



VIRGINIA ARTS FESTIVAL

2026

ROBERT W. CROSS, PERRY ARTISTIC DIRECTOR



DANCE
THEATRE OF
HARLEM



OLGA KERN



JOSHUA BELL



ALISON KRAUSS & UNION STATION

VAFEST.ORG

UNFORGETTABLE EXPERIENCES INSIDE!

WELCOME



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ALISON KRAUSS



Dear Festival Friend,

Welcome! We hope you will join us again and again — our new season provides ample opportunity to experience unforgettable performances.

Dance lovers will enjoy stunning ballet from Dance Theatre of Harlem, dazzling tap from Dorrance Dance, and an extraordinary contemporary dance by BalletX.

Classical music fans will hear from some of the genre's true legends, including violinist Joshua Bell and the Academy of St. Martin in the Fields, pianist Olga Kern, the Orava Quartet, and cellist Alisa Weilerstein. The Virginia Symphony Orchestra will be featured in several curated programs including a special salute to composer Adolphus Hailstork with *Performance Today* radio host Valerie Kahler as emcee, and *Finding Peace at Potsdam*, exploring music's role in WWII history. Additional highlights include a live orchestra performance accompanying a screening of *Top Gun: Maverick* and *Music of Queen — A Rock Symphony*, and, for our youngest music lovers, *Peppa Pig: My First Concert!*

Jazz enthusiasts can savor performances by some of the greatest names in jazz, including bassist Christian McBride and vocalist Cécile McLorin Salvant with Danish Radio Big Band. Vocal music fans will enjoy a stellar lineup including Hampton Roads native and Tony Award®-winning Broadway star Adrienne Warren and cabaret favorite Meow Meow. If you love a Gershwin tune, be sure to attend Rob Fisher's "Love, George & Ira: The Gershwins on Broadway." For something wildly entertaining, don't miss Edinburgh Fringe star Victory Melody's new show *Trouble, Struggle, Bubble, and Squeak*.

You won't want to miss the Virginia International Tattoo, a truly spectacular show with a salute to 250 years of American independence.

Join us for the four-day weekend finale at Williamsburg Live, featuring singer-songwriter Alison Krauss with Union Station — plus more artists to be announced soon.

Robert W. Cross
Perry Artistic Director



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Call (757) 282-2822 or (877) 741-2787
Or visit the Virginia Arts Festival Box Office
440 Bank Street, Norfolk, VA 23510
Hours: Monday - Friday, 10 AM - 5 PM



DORRANCE
DANCE



CHRIS THILE



DANCE THEATRE OF HARLEM

Firebird

with Virginia Symphony Orchestra

In 2026, Virginia Arts Festival proudly welcomes the return of Dance Theatre of Harlem — this time bringing one of the company's most beloved signature works: *Firebird*. This legendary production reimagines the classic Russian folk tale of love's triumph over evil in a lush, Caribbean setting. With John Taras' masterful choreography, Igor Stravinsky's iconic score (1945 version) performed live by the Virginia Symphony Orchestra, and Geoffrey Holder's dazzling costumes and sets, *Firebird* is a feast for the senses. First created in 1982, this Dance Theatre of Harlem classic has toured the world and enchanted audiences everywhere. As *The New York Times* declared: "...it does one thing other versions do not — send its audience into a whooping spell of delirium."

Join us as *Firebird* takes flight once again — an unforgettable evening of dance, music, and spectacle that captures the heart and imagination.

PROGRAM:

DONIZETTI Donizetti Variations
HAILSTORK Symphony No. 1
RADIOHEAD Take Me With You
STRAVINSKY Firebird

FRIDAY - SATURDAY, MARCH 20 - 21, 7:30 PM

SUNDAY, MARCH 22, 3 PM
CHRYSLER HALL, NORFOLK

*Live music is made possible by a generous gift from
The L & J Goldrich Foundation.*

Visionary support for Firebird provided by Jody and John Arnhold and the Virginia Arts Festival.

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DANCE THEATRE OF HARLEM

Virginia Arts Festival welcomes back one of America's most celebrated dance companies, Dance Theatre of Harlem, to Ferguson Center for the Arts in Newport News. Under the direction of Artistic Director Robert Garland, the company's extraordinary dancers bring to life an exhilarating program that showcases works from some of today's most acclaimed choreographers, merging the grace of classical ballet with the vitality of contemporary dance.

From lush and sweeping ensemble movement to breathtaking pirouettes, jumps and lifts, Dance Theatre of Harlem delivers a performance that thrills.

This program will feature *New Bach*, a neoclassical ballet created by Dance Theatre of Harlem Artistic Director Robert Garland and first performed in September 2001, immediately after 9/11; *Passage of Being*, which premiered this year, is a circular and physical piece unfolding in three cinematic movements set to the evocative music of Oscar®-nominated composer Ryan Lott *Everything Everywhere All at Once*; and *Return*, a soulful, high-octane celebration of the timeless sounds of James Brown and Aretha Franklin.

PROGRAM:

JOHANN SEBASTIAN BACH *New Bach*
RYAN LOTT; SON LUX; ROB MOOSE; YMUSIC *Passage of Being*
JAMES BROWN; ALFRED ELLIS; ARETHA FRANKLIN; CANDY FRANKLIN *Return*

TUESDAY, MARCH 24, 7:30 PM

**FERGUSON CENTER FOR THE ARTS, CHRISTOPHER NEWPORT UNIVERSITY,
NEWPORT NEWS**

DTH Residency Supported in part by

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Media Sponsor: VEER Magazine and WHRO Public Media

This performance funded in part by the City of Newport News and the Newport News Arts Commission.

*This project is supported in part by the National Endowment for the Arts
and the Friedrich Ludwig Diehn Fund of the Hampton Roads Community
Foundation.*



Additional Support is provided by the Newport News Sheriff's Office.

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DANCE SERIES

CONNIE AND MARC JACOBSON OPENING NIGHT CELEBRATION

BALLETX

Witness "art in motion" (*Philadelphia Inquirer*) with this extraordinary contemporary ballet company. Innovative and rooted in technical excellence, BalletX forges new works of athleticism, emotion, and grace. For 20 years, the company performed 150 world premieres by 80 choreographers — works that are "fresh, inclusive, and connect to what people want" (*Philadelphia Citizen*).

THURSDAY, MARCH 5, 7:30 PM
CHRYSLER HALL, NORFOLK

Media Sponsor: *VEER Magazine*

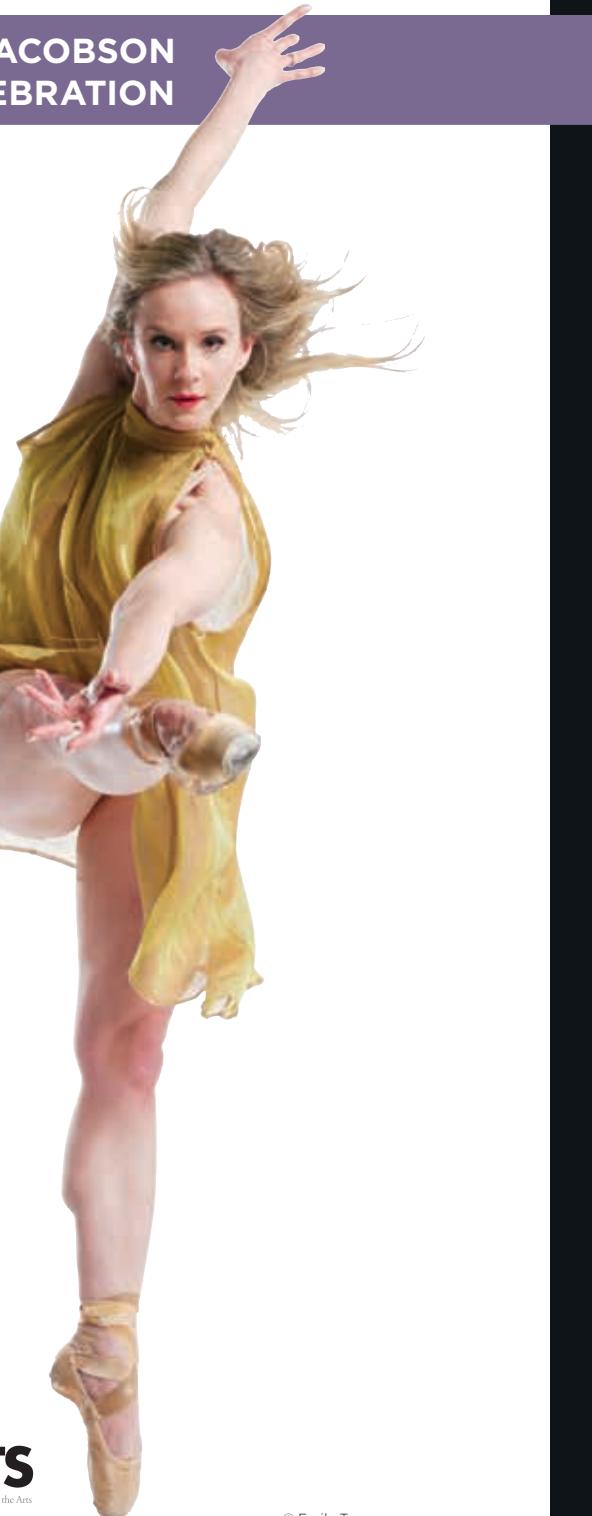
This project is supported in part by the Friedrich Ludwig Diehn Fund of the Hampton Roads Community Foundation.



