

Juan R. Ramirez, Conductor Emeritus

prondly presents

the Winners
of the
45th Kuth Kern
Goung Artists
Concerto Competition

Saturday, October 30, 2021 2 p.m.

Christ Church Presbyterian 1740 Peachtree Road NW, Atlanta, GA 30309



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#### A History of the Atlanta Community Symphony Orchestra

The Atlanta Community Symphony Orchestra (ACSO) was conceived in the summer of 1957 under the auspices of the Atlanta Music Club (AMC). At that time, there were very limited orchestral opportunities for serious instrumentalists in Atlanta. Mrs. Charles Chalmers, AMC President (1956-1960), worked with AMC members Mrs. Ruth Dabney Allen and Ms. Ruth Kern, a local music educator and violist, to establish a community orchestra to further the progress of talented amateur musicians in the Atlanta area. Ms. Kern emphasized that it was the responsibility of the teachers of the city to see that serious music students and adult musicians had an opportunity to rehearse and perform symphonic music.

In the fall of 1957, at the invitation of the AMC, an ensemble of seventeen players convened at the home of Mrs. Andrew Fairlie to explore the possibilities for a new community-based orchestra to perform symphonic literature. The Atlanta Community Orchestra (now the ACSO) was officially founded in 1958. The ACSO's first free public concert was performed on May 12, 1958, under the baton of Maestro Harry Kruger.

More than sixty years later, the ACSO continues its mission to promote the appreciation and enjoyment of music, to reach out to diverse communities throughout greater Atlanta, and to provide educational and cultural opportunities for musicians and audiences.

For forty-five years, the ACSO has held an annual Young Artists' Concerto Competition (YACC), giving dedicated music students the opportunity to perform solo works with the orchestra. The Ruth Kern YACC is named in honor of Ms. Kern, founding ACSO member, for her dedication to both music education and the orchestra.



Symphony Hall on November 15, 2008.



Juan R. Ramirez Conductor Emeritus, with Mrs. Ruth Dabney The Atlanta Community Symphony Orchestra performing at Allen, age 101, at the ACSO's 50th Anniversary Gala Concert at Symphony Hall, for the 100th Anniversary of the Atlanta Music Club The Atlanta Community Symphony Orchestra performing Centennial Celebration on September 27, 2015.



#### Juan R. Ramírez Hernández (b. 1945) Conductor Emeritus

A CENTRAL FIGURE in the Atlanta musical community for decades, the violinist, composer and conductor Juan R. Ramírez-Hernández began his musical education in Mexico, later moving to the United States to study with Joseph Silverstein at the New England Conservatory. His studies with Henryk Szeryng began at the age of fourteen, and continued as he became his principal

mentor in Mexico, the U.S. and Europe.

Under the tutelage of conductor Leon Barzin, Ramírez was the recipient of both the Serge Koussevitzky and Leonard Bernstein awards at the Tanglewood Music Festival.

Mr. Ramírez has performed and conducted in numerous countries throughout Europe and Asia, as well as in Israel and Mexico. The distinguished composer-conductor Gunther Schuller stated his "unqualified faith in Mr. Ramírez as a violinist and a musical leader of great artistic integrity" and noted that "whatever he undertakes is touched by quality."

He has won numerous awards and honors along the way, including Lexus Leader of the Arts by WABE Public Radio of Atlanta and WPBA Television for "his outstanding contributions, his pursuit of excellence in music and for his initiating and serving several community music organizations in the arts community", the Loridans Arts Award, and the Governor's Award in the Humanities.

Known throughout the state as a music advocator and educator, Mr. Ramírez founded Music for Success! - an educational program under the auspices of the Atlanta Virtuosi Foundation in partnership with metro Atlanta educational institutions, providing string training by professional musicians to young elementary and middle school children of many backgrounds.

He generously volunteers his time, energy and expertise to music students in the Atlanta area and beyond.

