

Chamber Music Festival announces 20th season

The Amelia Island Chamber Music Festival announced last week a host of concerts for its 2021 season. The lineup of international and national musical stars, as well as local artists, are scheduled to perform concerts both live at local island venues and virtually for the safety of both musicians and audiences.

Beginning in January, the acclaimed Dover Quartet will open the season, which extends through 12 concerts and concludes in May with a concert by world-renowned violinist Midori and legendary bluegrass group Balsam Range.

In announcing the season, Christopher Rex, the festival's general and artistic director, said in a news release, "It is exciting to present this season with both social distancing and online concerts because the pandemic has taught us, in the performing arts, how indispensable the audience is. The composer writes his music and we spend our lives learning how to bring the music, to life, but without people to express it to, we have no mission."

A wide array of internationally recognized and award-winning artists from multiple genres include festival newcomers violin virtuoso Midori and the New York Philharmonic String Quartet with Drew Petersen. Returning favorites include Pinchas Zukerman with the Zukerman Trio, charismatic pianist Valentina Lisitsa and concert violinists Robert McDuffie and Chee Yun Kim.

"Hosting these artists reflects our growing status as one of the nation's premier classical music festivals. The ability to grace our stages with such internationally renowned artists is a testimony to the strength and support of our valued contributors, ticket-buyers and volunteers," Rex said.

The Dover Quartet

The opening concert in January by the Dover Quartet will feature the great Schubert 2 Cello



Quintet. Rex will join them. Dover is one of the most in-demand ensembles in the world, according to the release. The first-ever quartet-in-residence for the Kennedy Center, the Dover also is quartet-in-residence for the Bienen School of Music at Northwestern University, Chamber Music Northwest, Artosphere and Peoples' Symphony in New York. The quartet's second performance will be joined by acclaimed composer and performer Edgar Meyer, bassist.

Edgar Meyer

In demand as both a virtuoso performer on the string bass and a composer, Edgar Meyer has formed a role in the music world unlike any other. Hailed by *The New Yorker* as "... the most remarkable virtuoso in the relatively unchronicled history of his instrument," Meyer's "unparalleled technique and musicianship in combination with his gift for composition" have brought him to the fore, where he is appreciated by a vast, varied audience. His uniqueness in the field was recognized with a MacArthur Award in 2002. Meyer's past collaborations include many festival favorites such as Joshua Bell, Béla Fleck, Yo-Yo Ma and Chris Thile.

Midori

A visionary artist, activist and educator, Midori's unique career has "transcended traditional boundaries through her relentless drive to explore and build connections between music and the human experience." A leading concert violinist for more than 35 years, Midori regularly transfixes audiences around the world, bringing



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Violin virtuoso Midori, above, a newcomer to the Amelia Island Chamber Music Festival, will be one of the 2021 season's headliners. The Zukerman Trio, right, has traveled around the globe and performed at such major festivals as Ravinia, the BBC Proms, Edinburgh, Verbier and Bravo! Vail. Balsam Range, below, will bring their award-winning performances of bluegrass to AICMF's 20th season.



FESTIVAL Continued on page 10

Craft fairs support local nonprofits

What would the holidays be without arts and crafts fairs filled with handmade items perfect for gifts as well as plenty of holiday decorations for your home, all while supporting local nonprofit organizations?

Holidays at the Beach Craft & Vendor Bazaar
10 a.m.-4 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 5
GFWC Woman's Club
201 Jean Lafitte Blvd.
Fernandina Beach

More than a dozen local crafters and vendors will be selling their wares inside and outside the building to observe social distancing guidelines so shoppers can safely browse for gifts for everyone on their holiday gift lists. Vendors will include Front Porch Beads, TRK Art Designs, Clothes Pins and Things, Rowland Creation, Serendipity by Nikki, Laura's Smelly Goodness, Gourds Gone Wild, Driftwood and Things, Limelife by Alcone, Ten19, Beachpeach Boutique and others. Masks and social distancing are required.

This event benefits the Woman's Club, which celebrates its 100th anniversary this year as a service organization. In the past, the organization has operated a dental clinic for underprivileged Nassau County children as well as a tonsil clinic, helped establish Fort Clinch and the Atlantic Avenue Junior High School, supplied books to what eventually became libraries in area schools and donated to Nassau County Council on Aging, The Salvation Army, NAMI, Take Stock in Children, Micah's Place and many other organizations.