In partnership with The Governor's School for the Arts and the Regional High School Dance Festival, under the auspices of the National High School Dance Festival.



© Emily Tong



DORRANCE DANCE

featuring Elizabeth Burke and Luke Hickey
A Swing Suite / SOUNDspace / REDUX

With a complex history and powerful legacy, the uniquely American art form of tap dance explodes with energy and sly storytelling. Led by MacArthur "Genius Grant" recipient Michelle Dorrance, this award-winning company champions tap, effortlessly blending tap forms from Detroit, Memphis, Chicago and beyond with hip-hop, breaking, house, and body percussion, composing rhythmic melodies as they go. "A visual, auditory, and rhythmic delight from beginning to end. Lightning-fast feet and intricate, jam-in-your-seat-inducing rhythms...the performers captivated the audience" (*LA Dance Chronicle*).

TUESDAY, APRIL 21, 7:30 PM
ATTUCKS THEATRE, NORFOLK

THURSDAY, APRIL 23, 7:30 PM
**FERGUSON CENTER FOR THE ARTS,
CHRISTOPHER NEWPORT UNIVERSITY,
NEWPORT NEWS**

This performance funded in part by the City of Newport News and the Newport News Arts Commission.

Media Sponsors: *Audacy and VEER Magazine*

Supported in part by the Jim & Karen Sparks Dance Residency Fund of the Virginia Arts Festival Endowment.



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© Richard Terne



JOSHUA BELL, violin, conductor ACADEMY OF ST. MARTIN IN THE FIELDS

With a career spanning almost four decades, GRAMMY® Award-winning violinist Joshua Bell is one of the most celebrated artists of his era. Bell has performed with virtually every major orchestra in the world, and continues to maintain engagements as a soloist, recitalist, chamber musician, conductor, and as the Music Director of the legendary chamber orchestra the Academy of St. Martin in the Fields. Playing together, this master violinist and superb ensemble are “exhilarating; Bell’s vaulted, singing tone [and the orchestra’s] beautifully articulated, cleanly executed” performances (*South Florida Classical Review*) never fail to thrill.

PROGRAM:

CAMILLE SAINT-SAËNS Violin Concerto No. 3 in B Minor, op. 61
ANTONÍN DVORÁK Symphony No. 8 in G Major, op. 88

SATURDAY, MARCH 7, 7:30 PM

FERGUSON CENTER FOR THE ARTS, CHRISTOPHER NEWPORT
UNIVERSITY, NEWPORT NEWS

This performance funded in part by the City of Newport News and the Newport News Arts Commission.

SUNDAY, MARCH 8, 3 PM

SANDLER CENTER FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS, VIRGINIA BEACH

This event is funded in part by the citizens of Virginia Beach through a grant from the City of Virginia Beach Arts and Humanities Commission.

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This project is supported in part by the Friedrich Ludwig Diehn Fund of the Hampton Roads Community Foundation.

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VIRGINIA SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

Celebrating Adolphus Hailstork's 85th Birthday

JoAnn Falletta, conductor

Stewart Goodyear, piano

Norfolk State University Chorus

Valerie Kahler, narrator, *Performance Today*® host

Virginia Arts Festival and Virginia Symphony Orchestra celebrate the 85th birthday of internationally acclaimed composer and Hampton Roads resident Adolphus Hailstork. This concert showcases his brilliant work's including *An American Port of Call*, *First Piano Concerto*, and *Done Made My Vow*. To make this special evening even more spectacular, the Orchestra's Connie and Marc Jacobson Music Director Laureate and GRAMMY® Award-winner JoAnn Falletta returns for one night only to conduct the performance, which includes pianist Stewart Goodyear and the acclaimed Norfolk State University Chorus.

PROGRAM:

HAILSTORK Fanfare on Amazing Grace

HAILSTORK An American Port of Call

HAILSTORK Piano Concerto No. 1

HAILSTORK Celebration

HAILSTORK For Those Who Serve

HAILSTORK Still Holding On

HAILSTORK Done Made My Vow

THURSDAY, APRIL 30, 7:30 PM

L. DOUGLAS WILDER PERFORMING ARTS CENTER, NORFOLK STATE
UNIVERSITY, NORFOLK

Co-presented with

 **VIRGINIA
SYMPHONY
ORCHESTRA**
Eric Jacobson, Music Director

 **NORFOLK STATE
UNIVERSITY**

Media Sponsors: **VEER Magazine** and **WHRO Public Media**

Valerie Kahler, host

**Performance
Today®**

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CLASSICAL MUSIC

VIRGINIA SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

Finding Peace at Potsdam

Eric Jacobsen, conductor

Mary Birnbaum, director

Harley Elias, writer

Tanner Porter, arranger and orchestrator

Step into a turning point in history — Potsdam, Germany, 1945. The war has ended, but the future hangs in the balance. Truman, Churchill, and Stalin sit across the table, navigating mistrust, determination, and fragile hope as they shape the post-war world.

Amidst the tension of delicate political negotiations, the world leaders bonded over their love of music. *Finding Peace at Potsdam* brings this fascinating moment to life through powerful storytelling and stirring performances of their beloved classics. Experience the music of Tchaikovsky, Chopin, Kreisler, and more, woven together with insights that reveal the surprising role Hampton Roads played in this pivotal chapter of history.

It's more than a concert — it's an unforgettable journey through music and memory where history's struggles and triumphs resonate in every note.

PROGRAM:

COPLAND "The Promise of Living" from *The Tender Land*

BERNSTEIN Selections from *Candide*

Selections of Tchaikovsky, Chopin, Kreisler, and more

FRIDAY, MAY 29, 7:30 PM
CHRYSLER HALL, NORFOLK

SATURDAY, MAY 30, 7:30 PM

**FERGUSON CENTER FOR THE ARTS,
CHRISTOPHER NEWPORT UNIVERSITY, NEWPORT NEWS**
This performance funded in part by the City of Newport News and the Newport News Arts Commission.

Co-presented with
**VIRGINIA SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA**
Eric Jacobsen, Music Director

5/30 Media Sponsor: Virginia Media

These performances are made possible by a generous gift from the Susan S. Goode Performance Fund.