In addition to his extensive career as a performer and conductor, Ramírez is also a prolific composer incorporating the sounds of his native Mexico into his works. His compositions include Anahuac for tenor, soprano, winds, strings, and pre-Columbian percussion, commissioned



Picture courtesy of Oliver Steiner

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in 1993 by the ACOG –Cultural Olympiad as part of ¡MEXICO! A Cultural Tapestry. Ramírez' Suite Criolla for tenor, soprano, chorus, narrator and orchestra debuted in 1995 at the Hispanic Festival of the Arts, and his Navidad Hispana for solo guitar and orchestra was given its premiere by the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra with the composer as the guitar soloist. Ramírez' Suite Huasteca for violin, strings and guitar earned critical acclaim in both the U.S. and Mexico, and in 2008 received its European premiere in Barcelona, Spain. His Elegy for violin and piano was written in memory of the Holocaust and received its world premiere at the Temple in Atlanta during the 70th commemoration of "Kristallnacht" 1938-2008 the Day of the Broken Glass. In 2016 Ramírez was featured as guest composer for his US world premiere of Suite Latina for string quartet and string orchestra at the Bellingham Festival of Music, Washington.

Mr. Ramírez has been a member of the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra since 1974 and is the founder and artistic director of the Atlanta Virtuosi Foundation, Buckhead Youth Orchestra, Casa de la Cultura-Atlanta, and is music director and conductor emeritus of the Atlanta Community Symphony Orchestra. Many of his commissioned compositions have been world premiered in Atlanta, New York, Budapest, Collonges sous Salève, Geneva and Monaco. His recent Elegy for violin, cello, piano and soprano, composed for the pancreatic cancer research fundraiser ART-CAN, was choreographed and performed with members of the Atlanta Ballet.

Mr. Ramírez has served on the Board of Directors of Childhood Cancer, the Sphinx Organization and the Oglethorpe University Museum of Art, and received the World Chamber of Commerce Cultural International Hero Award. Mr. Ramírez received in 2007 the Martin Luther King, Jr., César Chavez, Rosa Parks Visiting Professor from the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor. He holds the title of "Presidential Professor" at the University of Michigan, the highest honor "given to visiting artists and scholars, recognizing distinguished individuals for their extraordinary achievements." Mr. Ramirez was awarded the League of American Orchestras 2018 Ford Foundation Musician Award for Excellence in Community Service. He is very proud to have been awarded the 2018 Ohtli Award, one of the highest honors from the Mexican Government, recognizing individuals who have "aided, empowered or positively affected the lives of Mexican nationals in the United States and around the world". Recently Mr. Ramírez was awarded by the Georgia Hispanic Chamber of Commerce as "The 50 Most Influential Latinos in Georgia".



### The Atlanta Community Symphony Orchestra 64th Concert Season

#### (Musicians listed alphabetically)

Violin 1
Kevin Chen,
Concertmaster Constantenidis Chair
Oriana Cardenas
Craig Frankel
Gloria Jacobson
Ryan Metzler
Quynh-Lan Ngo
Peter Strauss

#### Violin 2 Jessica Fuchs, *principal* Deborah Cook

Ellen Krall Tom Mattimoe Jennifer Nickell

#### Viola

Courtney Whyte-May, principal Melanie Blevins Donna Clegg Kelsey Hammond Norman Zoller

#### Cello

Rachel Bender *principal* Rana Alsiro Alex Commanday Kathleen Crawford Kendra Felando Nathan Le Grace Yen

#### Bass

Nate Cox, *principal* Duane House Terry Klemenson

#### Piccolo/Flute

Tisa Schuurman, principal Letha Hankins Melissa Rolón

#### Oboe/English Horn Jean Russ

Jean Russ Amy Ross

#### Clarinet/ Bass Clarinet

Stacy Quiros, principal Ray Caputo

#### Bassoon

Jacob Davis *principal* Cesar Mendoza

#### French Horn

Jaime Jamison, *principal* Cory Adamson Gibson Garner

#### Trumpet

Peter Berry James Blackburn

#### Trombone

Richard Schulman, principal Fred Land

#### Timpani

Harvey Warner

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Conductor Emeritus Juan R. Ramirez