IAA Art Market
11 a.m.-4 p.m., Saturday, Dec. 5
IAA Education Center
18 N. Second St.
Fernandina Beach

Island Art Association will hold a one-day sale of original works by 17 participating artists. Items will include drawings, paintings, ceramics, glass, jewelry and more.

CRAFTS Continued on page 10



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The Holidays at the Beach Craft & Vendor Bazaar will have handmade jewelry available.

MUSIC FOR THE HOLIDAYS



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DeMerle plans 'dynamic' holiday shows

The Dynamic Les DeMerle Trio, featuring Bonnie Eisele and special guests, will perform "The Jazz Spirit of Christmas" at 2 and 7:30 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 19, at Story & Song Bookstore Bistro. Tickets are \$25 per person. Then, the Dynamic Les DeMerle Band will perform "New Year's Eve in Paris" from 5-7 p.m. Thursday, Dec. 31, at Story & Song Bookstore Bistro, where the upstairs will be transformed into a Parisian cabaret so you can swing in the New Year when it's midnight in Paris. Bistro table seating will be limited to 12 tables for parties of two-four people each. Tickets are \$50 per person and include appetizers and champagne. For information and tickets for both shows, call 904-601-2118. Story & Song is located at 1430 Park Ave. in Fernandina Beach.



Crescendo Amelia takes holiday show outdoors

Crescendo Amelia will present "How the Big Band Stole Christmas," an annual tradition now in its seventh year, at 4 and 7 p.m. Sunday, Dec. 20, on the outdoor stage at Amelia Musical Playhouse. The show is a full theater production featuring favorite holiday songs, local celebrity singers, dancers, acting and a few surprises. The singer lineup includes Marah Lovequist, Reed Meyer, Toots Lorraine, Eden Rewa and some special guests. To watch a preview of the show, visit <https://bit.ly/39BiFzc>. Tickets are available by going online to CrescendoAmelia.com or by calling 904-878-0037. AMP is located at 1955 Island Walkway in Fernandina Beach.

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Duo will play new album of Christmas music

Local duo Eden & Frankie released an album of Christmas music this week and will perform their new songs during a community concert set for 7:30-9 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 5, on the outdoor stage at Amelia Musical Playhouse. Entrance to the concert will be a pay-what-you-can donation. *An Island Christmas* uses ukulele and violin to achieve its signature "island" sound, according to the pair. CDs will be available at the performance, and the album is also available to purchase on Apple Music and to stream on Spotify. AMP is located at 1955 Island Walkway in Fernandina Beach.

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Museum's Holiday Home Tour sells

JACK DICKISON
Special to the News-Leader

Despite the albatross of a major health challenge, Amelia Island Museum of History's annual Holiday Home Tour has sold every single time slot available. To those potential patrons who might have waited too long, our hopes are high that the recent vaccine announcements will eliminate this necessary restriction for next year so all who desire to participate will be able to visit our city's heritage homes. For those who do have a ticket, please review the guidelines below and make sure to visit the Myers' residence at 28 S. 10th St. to purchase raffle tickets. The list of prizes appears at the end of this article.

COVID-19 protocols: Each guest must wear a mask. Hand sanitizer stations will be available at each home. Instead of a docent in each room, there will be a docent on each floor. Physical distancing is required while queuing outside of each home. No touching of surfaces or objects within.

General rules: No high heels, strollers or backpacks. Absolutely no photography allowed.

Transportation: There is no shuttle bus this year. On-street parking is limited so prior planning is recommended. The Myers residence is the only home east of Eighth Street. The remainder are on Seventh, Sixth and Fourth streets so walking is possible.

Here's a review of this year's homes.

• **Myers residence, aka "Steamboat House," 28 S. 10th St. Holiday décor by Heirloom Yard.**

Original house built in 1883 by Edward Bell. In 1901, a saloon owner from Switzerland named John Rutishauser purchased it. Mr. Rutishauser later became the city's first assistant fire chief. The two-story porches and elaborate scrollwork and other details were reminiscent of a Mississippi sternwheeler and the name stuck. Near the end of the 20th century, the house ceased to be residential and became host to various law offices. The current owners, the Myers, returned it to residential by adding an addition on the north side and putting in full baths, a kitchen and a sunroom.