VIRGINIA SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

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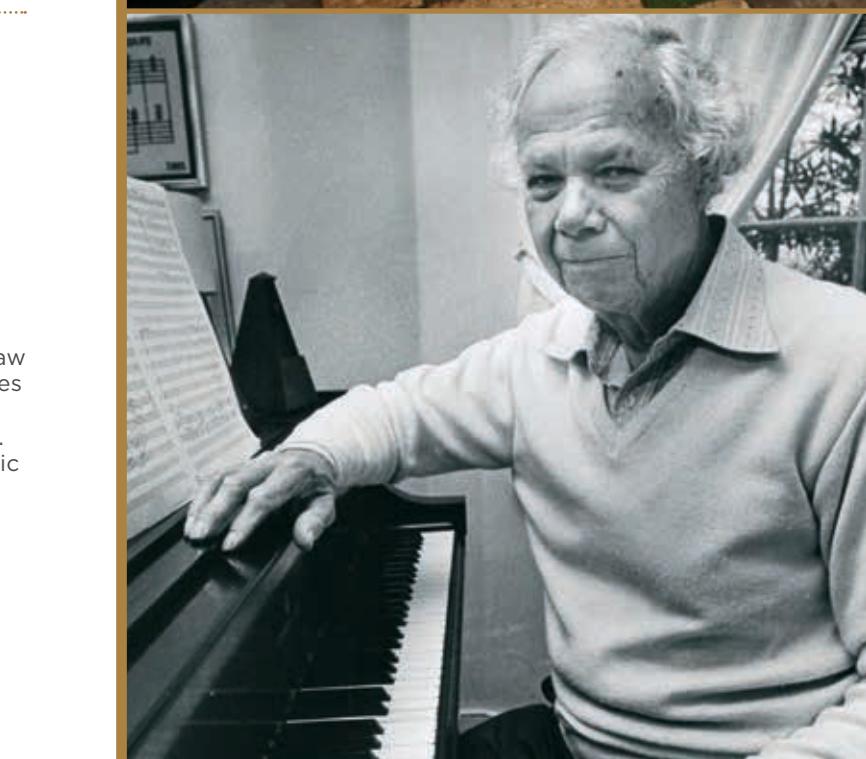
©Shervin Lainez

A SOLO EVENING OF MUSIC WITH CHRIS THILE

Comfy and inviting as an old friend (if your old friend happens to be a musical genius), An Evening with Chris Thile brings the GRAMMY® Award-winning mandolinist, singer, songwriter, composer, and MacArthur Fellow recipient of the prestigious "Genius Grant" to the Festival's Perry Pavilion. Described by *The Guardian* as "that rare being: an all-round musician," and hailed by NPR as a "genre-defying musical genius," Thile is a founding member of the influential string bands Punch Brothers and Nickel Creek, and has collaborated with countless luminaries from Yo-Yo Ma to Fiona Apple to Brad Mehldau. In this intimate program, Thile will perform selections from his acclaimed solo recordings of Bach's Sonatas and Partitas — including the upcoming second volume out this autumn — alongside his signature improvisational brilliance.

FRIDAY, JUNE 12, 7:30 PM
PERRY PAVILION, NORFOLK

Media Sponsors: VEER Magazine and WHRO Public Media



CELEBRATING F. LUDWIG DIEHN

Emily Ondracek-Peterson, violin; Fanny Pointet, violin; Celia Daggy, viola;
Jake Fowler, cello; Debra W. Cross, flute; Zachary Deak, piano
Diehn Chorale, Nancy K. Klein, Director

One man's lifelong love of music fueled a composing career and endowed programs that would nurture artists for generations to come. F. Ludwig Diehn, a successful businessman with degrees in law and chemistry, fulfilled his musical dreams by composing works for orchestra and chamber ensembles that have been performed around the world. He chose Norfolk as his home, and left a legacy to the community whose impact is vast, touching the lives of aspiring artists, students, and audiences alike. Virginia Arts Festival joins Hampton Roads Community Foundation to celebrate Diehn's life and music in this memorable performance of his works featuring some of the region's finest musicians.

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 11, 7:30 PM
CHANDLER RECITAL HALL, OLD DOMINION UNIVERSITY, NORFOLK

Co-presented with
 Hampton Roads
Community Foundation

Our Connie & Marc Jacobson Director of Chamber Music, the Van Cliburn Gold Medalist pianist Olga Kern, has assembled irresistible programs that match world-renowned artists with chamber classics — a veritable who's who of great music.



ORAVA QUARTET OLGA KERN, piano

This electrifying Australian group, founded in 2007 by brothers Daniel Kowalik (violin) and Karol Kowalik (cello), and friends Thomas Chawner (viola) and David Dalseno (violin), is one of the most exciting string quartets of its generation. Known for their engaging performances, they inspire reviews like this one from the *Canberra City News*: “incredible passion, fire and intensity. The audience erupted in thunderous applause and cheers. It was an electric and enthralling evening of the finest music making.”

PROGRAM:

MENDELSSOHN String Quartet No. 2 in A minor, Op. 13
SCHULHOFF Three Pieces from *Five Pieces for String Quartet*

BARBER *Adagio for Strings* from String Quartet, Op. 11
SCHUMANN Piano Quintet in E flat major, Op. 4
GERSHWIN Four Songs for Piano and String Quintet
The Man I love
Fascinating Rhythm
Stairway to Paradise

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 3, 7:30 PM

ROBIN HIXON THEATER, CLAY & JAY BARR
EDUCATION CENTER, NORFOLK

THURSDAY, JUNE 4, 7:30 PM

WILLIAM & MARY CONCERT HALL,
WILLIAMSBURG

Co-presented with THE CHAMBER MUSIC SOCIETY
OF WILLIAMSBURG

Funded in part by the City of Williamsburg and the
Williamsburg Area Arts Commission.

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TUESDAY, JUNE 9, 7:30 PM

ROBIN HIXON THEATER, CLAY & JAY BARR EDUCATION
CENTER, NORFOLK



ALEXANDRE DA COSTA, violin TOMMY MESA, cello OLGA KERN, piano

“When I play, my instrument becomes the extension of my soul,” so says famed Canadian artist Alexandre Da Costa, renowned for his passionate violin as well as his roles as Music Director and Chief Conductor of the Orchestre Philharmonique du Québec and Principal Guest Conductor of the Orquesta Sinfónica Sinaloa de las Artes. He performs here with Cuban-American cellist Thomas “Tommy” Mesa, whose dazzling performance style is “a masterclass in virtuosic playing” (Tucson.com). Passion and fire — the perfect complement to the thrilling performance style of pianist Olga Kern.

PROGRAM:

HAILSTORK Baroque Suite for Violin and Piano
BRAHMS Violin Sonata No. 2 in A major, Op. 100

HAILSTORK Elegy for Cello and Piano
BARBER Sonata for Cello and Piano, Op. 6

WILLIAMS Schindler's List 3 Pieces for Violin and Piano
COPLAND Waltz and Celebration from *Billy the Kid* for Cello and Piano

HAILSTORK Trio for Violin, Cello, and Piano

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SUNDAY, APRIL 12, 5 PM

WILLIAM & MARY CONCERT HALL, WILLIAMSBURG

Co-presented with



ALISA WEILERSTEIN, Project Creator and Cello FRAGMENTS 5: Lament

Alisa Weilerstein's *FRAGMENTS 5* marks the next chapter of her groundbreaking, multi-year solo cello project, which interweaves movements from J.S. Bach's Cello Suites with 27 newly commissioned works by leading contemporary composers. Each installment is crafted as an immersive, theatrically staged experience, performed without interruption.

FRAGMENTS 5 features new works by composers including Gabriela Lena Frank, Gabriella Smith, Gerard McBurney, Mathilde Wantenaar, and Osvaldo Golijov, thoughtfully paired with J. S. Bach's Cello Suite No. 5. The result is a singular, multisensory journey that invites listeners to experience the cello repertoire in a completely new way.

Presented in the intimate Concert Hall at The College of William & Mary as part of the Virginia Arts Festival's 2026 season and co-presented with the College of William & Mary, this special 60-minute performance offers audiences a rare opportunity to experience Weilerstein's visionary project just before she performs it at Carnegie Hall.

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SUNDAY, APRIL 12, 5 PM

WILLIAM & MARY CONCERT HALL, WILLIAMSBURG

Co-presented with

WILLIAM & MARY

CHARTERED 1693

Media Sponsor: WHRO Public Media

This performance is funded in part by the City of Williamsburg and the Williamsburg Area Arts Commission.



COFFEE CONCERT SERIES

This is chamber music as it was meant to be heard: the communion of gifted artists in an intimate, beautiful setting, among music lovers and friends. After the performance, patrons can mingle with the performers, a lovely postscript for a perfect performance experience.