#### Season 64 Conductor Candidates

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The Atlanta Community Symphony Orchestra proudly presents

# "Winners of the 45th Knth Kern Young Artists Concerto Competition"

Juan R. Ramirez, Conductor Emeritus

Saturday, October 30 at 2 p.m. Christ Church Presbyterian

Concerto in D major, Hob.XVIII:11

for piano and orchestra

Allegro Vivace (Movement I)

Darin Goodman, piano Junior Division

Franz Joseph Haydn (1732-1809)

Allegro non troppo (Movement I)

Anna Willard, cello Junior Division

Concerto No. 1 in A minor, Op. 33 Camille Saint-Saëns for cello and orchestra (1835-192)

Concerto in B flat major, HWV 294, Op.4/6 George Frideric Handel for harp and orchestra (1685-1759)

Andante allegro (Movement I)

Emma Burnsworth, harp Senior Division

Concerto in D minor, op. 47 for violin and orchestra

Allegro, ma non tanto (Movement III) Jennifer Deng, violin Senior Division

Jean Sibelius (1865-1957)







#### Kevin Chen, Concertmaster

Kevin Chen was a fellow with the New World Symphony, led by Maestro Michael Tilson Thomas in Miami, since 2017 before joining the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra in the fall of 2020.

In 2017 and 2018, Chen enjoyed a month of music in the Swiss Alps as a fellow of the

the Verbier Festival, where he performed as one of the concertmasters for the Verbier Festival Orchestra under the batons of Maestros Gianandrea Noseda, Daniel Harding and Joshua Weilerstein. Chen performed as a member of the New York Philharmonic at David Geffen Hall, conducted by Alan Gilbert, as a 2017 Zarin Mehta Fellow in the Philharmonic's Global Academy Fellowship Program. He has also been the concertmaster of The Juilliard Orchestra and the Columbia University Orchestra.

Chen received his Master's Degree from The Juilliard School in 2016, where he studied with Naoko Tanaka and David Chan. He is also a graduate of Columbia University, where he completed his undergraduate studies as part of the Columbia-Juilliard Joint/Exchange program.

Outside of music, Chen enjoys running, hiking, cooking, and traveling.



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#### Darin Goodman, piano

From an early age, Darin has been drawn to the world of music. At age seven, he began formally studying piano with Shirley Irek. Less than a year later, he won the Atlanta Music Teachers Association Romantic and Impressionistic competition for his age group.

When Darin was nine years old, his family moved from Atlanta to North Carolina, and he began studying piano with Dr.

Dmitri Shteinberg at the North Carolina School of the Arts. In North Carolina, Darin won the Elfrida Helbig Award at the NC Bach Festival.

Last year, when his family returned to Atlanta, Darin was reunited with his first piano teacher, Shirley Irek, with whom he currently studies. In the six months since he returned to Atlanta, Darin has placed first at the GFMC- East Cobb Club Bach Competition and also achieved first place at the same festival in their Sonata Competition, performing the Rondo movement of Beethoven Sonata, Op.13.

Darin also studies classical guitar with Dr. Kami Rowan at Guilford College (NC). His guitar accomplishments include 3rd place at the 2020 Columbus State University Guitar Symposium Competition and 3rd place at the 2019 Appalachian State University GuitarFest Competition.

Darin is twelve years old and a sixth-grader at The Epstein School in Atlanta. Playing with an Orchestra is a dream come true for Darin, and he would like to express his thanks to his teachers and family, especially to his sisters for tolerating the constant sounds of his music while they do their homework. He is also appreciative of his dog, "Woofgang Amadeus," for his inspiration and musical, albeit out of tune, accompaniment.