The interior of the 1883 house remains basi-

cally unchanged with yellow heart pine floors. The foyer/parlor retains its tin ceiling and large pocket doors. There are numerous pieces of art from the owner's collections, including works by American folk artists as well as some from Brazil and Mallorca. In the foyer is a gold leaf mirror obtained in 2005 from the redecoration of the Plaza Hotel in New York City. The original house has three bedrooms on the second floor and an owner's suite in the new wing.

The exterior is dominated by an enormous live oak with a 77-inch trunk. The tree predates the house by many years. Of interest is the story told by the homeowner who met a more than 90-year-old gentleman who grew up in the house and snuck out at night by climbing down the tree. The landscaping is traditional southern: azaleas, camellias and hydrangeas. A traditional carriage step with 1901 on one side and JJR on the other is located in the southern interior yard.

• **The Lucy Cottage, 17 S. Seventh St. Holiday décor by Lillian Adeline Designs.**

This home was built circa 1882 as a Gothic Revival cottage. It was one of three homes on the west side of South Seventh Street belonging to the Thompson family. The large white house to the right was owned by William Thompson, a prominent railroad and state senator. The brick house to the left was owned by William Thompson's son. The Lucy House was owned by Lucy Thompson Haverstick, the senator's sister. After the death of Lucy Haverstick, it was subsequently owned by two more Lucys: Lucy Nolan, the original Lucy's niece obtained it from the estate and rented it out as a guest house. Her husband, Raymond Nolan, died and Lucy Nolan and her daughters, Elizabeth and Lucy, lived there until the older Nolan's death in 1937. Lucy Nolan III lived there until 1999. Current owner Deborah Conner purchased the home in 2000.

The term Gothic Revival generally denotes decorative vergeboards on east and south gables with steep roofs, false dormers and narrow lancet windows. The entry is via a long porch on the left side. The landscaping is lush with multiple flower bushes and gorgeous bougainvillea.

An important correction to the original article

that ran on Nov. 20 is the names of the owner's pets. The cat is Vincent, the beagle is Lucy and the hound is Desi. This is the fourth Lucy to live in this wonderful house!

• **The Stockard House, 110 S. Sixth St. Holiday décor by Amelia's Treasures.**

The two-story gallery house was built in 1897 with a wing on the east side running south. Sometime after 1926, that wing was moved to face South Sixth Street. That wing had four rooms, two up and two down, with fireplace in each room. A 1929 reconstruction added a kitchen and dining room on the north side and a room over the dining room. The outside stairs were enclosed. In the 1940s and 1950s, the house was a duplex, returning to single family in the 1970s. During the 1990s and again in 2001, the house was renovated. The current homeowners bought the home in 2003.

The house is full of art items both modern and all the way back to King David. Many of them are from family members ranging from the owner's mother, son, aunts and grandchildren.

• **Ella and John R. Hardee House, 28 N. Fourth St. Holiday décor by Coastal Cottage Amelia.**

"J.R." and Ella bought the home and moved to Fernandina Beach in 1912 from Georgia to be a founder of our shrimp industry. With three children from a first marriage, John and Ella had seven more. To house such a family, everything to the left of the front door was added on. The Hardees built a playhouse in the rear where the children put on dramas for a nickel per show. That structure is now a garage. The house is of frame construction with heart pine floors. All mantels are original. The parlor was originally a screened porch and the current owner's master bedroom was once the living room. The parlor wainscoting and wallpaper are 2019 additions. The kitchen was updated in the 1950s and again in the late-1960s. It was the very definition of a family home. At Ella's 100th birthday in 1980, there were 97 descendants: seven children, 27 grandchildren, 49 great-grandchildren and 14 great-great-grandchildren.

• **Content Hardee Partin House, 22 N. Fourth St. Holiday décor by Dottie B Florist.** Content Hardee was one of John Hardee's

children by his first marriage. He wanted her to be near him, so he bought the house next door to his for her and her family in 1924. Built in 1883, the house was occupied by the Partin family until 1992 when daughter Eloise Partin Rogers took over. The current owners purchased the property in 2003 with Eloise entitled to life estate. When she died in 2018, a complete restoration ensued. What guests see today is a respectful renovation with great care taken to maintain the original colors and layout of the 1924 Partin era. There are many details related to the current homeowner's great-great-grandmother's ancestral home, the Merrow House, which is now the Port of Fernandina's office. The rooms are filled with artifacts from this amazing multigenerational home. There are also light fixtures from a French chateau in the dining room. Although there is new flesh on the bones, this house maintains its traditions to the Partin and Hardee families. It is a true gem.