BRENDON ELLIOTT



ELIZABETH VONDERHEIDE



BEVERLY KANE BAKER



MICHAEL DANIELS



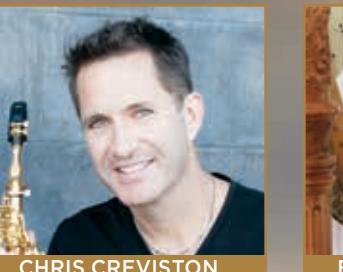
OLGA KERN



DEBRA WENDELLS CROSS



ALEXANDER MAYER



CHRIS CREVISTON



BARBARA CHAPMAN

COFFEE CONCERTS I & II:

BRENDON ELLIOTT, violin; **ELIZABETH VONDERHEIDE**, violin; **BEVERLY KANE BAKER**, viola; **MICHAEL DANIELS**, cello; **DEBRA WENDELLS CROSS**, flute; **ALEXANDER MAYER**, oboe; **CHRIS CREVISTON**, saxophone; **BARBARA CHAPMAN**, harp; **OLGA KERN**, piano; **HANNAH CREVISTON**, piano

PROGRAM:

STILL Miniatures for Piano, Flute, and Oboe
HAILSTORK Chinese Zodiac Suite for Flute, String Quartet and Harp
GARROP Silver Dagger for Cello, Saxophone, and Piano
PAN Concerto for Saxophone
STILL Romance
DORSEY Oodles of Noodles

THURSDAY, MAY 21, 10:30 AM
ROBIN HIXON THEATER, CLAY & JAY BARR EDUCATION CENTER,
NORFOLK

PROGRAM:

STILL Miniatures for Piano, Flute, and Oboe
HAILSTORK Chinese Zodiac Suite for Flute, String Quartet and Harp
GARROP Silver Dagger for Cello, Saxophone, and Piano
PAN Concerto for Saxophone
DORSEY Repair the World
DORSEY Oodles of Noodles

FRIDAY, MAY 22, 10:30 AM
MILLER STUDIO THEATRE, SANDLER CENTER FOR THE
PERFORMING ARTS, VIRGINIA BEACH

This event is funded in part by the citizens of Virginia Beach through a grant from the City of Virginia Beach Arts and Humanities Commission.



ORAVA QUARTET

©Laurence Labat
ALEXANDRE DA COSTA©Lisa-Marie Mazzucco
TOMMY MESA

COFFEE CONCERT III:

ORAVA QUARTET

PROGRAM:

SCHULHOFF Five Pieces for String Quartet
SHOSTAKOVICH String Quartet No. 8 in C minor, Op. 110
MENDELSSOHN String Quartet No. 2 in A minor, Op. 13

FRIDAY, JUNE 5, 10:30 AM
ST. JOHN'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH,
PORTSMOUTH

This program funded in part by the City of Portsmouth and the Portsmouth Museum and Fine Arts Commission.

COFFEE CONCERT IV:

ALEXANDRE DA COSTA, violin
TOMMY MESA, cello
OLGA KERN, piano

PROGRAM:

HAILSTORK Baroque Suite for Violin and Piano
BRAHMS Violin Sonata No. 2 in A major, Op. 100
HAILSTORK Elegy for Cello and Piano
BARBER Sonata for Cello and Piano, Op. 6
HAILSTORK Trio for Violin, Cello, and Piano

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 10, 10:30 AM
WILLIAM & MARY CONCERT HALL,
WILLIAMSBURG

This performance is funded in part by the City of Williamsburg and the Williamsburg Area Arts Commission.

COFFEE CONCERT V:

ALEXANDRE DA COSTA, violin
TOMMY MESA, cello
OLGA KERN, piano

PROGRAM:

BRAHMS Violin Sonata No. 2 in A major, Op. 100
WILLIAMS Schindler's List 3 Pieces for Violin and Piano
BARBER Sonata for Cello and Piano, Op. 6
COPLAND Watz and Celebration from Billy the Kid for Cello and Piano
HAILSTORK Trio for Violin, Cello, and Piano

THURSDAY, JUNE 11, 10:30 AM
TOWNE UNIVERSITY, SUFOLK

Sponsored by TOWNBANK

RECITALS

BORROMEO STRING QUARTET



VERONA QUARTET

BORROMEO STRING QUARTET & VERONA QUARTET

A performance by the award-winning Borromeo String Quartet is “a musical experience of luminous beauty” (*The San Diego Reader*), sealing the acclaimed quartet’s reputation as one of the most important ensembles of our time. Admired and sought after for both its fresh interpretations of the classical music canon and its championing of works by 20th and 21st century composers, the ensemble has been hailed for its “edge-of-the-seat performances” by the *Boston Globe*. They perform here with the Verona Quartet, hailed as an “outstanding ensemble ... cohesive yet full of temperament” by *The New York Times*, and marked for its “bold interpretive strength, robust characterization and commanding resonance” (*Calgary Herald*).

PROGRAM:

SHOSTAKOVICH Two Pieces for String Octet, Op. 11
ENESCU String Octet in C Major, Op. 7
MENDELSSOHN String Octet in E-flat Major, Op. 20

MONDAY, APRIL 13, 7:30PM
KAUFMAN THEATER, CHRYSLER MUSEUM OF ART, NORFOLK

Co-presented with  FELDMAN

GUITAR

©Fadi Kheir



JAMES KEALEY, organ

James Kealey is a young lion of the organ. First Prize and Audience Prize winner of the 2022 American Guild of Organists National Young Artist Competition in Organ Performance. A recent recital was hailed by *The American Organist*: “A deeply satisfying performance. Kealey used the organ beautifully, finding its color. The audience rose to its feet ... giving well-deserved praise.”

SUNDAY, MAY 10, 4 PM
CHRIST & ST. LUKE'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH, NORFOLK

Co-presented with



SÉRGIO & ODAIR ASSAD

60th Anniversary Farewell Tour

“Revelatory...supple, almost telepathic, guitar duo performances.” (*San Francisco Classical Voice*). Brazilian-born brothers Sérgio and Odair Assad have created a new standard of guitar expression, with exceptional artistry and uncanny ensemble-playing informed by a deep family musical tradition. In 2026, the Assads will celebrate their 60th anniversary with a new album of compositions by Sérgio and a tour across North America. Savor a compelling blend of styles, periods and cultures including classical, folk, jazz, and Latin music in this captivating concert!

THURSDAY, MARCH 12, 7:30 PM
NORFOLK ACADEMY, NORFOLK

Co-presented with



1728

TIDEWATER CLASSICAL GUITAR

AGO Tidewater Chapter

Christ & St. Luke's

EPISCOPAL CHURCH

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TIDEWATER CLASSICAL GUITAR

AGO Tidewater Chapter

Christ & St. Luke's

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EPISCOPAL CHURCH

1728</

THEATER



"A Must See!"
-BROADWAYWORLD

©Matt Stronge



ALL THINGS EQUAL – THE LIFE & TRIALS OF RUTH BADER GINSBURG

Written by Tony Award®-winning playwright RUPERT HOLMES
Starring Michelle Azar as Ruth Bader Ginsburg: Directed by Laley Lippard

In this moving, inspiring play, Supreme Court Justice "RBG" welcomes a friend of the family to her cozy chambers to convey fascinating and often funny moments of her life and its many trials: losing her mother the day before she graduated as valedictorian of her Brooklyn high school ... being one of only nine young women studying law at Harvard while also raising a daughter and helping her husband battle cancer ... fighting for women's rights in the 1970s ... taking courageous stands for human rights as a voice of reason amid a splintering and increasingly politicized Supreme Court. An evening with a great and compassionate icon of American justice — an RBG who is not only notorious but victorious as she takes a stand for ordinary people facing the many challenges of a changing world.

SUNDAY, MARCH 29, 7:30 PM
ATTUCKS THEATRE, NORFOLK

Media Sponsor: VEER Magazine and WHRO Public Media

VICTORIA MELODY

Trouble, Struggle, Bubble, and Squeak

Edinburgh Fringe favorite Victoria Melody returns to Virginia Arts Festival after her successful wildly witty tale *Major Tom*.

Who really shapes history? While spending weekends with a historical re-enactment society, award-winning theatre maker and "Fringe legend" (*Time Out*) Victoria Melody uncovered the story of a group of 17th-century radicals called The Diggers — and began a quest to find the Diggers of today. Blending storytelling and stand-up, this wildly entertaining show celebrates the ordinary people still making history.