#### Anna Willard, cello

Even at the age of 15, Anna Corinne Willard has had many varied and exciting opportunities to perform and share music. In addition to being named a winner for the Ruth Kern Concerto Competition in 2020, Anna was also awarded First Place in the Gulf Coast Steinway Society Concerto Competition in Mobile, AL. She has also received Honorable Mention

in the 2019 MTNA competition, and was the First Place and Conference Recitalist for the GMTA spring auditions in 2018 as well as 2016 and 2015. She has had the pleasure of performing in masterclasses with wonderful musicians such as Melissa Kraut of The Cleveland Institute of Music, Avi Friedlander, director and faculty member of The Music Institute of Chicago, and Anthony Elliot of Northwestern University. Anna has had the privilege of performing extensively as a featured soloist in her community and church.

Right before her eighth birthday, Anna began her cello studies with Christine Christensen, member of the Atlanta Symphony and Verbier Festival Orchestra, and then was soon introduced to Martha Gerschefski, a Julliard trained performer and graduate, who toured extensively throughout Europe. Martha Gerschefski also has made her musical mark through pedagogical endeavors by initiating the creation of Cellobration Cello Choirs, which toured the United States and South American countries, The Westminster Music Academy in Atlanta, and teaching with great success and honor at Georgia State University.

Although Mrs. Gershchefski now lives in South Carolina, Anna continues to study on occasion with her via internet platforms. While she lived in Georgia, Anna was a student of esteemed performer and teacher, Wendy Warner, a Curtis graduate and The Leah D. Hamer Distinguished Faculty Chair in Cello at the Schwob School of Music at Columbus State University. Anna is so grateful for and so very blessed to have had such wonderful teachers and mentors who have instilled a deep love of music and artistry in her life.

Anna is the third child of Mark and Katy Willard. She and her family recently moved to Jackson, Tennessee, after growing up in Albany, Georgia. Anna is a recipient of the James Barnett Foundation which supports her musical studies. Anna is also an award winning artist, runs cross country, plays soccer, enjoys a ting, singing, going to church, and being with friends and family.

#### Emma Burnsworth, harp

Emma has been playing the harp for 6 years. She is 14 years old. Emma recently won first place in the International Maestro String and Piano Competition and played a solo in the winner's concert at Carnegie Hall. She has also played for the Governor of Georgia at the Christmas event hosted at the Governor's mansion in 2018 and



2019. She progressed to finals for the Alpharetta Symphony Concerto Competition, the Ruth Kern Concerto Competition, and Dekalb Symphony Orchestra Competition. Emma plays regularly for events, church, weddings, funerals, and private concerts. She has a heart to play for shut ins and palliative care patients. Emma is trained classically and studying under Nella Rigell, Principal harpist for the Atlanta Ballet.

#### Jennifer Deng, violin

Jennifer Deng, a senior at McIntosh High School, has been playing the violin for nine years and studying with Sonja Foster for four years. Jennifer was co-concertmaster of the Atlanta Symphony Youth Orchestra for its 2018-19 season, as well as concertmaster of the Georgia All-State Orchestras for the last three years. In 2018, Jennifer was the first-place winner of the Georgia Music



Teachers Association Concerto Competition and soloed at the annual conference. Jennifer has also won the GMTA competitions in the 8/9 division and the 10/11 division. In 2017, her chamber group won first place at the Franklin Pond Chamber Music Competition. Additionally, Jennifer has won scholarships with the Griffin District Kiwanis Music & Art Showcase, placing 1st in 2019 (\$3500), 2nd in 2018 (\$1250), and 3rd in 2017 (\$500). She has spent previous summers at the Bowdoin International Music Festival and the Georgia Governor's Honors Program. In her free time, Jennifer enjoys drawing, running, and reading.



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<u>Judy Latz Memorial Fund</u>: in memory of ACSO's longtime principal oboe, past chairperson and creative, enthusiastic leader.

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<u>Platon P. Constantinides Memorial Chair</u>: accepting donations to support our concertmaster's chair, named in honor and memory of a dedicated supporter of the ACSO. His wife, Irene Constantinides was a founding ACSO member and played in the first violin section for more than 50 years, and his entire family has continued to support the ACSO well after her retirement from our performing membership.



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Kim Johnson

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