Special Added Attractions: At the Myers House, 28 S. 10th St., there will be a spectacular raffle. Here are the prizes:

• The Golf Club of Amelia Island	
Round of golf for four	\$800
• Sandra Hughes – Original oil painting, <i>Sunday Morning in Savannah</i>	\$1,600
• Lindy's Jewelry – 14k yellow gold and blue topaz chandelier earrings	\$500
• Artistic Florist – Christmas wreath	\$550
• Rollin Phat – Two days of electric scooter rental and two t-shirts	\$200
• Judy Versteeg – Framed watercolor of lighthouse	Unknown
• Nassau Jewelry – Amelia Island silver necklace and silver link bracelet	\$364
• Evelyne Talman – Gift card	\$100
• Amelia Schoolhouse Inn – Two duvet cover sets	\$200
• Amelia Toffee – Gift basket of assorted toffees	\$45
• Cape House – Gift certificate	\$100
• Bar Zin/Cucina South – Gift certificate good at either restaurant	\$100

Tickets are \$5 each, three for \$10 and seven for \$20. Both cash and credit or debit cards will be accepted.

FESTIVAL *Continued from page 8*

together graceful precision and intimate expression that allows the listening public to not just hear music but to be personally moved by it.

New York Philharmonic String Quartet

The New York Philharmonic String Quartet comprises four principal musicians from the Orchestra. The group, formed in January 2017, made its debut as the solo ensemble in John Adams' "Absolute Jest" in March 2017 in New York. All four members are multiple prize winners, have appeared as concerto soloists with the Philharmonic and orchestras around the world and have appeared frequently in the Philharmonic's chamber music series at David Geffen Hall and Merkin Hall.

Drew Petersen

Acclaimed young American pianist Drew Petersen is a sought-after soloist, recitalist and chamber musician in the United States, Europe and Asia. He's been praised for his commanding and poetic performances of repertoire ranging from Bach to Zaimont and is the recipient of the 2018 Avery Fisher Career Grant, 2017 American Pianists Award and the Christel DeHaan Fellow of the American Pianists Association, as well as a residency at the University of Indianapolis.

'Peter and the Wolf'

"Peter and the Wolf" is presented for children, including those of our Young Patrons. "Peter and the Wolf" will be performed as a four-hand piano concert by Julie Coucheron and Elizabeth Pridgen accompanied by dancers under the direction of Susie Dodge from the Amelia Island Dance Festival.

Beer and G-Strings

A collaborative concert entitled "The Four Seasons" brings back the popular concerts of years past. Festival favorites include Christiania Trio, Andres Diaz, Wendy Chen, and Chee Yun



The Dover Quartet, left, will open the festival in January and perform a second time later in the season with acclaimed composer and performer Edgar Meyer. A YouTube sensation with 83 million views and counting, piano virtuoso Valentina Lisitsa, right, is one of the most-watched classical musicians on the internet.



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in 2 of the "Four Seasons" concertos of Vivaldi and two of the "Four Seasons" tangos of Astor Piazzolla in a "Battle of the Bands" on the Sadler Ranch stage.

The Zukerman Trio

With a celebrated career spanning five decades, Pinchas Zukerman reigns as one of today's most sought-after and versatile musicians as a violin and viola soloist, conductor and chamber musician. He launched his trio in 2013, and since then, the ensemble has traveled around the globe and performed at such major festivals as Ravinia, the BBC Proms, Edinburgh, Verbier and Bravo! Vail.

Kelly/Scott Jazz Quintet

Collaborators since 1997, J.B. Scott and Lisa Kelly have performed internationally at major festivals, jazz clubs and jazz societies as featured soloists with big bands and with their own big band and small groups. They are highly regarded

adjudicators and guest artists/clinicians for secondary to collegiate music programs, competitions and music camps. They have co-produced six successful CDs.

UNF Big Band Ensemble

The University of North Florida Jazz Ensemble 1, led by director J.B. Scott, is the flagship ensemble of the prestigious UNF Jazz Studies Program. With an impressive list of awards, festival invitations and recognition by industry publications for its improvisational prowess and precision ensemble playing, JE1 has enjoyed the reputation of being one of the finest collegiate jazz ensembles worldwide.

Valentina Lisitsa

With more than 83 million YouTube views, piano virtuoso Valentina Lisitsa is one of the most-watched classical musicians on the internet. An Amelia Island favorite, Valentina is at ease with a vast repertoire, ranging from Bach

and Mozart to Rachmaninoff, Shostakovich and Bernstein. Her orchestral repertoire includes more than 40 concertos.