Rated ★★★★ Edinburgh Festivals Magazine

FRIDAY, APRIL 10, 7:30 PM
SATURDAY, APRIL 11, 7:30 PM
ROBIN HIXON THEATER, CLAY & JAY BARR EDUCATION CENTER, NORFOLK

ROB FISHER, The Goode Family Artistic Advisor for Musical Theater and American Songbook



LOVE, GEORGE & IRA

The Gershwins on Broadway with Rob Fisher

Rob Fisher, piano and music director
Patti Murin, vocalist; Ross Lekites, vocalist

Famed Broadway music director and the Festival's Goode Family Artistic Advisor for Musical Theater and the American Songbook, Rob Fisher cut his musical teeth on Gershwin. The uniquely American music that George and Ira Gershwin created fused classical, Broadway, jazz, and Tin Pan Alley to form an exhilarating new kind of music for the 20th century and beyond, conquering stage and screen with enduring classics like "Embraceable You," "Summertime," "Love is Here to Stay," and "Rhapsody in Blue," a favorite for audiences and orchestras. Rob Fisher curated the Carnegie Hall Gershwin Centennial celebrations of Ira's in 1996 and George's in 1998. The Gershwin brothers' timeless songs explore the joys and disappointments of love, brought vividly to life by Ross Lekites (*Brigadoon*, *Frozen*) and Patti Murin (*Frozen*, *Wicked*). In this must-hear concert, Fisher gathers Broadway singers and a swinging quartet for a trip down a memory lane of greatness, courtesy of the immortal Gershwin brothers.

SATURDAY, MARCH 28, 7:30 PM
ROBIN HIXON THEATER, CLAY & JAY BARR EDUCATION CENTER, NORFOLK

Media Sponsor: WHRO Public Media

MUSICAL THEATER



MEOW MEOW

An experience you will never forget! This internationally acclaimed cabaret star draws fans from every continent. There are no many women who can stun an audience into pin-drop silence with an exquisitely delivered torch song one moment and rock the rafters with laughter the next" (*The Evening Standard*, UK). "The voice alone is glorious in its range and texture. But it combines with carefully chosen songs, superb comic timing, improvisational wit, and some engaging audience participation so cannily conducted that you suspect a degree in psychology, and you have an evening that demonstrates that Meow Meow really is the cat's whiskers" (*The Guardian*).

MONDAY, MARCH 30, 7:30 PM
TUESDAY, MARCH 31, 7:30 PM
ROBIN HIXON THEATER, CLAY & JAY BARR EDUCATION CENTER, NORFOLK
(ADULT CONTENT; NOT APPROPRIATE FOR CHILDREN UNDER 13)

Media Sponsor: VEER Magazine

2026 CALENDAR

KEY: (NN) Newport News | (N) Norfolk | (P) Portsmouth | (S) Suffolk | (VB) Virginia Beach | (W) Williamsburg

Dates, times, programs, prices, venues, and artists subject to change. Fees and taxes vary. For the enjoyment of all patrons, children under 6 will not be permitted to attend ticketed events, with exceptions to include the Virginia International Tattoo, *Peppa Pig: My First Concert*, Williamsburg Live (lawn seats), and free events. Additional fees apply to ticket prices. Discounts vary, restrictions apply, call for details.

2026 CALENDAR

	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
OPENING WEEK!							
MARCH	5	BalletX 7:30 PM (N)	6	7 Joshua Bell, violin, conductor Academy of St. Martin in the Fields 7:30 PM (NN)	8 Joshua Bell, violin, conductor Academy of St. Martin in the Fields 3 PM (VB)		
	9	10	11 Celebrating F. Ludwig Diehn 7:30 PM (N)	12 Sérgio & Odair Assad 7:30 PM (N)	14 Attucks Jazz Club Series: Anaïs Reno, vocalist 7:30 PM (N)	15	
	16	17	18	19	20 Dance Theatre of Harlem <i>Firebird</i> with Virginia Symphony Orchestra 7:30 PM (N)	21 Dance Theatre of Harlem <i>Firebird</i> with Virginia Symphony Orchestra 7:30 PM (N)	22 Dance Theatre of Harlem <i>Firebird</i> with Virginia Symphony Orchestra 3 PM (N)
	24	Dance Theatre of Harlem 7:30 PM (NN)	25	26	27	28 Love, George & Ira The Gershwins on Broadway with Rob Fisher 7:30 PM (N)	29 All Things Equal - The Life & Trials of Ruth Bader Ginsburg 7:30 PM (N)
	30 Meow Meow 7:30 PM (N)	31 Meow Meow 7:30 PM (N)	1	2	3	4	5
	6	7 Lucia 7:30 PM (N)	8	9	10 Victoria Melody Trouble, Struggle, Bubble, and Squeak 7:30 PM (N)	11 Victoria Melody Trouble, Struggle, Bubble, and Squeak 7:30 PM (N)	12 Peppa Pig: My First Concert 2 PM (N)
	13 Borromeo String Quartet & Verona Quartet 7:30 PM (N)	15	16 Norfolk NATO Festival Flag Raising 5 PM (N)	17 Virginia International Tattoo 7:30 PM (N)	18 Norfolk NATO Festival Parade of Nations - 12 PM (N) Norfolk NATO Festival International Village - 1:30 PM (N) Virginia International Tattoo 7:30 PM (N)	19 Virginia International Tattoo 2:30 PM (N)	
	20	21 Dorrance Dance 7:30 PM (N)	22	23 Dorrance Dance 7:30 PM (N)	24 One Night in Memphis 7:30 PM (NN)	25 Kayce Laine Sound Bath 7:30 PM (N)	1
APRIL	27	30 Virginia Symphony Orchestra Celebrating Adolphus Hailstork's 85th Birthday 7:30 PM (N)		2	3 Lee Greenwood 7:30 PM (N)		

	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
MAY	4	5	6	8 The Lone Bellow 7:30 PM (N)	9 Attucks Jazz Orchestra 7:30 PM (N)	10 James Keale, organ 4 PM (N)	
	11	12	13	14	15 Music of Queen - A Rock Symphony with Virginia Symphony Orchestra 7:30 PM (VB)	16 Adrienne Warren 7:30 PM (N)	17 Christian McBride with Jaya Majar 5 PM (VB)
	18	19	20	21 Coffee I: Olga Kern, piano Virginia Arts Festival Chamber Players 10:30 AM (N)	22 Coffee II: Olga Kern, piano Virginia Arts Festival Chamber Players 10:30 AM (VB)		24
	25	26 Michael Mayo Quartet 7:30 PM (N)	27 Palmyra 7:30 PM (N)	28 Virginia Symphony Orchestra Finding Peace at Potsdam 7:30 PM (N)	29 Virginia Symphony Orchestra Finding Peace at Potsdam 7:30 PM (NN)	30 Virginia Symphony Orchestra Finding Peace at Potsdam 7:30 PM (NN)	
	1	2	3 Orava Quartet Olga Kern, piano 7:30 PM (W)	4 Orava Quartet Olga Kern, piano 7:30 PM (VB)	5 Coffee III: Orava Quartet 10:30 AM (P)	6	7 Cowboy Junkies 7:30 PM (N)
	8	9 Alexandre Da Costa, violin Tommy Mesa, cello Olga Kern, piano 7:30 PM (N)	10 The Leila 7:30 PM (N)	11 Coffee IV: Alexandre Da Costa, violin Tommy Mesa, cello Olga Kern, piano 10:30 AM (S)	12 A Solo Evening of Music with Chris Thile 7:30 PM (N)	13 Top Gun: Maverick In Concert with Virginia Symphony Orchestra 7:30 PM (N)	
	15	16	17	18	19	20	21
	22	23	24	25	26	27 Alison Krauss & Union Station featuring Jerry Douglas with special guest Theo Lawrence 7 PM (W)	28
WILLIAMSBURG LIVE! JUNE 25-28, WILLIAMSBURG							



MUSIC OF QUEEN - A ROCK SYMPHONY

Performed by the Virginia Symphony Orchestra
Featuring Conductor Brent Havens
and Vocalist MiG Ayesa

We Will Rock You, We Are The Champions, Bohemian Rhapsody ... the list of Queen anthems goes on and on and on ... and now you can relive the thrill of a live Queen concert with full symphony orchestra in this unforgettable concert from Windborne Productions, a Festival favorite for decades. One reviewer wrote "everyone in the hall hung on every word and turn of the music" and the finale "had the whole throng in the packed house on their feet" (*Houston Press*). Get ready to rock!

FRIDAY, MAY 15, 7:30 PM
SANDLER CENTER FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS,
VIRGINIA BEACH

Sponsored by  **TOWNEBANK**

Media Sponsors: *VEER Magazine*, *WAFX/WNOR*, and *WHRO Public Media*

This event is funded in part by the citizens of Virginia Beach through a grant from the City of Virginia Beach Arts and Humanities Commission.

ADRIENNE WARREN

"Perfection! Warren is the real deal and no imitation; she's smoke on wheels, luminous, unbridled, and her performance gives goosebumps" (*Manhattan Digest*). The Tony Award®-winning star singer/actress (*Shuffle Along, Tina: The Tina Turner Musical*) grew up right here in Hampton Roads, wowing teachers and audiences with her extraordinary in-born panache and musical ability. Her television (*Orange is the New Black*, *Black Cake*, and *Women of the Movement*) and film roles (*The Woman King*) have won high ratings. Catch a hometown superstar in this great evening of song from Broadway, pop and beyond!

SATURDAY, MAY 16, 7:30 PM
HARRISON OPERA HOUSE, NORFOLK

Media Sponsors: *Audacy* and *WHRO Public Media*



VIRGINIA INTERNATIONAL TATTOO

AMERICA'S INTERNATIONAL MILITARY TATTOO

2026 VIRGINIA INTERNATIONAL TATTOO

*Life, Liberty and the Pursuit of Happiness –
A Salute to 250 Years of American Independence*

In 2026 we commemorate the 250th anniversary of the American Revolution and the founding of the United States, and Virginia stands as the perfect place to honor our shared history. From the principles that built our democracy to the visionary leaders who forged its path, Virginia remains at the heart of the American story.

The 2026 Virginia International Tattoo proudly honors 250 years of American independence. More than 800 performers from around the world will take the stage, including massed pipes and drums, renowned military bands, precision drill teams, dancers, choirs, and more.

Through stirring music, historic imagery, and moving tributes, the 2026 Virginia International Tattoo will celebrate the enduring promise of freedom that defines our nation.

This is more than a performance — it is a celebration of America's spirit, 250 years in the making.

**THIS TATTOO IS CERTAIN TO LEAVE ITS MARK ON YOU!
GET YOUR TICKETS NOW!**

THURSDAY, APRIL 16, 2026, 7:30 PM

FRIDAY, APRIL 17, 2026, 7:30 PM

SATURDAY, APRIL 18, 2026, 7:30 PM

SUNDAY, APRIL 19, 2026, 2:30 PM

SCOPE ARENA, NORFOLK



TATTOO HULLABALOO
With piping, drumming, dancing, historic displays, Celtic merchandise and a variety of craft beer and food, the Hullabaloo has something for everyone. Three hours prior to each performance of the Virginia International Tattoo, the Hullabaloo will jump start your Tattoo experience before the show even begins!

**APRIL 16 - 18, 4:30 PM
APRIL 19, 11:30 AM
SCOPE PLAZA, NORFOLK
FREE**

PLUS NORFOLK NATO FESTIVAL EVENTS! See page 36.

VIRGINIA INTERNATIONAL TATTOO AMERICAN PIPE BAND CHAMPIONSHIP
Several of our nation's best pipe bands will battle it out to be crowned American Champions.

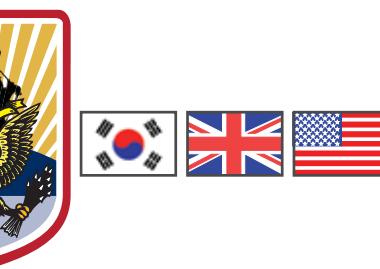
**APRIL 18, NOON - 5 PM
6 PM MASSED PIPING EXHIBITION AND AWARDS CEREMONY
SCOPE PLAZA, NORFOLK | FREE**

ORDER NOW FOR BEST SEATS! VAFEST.ORG OR CALL 757-282-2822

Co-presented with **The HIXON FAMILY**

Presenting Sponsor
VIRGINIA IS FOR LOVERS

HUNDREDS OF PERFORMERS FROM AROUND THE WORLD!



SPECIAL GUESTS

CANADA

Royal Canadian Air Force Pipes and Drums

FRANCE

Musique de la Marine Nationale (National Band of the French Navy)

REPUBLIC OF KOREA

Republic of Korea Army Band and Honor Guard Battalion

UNITED KINGDOM

Dougie Anderson
King's Colour Squadron of the Royal Air Force

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Camden County Emerald Society Pipes and Drums
Kilgore College Rangerettes
The Kiltie Band of York
Norfolk Public Schools Naval Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps
Old Dominion University Concert Band
Rhodes Academy of Irish Dance
Rhythm Project
Tidewater Pipes and Drums
U.S. Air Force Heritage of America Band
U.S. Army Old Guard Fife and Drum Corps
U.S. Marine Corps FAS Company
U.S. Navy Fleet Forces Band
Virginia Symphony Orchestra Chorus

*Subject to change and addition.

Presented in cooperation with North Atlantic Treaty Organization and Norfolk NATO Festival.

Event Sponsor 4/16



Event Sponsor 4/18



Event Sponsor 4/19



Signature Educational Sponsor

Media Sponsors: Audacy, WHRO Public Media, WY-TV

Additional Support provided by Dollar Bank, Newport News Shipbuilding, and Virginia Electronic Systems.

Supported in part by the Diana Prentiss Virginia International Tattoo Fund of the Virginia Arts Festival Endowment.



CÉCILE McLORIN SALVANT with DANISH RADIO BIG BAND led by MIHO HAZAMA

Considered Europe's best, this storied big band has a rich history of powerhouse performances and a superstar roster of past guest artists including Miles Davis, Stan Getz, Joe Henderson and more. In their Virginia Arts Festival debut performance, they are joined by one of today's most sought-after and style-setting jazz vocalists, the always-thrilling Cécile McLorin Salvant.

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 22, 5 PM
ATTUCKS THEATRE, NORFOLK

Media Sponsors: VEER Magazine and WHRO Public Media

LUCÍA, vocalist

Uniquely reflecting a blend of cultures, this Mexican singer has captured the hearts of audiences and critics, mixing a virtuosic jazz sensibility with deep Mexican traditional and folk music roots. She might burst into dance mid-song, crooning irresistibly in English and Spanish. Winner of the 2022 Sarah Vaughan Vocal Competition, she is hailed by critics for her "powerful and beautiful" voice which she uses "effortlessly to create emotion and intensity" (UKJazzNews.com). Catch jazz's newest star!

TUESDAY, APRIL 7, 7:30 PM
ROBIN HIXON THEATER, CLAY & JAY BARR EDUCATION CENTER, NORFOLK

Media Sponsor: VEER Magazine



NEW YORK VOICES

The Grand Finale

This GRAMMY® Award-winning vocal ensemble has set the high bar for jazz vocal artistry for more than 30 years, blending their signature harmonies, inspired improvisation, and genre-spanning versatility, on stage as well as on their acclaimed recordings. In 2026, New York Voices embarks on their much-anticipated final tour, a celebration of the group's enduring legacy and a heartfelt thank you to generations of fans. Hear jazz standards, big band classics, and more in a poignant, unforgettable tribute to the art of jazz.

THURSDAY, JUNE 4, 7:30 PM
SANDLER CENTER FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS, VIRGINIA BEACH

Media Sponsors: VEER Magazine and WHRO Public Media

This event is funded in part by the citizens of Virginia Beach through a grant from the City of Virginia Beach Arts and Humanities Commission.

Co-presented by



JUNE 3-7, 2026

The Vocal Jazz Summit brings together emerging and established artists, industry leaders, and vocal jazz fans for a unique, intensive weekend dedicated to performance, connection, and education.



CHRISTIAN McBRIDE with URSA MAJOR

Christian McBride has blazed an extraordinary trail as one of the most preeminent musicians of his time. Over the last three decades, the nine-time GRAMMY® Award-winner has made momentous advances as a dynamic musician and recording artist, a prolific composer-arranger-producer, a curator of culture, and a dedicated educator and mentor. A prolific bandleader, McBride's ensembles are each distinctive extensions of his creative inspiration, which span jazz, funk, soul, Latin, hip hop, and rhythm and blues. His celebrated groups — including his newest, Ursa Major, joining him here — have not only enjoyed consistent critical acclaim, but they have also emphasized his role as an early presenter of rising stars. McBride's staggeringly diverse career also includes the role of host of NPR's public radio program *Jazz Night in America* as well as *The Lowdown: Conversations with Christian* on SiriusXM. Don't miss this evening of stellar jazz with a star!