Scherzando 20th Season Celebration

A collaborative concert dedicated to the memory of renowned cellist and much-loved Amelia performer Lynn Harrell, the Scherzando 20th Season Celebration will feature stars from the festival's 20 seasons, including violinists Robert McDuffie, Amy Moretti, Helen Nightengale and Giora Schmidt; violists James Dunham and Nokuthula Ngwenyama; cellists Zuill Bailey and Christopher Rex; and pianist Elizabeth Pridgen. They will perform works of Beethoven, Brahms, Mendelssohn, Schubert, Wieniawski, and Chopin.

Balsam Range

The 2018 International Bluegrass Music Association's Entertainer of the Year, Balsam Range has become one of the genre's most award-winning acts. Since forming in 2007, the group has garnered 13 IBMA awards on the heels of eight critically acclaimed albums. Balsam Range has left audiences "spellbound" while headlining major festivals from coast-to-coast, selling out venues across the nation and in multiple appearances at the Grand Ole Opry.

According to Festival Board President Emma Mills Bledsoe, tickets for the 2021 season will be released for sale in December.

For information and ticketing, visit amelia-chambermusic.org.

Bledsoe said in the release, "Music truly soothes the soul, and through this extraordinary group of musicians, we hope you will be refreshed and inspired, particularly as we look forward to a healthy new year."

Celebrating its 20th anniversary season, the Amelia Island Chamber Music Festival is one of the nation's most renowned classical music festivals. The festival is a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organization.



SUBMITTED PHOTOS

Buy Local Holiday Extravaganza will feature metal art and ornaments for your tree.

CRAFTS *Continued from page 8*

The Island Art Association is a nonprofit volunteer organization whose mission is exclusively philanthropic and educational. Its purpose is to develop and sustain an interest, appreciation and enjoyment in and of the arts of Nassau County. Its gallery houses the works of more than 50 local artists and its Education Center is utilized for classes, workshops and scheduled events. For information, visit islandart.org.

Buy Local Holiday Extravaganza

10 a.m.-4 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 12
8 Flags Shopping Center
South 14th and Lime streets
Fernandina Beach

More than a dozen local artisans, crafters and others will take part in this fair that will benefit The Salvation Army Hope House. Some of the arts and crafts that will be available include hand-made leather items such as purses and belts, jewelry, handmade chocolates, lamps and other items made from driftwood, shells and sand, metal art, ceramic tile coasters, shell art, micro-greens, pepper oils and more. Organizers are still accepting vendors. For information, contact Kim Murray at k.copeland.murray@gmail.com.

Front Porch Beads Trunk Show

10 a.m.-5 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 12
Story & Song Bookstore Bistro



1430 Park Ave. Fernandina Beach

This group of enthusiastic bead makers and sell jewelry to raise funds for donations to local charities. Most recently, the group was able to donate \$2,000 to the Interfaith Dinner Network, which serves meals several days a week to the area's homeless and food insecure. Since their first donation of \$1,000 in March 2019 to Micah's Place, the county's resource for victims of domestic abuse, the group has donated a total of \$8,000 to organizations that include Take Stock in Children, Arts Alive, Nassau County Council on Aging, Starting Point Behavioral Healthcare and Gracie's Kitchen.

WE ARE STILL BRINGING JOY TO THE CHILDREN THIS YEAR!



Since 1995 Joy has been able to serve economically disadvantaged children and their families in the Nassau County community.

We typically host about 150 children and their families each Christmas Day by providing a celebration that includes Christmas dinner and gifts of clothing, bedding, books, school supplies, hygiene products, and toys.

Due to Covid we are changing it up a bit... we will be offering Curbside Christmas!

On Christmas Eve we will distribute the same type of awesome gifts, but unwrapped. Homeless or at risk of being homeless families will be referred from the FIT (Families In Transition) Program of Nassau County Schools. Families will also receive fresh fruit and essential food items which may be used to prepare dinner.

Joy to the Children is a 501(c)(3) organization operating with an all-volunteer board and workers. Donations are used mainly for the purchase of toys, clothes, books, school supplies, personal hygiene items, and bedding consisting of new sheets, a blanket, and a pillow for each child.



PLEASE SEND YOUR DONATION TO

PO Box 16404, Fernandina Beach, FL 32035

Or donate via our website:

JOYTOTHECHILDREN.ORG