SUNDAY, MAY 17, 5 PM
SANDLER CENTER FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS, VIRGINIA BEACH

Media Sponsors: Audacy and WHRO Public Media

This event is funded in part by the citizens of Virginia Beach through a grant from the City of Virginia Beach Arts and Humanities Commission.



ATTUCKS JAZZ ORCHESTRA

Todd Stoll, Director

Celebrating the 100th Anniversary of Miles Davis & John Coltrane: Giants of Modern Jazz

Celebrate the centennial of two towering figures who changed music forever. We present a virtuosic gathering of some of the best jazz players you've ever heard to form the Attucks Jazz Orchestra, bringing the fire and beauty of Miles Davis and John Coltrane to life in a night of swing, innovation, and fearless creativity. From cool elegance to spiritual intensity, this concert honors the sound that defined modern jazz — and still shapes it today.

SATURDAY, MAY 9, 7:30 PM
ATTUCKS THEATRE, NORFOLK

Media Sponsor: WHRO Public Media

FILM WITH ORCHESTRA

TOP GUN: MAVERICK

In Concert
with Virginia Symphony Orchestra

Top Gun: Maverick in Concert will feature the Virginia Symphony Orchestra performing the original score by Harold Faltermeyer, Lady Gaga, and Hans Zimmer, produced by Lorne Balfe.

Top Gun: Maverick was nominated for six Academy Awards® including Best Picture and Best Original Song, winning Best Sound.

After more than 30 years of service as one of the Navy's top aviators, Pete "Maverick" Mitchell (Tom Cruise) is where he belongs, pushing the envelope as a courageous test pilot and dodging the advancement in rank that would ground him. When he finds himself training a detachment of TOPGUN graduates for a specialized mission the likes of which no living pilot has ever seen, Maverick encounters Lt. Bradley Bradshaw (Miles Teller), call sign: "Rooster," the son of Maverick's late friend and Radar Intercept Officer Lt. Nick Bradshaw, aka "Goose."

Facing an uncertain future and confronting the ghosts of his past, Maverick is drawn into a confrontation with his own deepest fears, culminating in a mission that demands the ultimate sacrifice from those who will be chosen to fly it.

A Royal Albert Hall production. With thanks to esk film.

SATURDAY, JUNE 13, 7:30 PM
CHRYSLER HALL, NORFOLK

Co-presented by


Media Sponsors: *The Flagship*



VIRGINIA SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

“ I instantly had goosebumps (no pun intended) and a lump in my throat. ”

Full Stop Next Chapter

ONE NIGHT IN MEMPHIS

December 4, 1956: Four musicians destined to be seminal pioneers of popular music — Elvis Presley, Carl Perkins, Jerry Lee Lewis, and Johnny Cash — gathered, impromptu, in a recording studio in Memphis. The no-holds-barred jam that ensued was captured live on tape and became the inspiration for the Broadway hit *Million Dollar Quartet*. Now, *One Night in Memphis* captures that historic session, performed live and starring former cast members of the Broadway smash. We dare you to sit still in this rocking show jam-packed with rockabilly, country, gospel, and 1950's rock and roll hits like "Hound Dog," "Shake, Rattle & Roll," "Blue Suede Shoes," "Great Balls of Fire," "I Walk the Line," and more! "A live, hard-charging rock and roll romp!" (*The Daily Herald*)

FRIDAY, APRIL 24, 7:30 PM
PERRY PAVILION, NORFOLK
(CABARET SEATING)

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Media Sponsor: *VEER Magazine*

LEE GREENWOOD

Making his Festival debut, international country music icon Lee Greenwood brings a celebrated career marked by chart-topping hits, industry honors, and enduring patriotism. A GRAMMY Award®-winner and recipient of multiple CMA and ACM Awards, Greenwood has released twenty-two studio albums, earned seven No. 1 hits, and charted thirty-eight singles.

His signature anthem, "God Bless the USA," reached the Top Five on the country charts three times — an unprecedented achievement — and rose to the *Billboard* Hot 100 following September 11, 2001. Honored with the Congressional Medal of Honor Society's National Patriot's Award, Greenwood has also entertained U.S. troops on more than 30 USO Tours.

SUNDAY, MAY 3, 7:30 PM
PERRY PAVILION, NORFOLK

Media Sponsor: *VEER Magazine*

Discover Norfolk's Most Exciting New Venue: Perry Pavilion!
Loved by artists and fans alike, this vibrant covered venue offers an unbeatable vibe with an on-site bar and an open-air atmosphere.





THE LONE BELLOW

It's a sound like no other: born in the South, transplanted to Brooklyn, cooked in a Kentucky farmhouse and distilled in a Muscle Shoals studio — true to its roots in country, blues, gospel, and indie rock. Fans flock to share this band live, craving concerts of raw, ecstatic energy, with lush harmonies driving songs that pulse with honesty and human connection.

Get your tickets early for "arguably the most talented trio working in Americana music today — their superlative songwriting, instrumentation and vocal skills are on full display" (*Americana Highways*).

FRIDAY, MAY 8, 7:30 PM
PERRY PAVILION, NORFOLK

Media Sponsor: *VEER Magazine*



MICHAEL MAYO QUARTET

In its 4-star review of his debut album, *Jazziz* raved, "Michael Mayo has developed his own lush, neo-soul sound that adroitly showcases his clear tenor, which glides over luxuriant clouds of his multi-tracked vocals." This L.A.-based artist has captivated audiences worldwide with heavenly harmonizing, hard-hitting beatboxing, and heartfelt crooning. Sit in on an entrancing evening of jazz with this phenomenal singer!

TUESDAY, MAY 26, 7:30 PM
PERRY PAVILION, NORFOLK

Media Sponsors: *Audacy* and *VEER Magazine*

PALMYRA

They met at James Madison University, and now they're attracting critical acclaim with their take on bluegrass and folk heard on their debut on John Prine's Oh Boy Records. "If it's possible to fall head over heels for a band, then Palmyra is [that] band. Beautiful, full of gorgeous harmony ... a masterclass in tension and release: I caught myself holding my breath" (*Red Line Roots*).

WEDNESDAY, MAY 27, 7:30 PM
PERRY PAVILION, NORFOLK
(CABARET SEATING)

Co-presented with

NORTH SHORE POINT
HOUSE CONCERTS

Media Sponsor: *VEER Magazine*



COWBOY JUNKIES

In the '80s, Cowboy Junkies proved that there was an audience waiting for something beautiful and reflective — and that audience has followed this iconic roots band through four decades of moving, masterful music. In their "virtuosic blend of folk and rock textures, riveting sonic paradoxes, [lead singer Margo Timmins] offers ragged proclamations like a poet towering on the outskirts of a war-ravaged city" (*No Depression*).

SUNDAY, JUNE 7, 7:30 PM
PERRY PAVILION, NORFOLK

Co-presented with

NORTH SHORE POINT
HOUSE CONCERTS

Media Sponsor: *VEER Magazine*





THE LEILA

Born in Oujda in the east of Morocco, this astonishing singer grew up in an environment at once culturally rich and repressive for women. Her fierce spirit shines through in her passionate performances of music inspired by the many musical styles of Morocco; she recorded her first single at the age of 15. Prepare to be swept away by this extraordinary artist!

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 10, 7:30 PM
PERRY PAVILION, NORFOLK
(CABARET SEATING)

Media Sponsor: VEER Magazine

The program is funded in part by the Mid Atlantic Arts Foundation Performing Arts Global Exchange Program.



A SOLO EVENING OF MUSIC WITH CHRIS THILE

An Evening with Chris Thile brings the GRAMMY® Award-winning mandolinist, singer, songwriter, composer, and MacArthur Fellow recipient of the prestigious "Genius Grant" to the Festival's Perry Pavilion. Thile is a founding member of the influential string bands Punch Brothers and Nickel Creek, and has collaborated with countless luminaries from Yo-Yo Ma to Fiona Apple to Brad Mehldau. In this intimate program, Thile will perform selections from his acclaimed solo recordings of Bach's Sonatas and Partitas alongside his signature improvisational brilliance.

FRIDAY, JUNE 12, 7:30 PM
PERRY PAVILION, NORFOLK

Media Sponsor: VEER Magazine

This production is made possible by a generous gift from Joan Brock.



ALISON KRAUSS & UNION STATION

featuring Jerry Douglas
with special guest Theo Lawrence

For nearly four decades, Alison Krauss & Union Station have upheld their legacy as one of the most influential and widely celebrated acts in bluegrass and roots music. Known for an immaculately crafted but endlessly surprising sound that transcends the boundaries of roots, country, rock & roll, and pop, Alison Krauss & Union Station released their highly anticipated new album, *Arcadia*, in 2025. This marked their first studio album since the 2011 masterpiece *Paper Airplane* — a critically lauded, multiple GRAMMY Award®-winning LP that debuted at #1 on the *Billboard* Country, Bluegrass, and Folk Album charts. Alison Krauss & Union Station have brought their phenomenal live show to sold-out performances at famed venues like Red Rocks Amphitheatre, The Greek Theatre, Radio City Music Hall, and London's Royal Festival Hall, in addition to supporting Paul Simon in Hyde Park for his 2012 Graceland reunion. They now continue the celebration of their new music with the *Arcadia* 2026 Tour.

SATURDAY, JUNE 27, 7 PM
LAWN OF THE ART MUSEUMS OF COLONIAL WILLIAMSBURG

FULL ARTIST LINEUP COMING SOON!



A weekend festival that will stir your senses with moonlit nights of great music. As the summer breezes blow and the stars come out, enjoy inspired local food, regional wine, and craft beers — then settle in for performances by some of today's most compelling artists. This incomparable setting offers many opportunities to explore. Step back in time and stroll the tree-lined lanes of Colonial Williamsburg, traverse this quaint town and gather treasures from unique shops, bike the trails or paddle the waterways, soothe your spirits in the Spa of Colonial Williamsburg or catch the thrill rides in Busch Gardens, or wander up the road for adventures in historic Jamestown and Yorktown.

THURSDAY, JUNE 25 - SUNDAY, JUNE 28
GATES OPEN AT 5:30 PM
LAWN OF THE ART MUSEUMS OF COLONIAL WILLIAMSBURG

Co-Presented with



Colonial
Williamsburg

Sponsored in part by



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VIRGINIA
IS FOR
LOVERS



WILLIAMSBURG
ARTS
COMMISSION

Media Sponsors: *Audacy*, *Local Daily Media*, *Richmond Times Dispatch*, *VEER Magazine*, *The Virginia Gazette*, *WAVY-TV 10*, and *WHRO Public Media*

MAKE IT A WEEKEND!

For Colonial Williamsburg Hotel Packages visit colonialwilliamsburghotels.com or call 1-855-321-7400.



PEPPA PIG: MY FIRST CONCERT

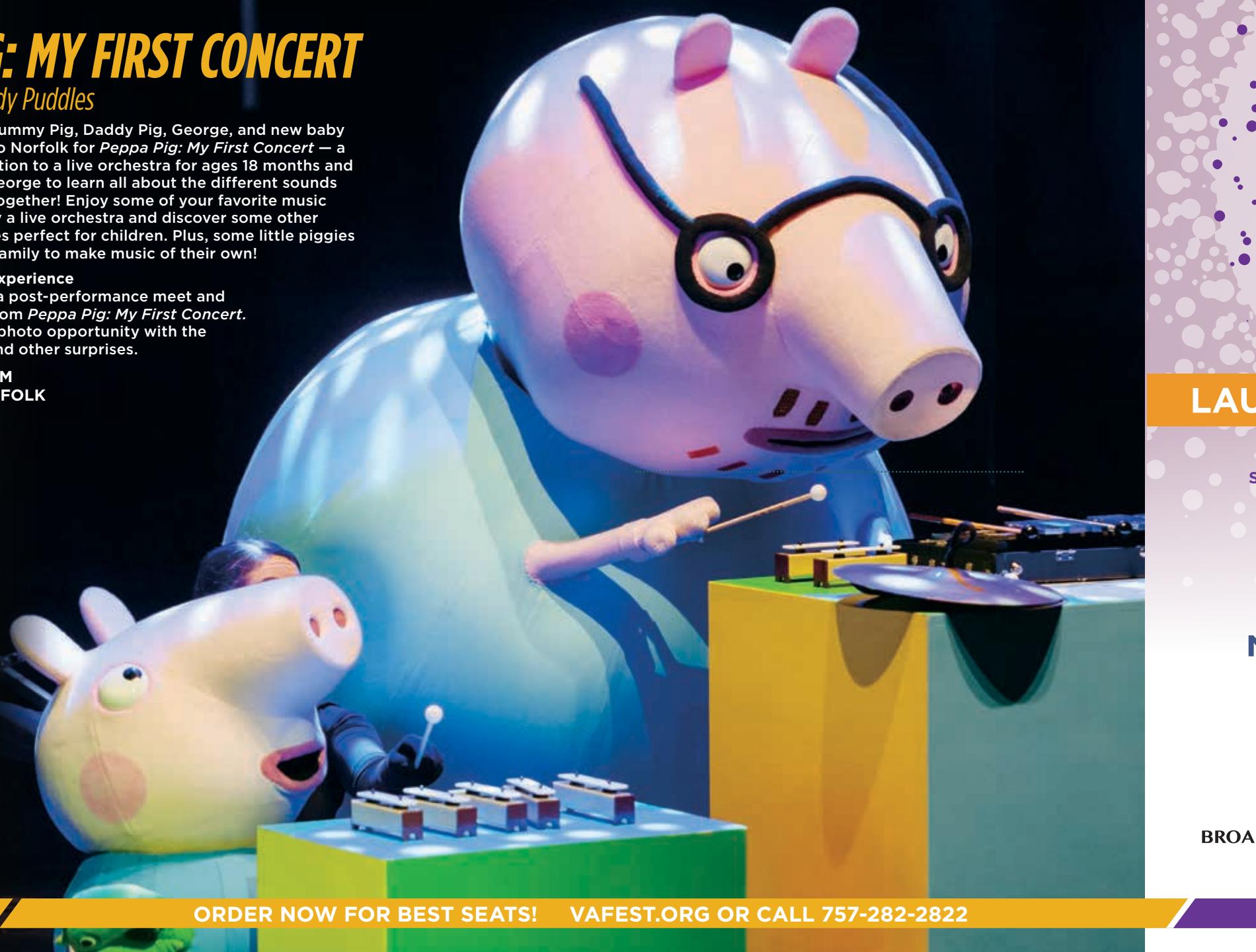
From Mozart to Muddy Puddles

Peppa Pig, along with Mummy Pig, Daddy Pig, George, and new baby sister Evie, are coming to Norfolk for *Peppa Pig: My First Concert* — a fun, interactive introduction to a live orchestra for ages 18 months and older. Join Peppa and George to learn all about the different sounds that instruments make together! Enjoy some of your favorite music from the show played by a live orchestra and discover some other exciting orchestral pieces perfect for children. Plus, some little piggies can join Peppa and her family to make music of their own!

Add a Meet and Greet Experience

Enhance your visit with a post-performance meet and greet with a character from *Peppa Pig: My First Concert*. The package includes a photo opportunity with the character, a plush toy, and other surprises.

SUNDAY, APRIL 12, 2 PM
CHRYSLER HALL, NORFOLK



NORFOLK THEATRE FESTIVAL

MARCH 23 - APRIL 26

LAUGH, CRY, SIGH, LOVE...THEATRE!

Whatever your taste in theatre, you'll find something to intrigue and entertain you in Norfolk. Book your ticket to adventure

TODAY!

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Seven Venues

VIRGINIA ARTS FESTIVAL
VSC VIRGINIA STAGE COMPANY
THE WELLS THEATRE

MARCH 11-29	JOSEPH AND THE AMAZING TECHNICOLOR DREAM COAT THE WELLS THEATRE
MARCH 19 - APRIL 4	WHAT REMAINS - A IMMERSIVE EXPERIENCE THE HERMITAGE MUSEUM & GARDENS
MARCH 27-29	PRIMARY TRUST NSU BROWN MEMORIAL HALL MAIN STAGE THEATRE
MARCH 28	LOVE, GEORGE & IRA THE GERSHWINS ON BROADWAY WITH ROB FISHER ROBIN HIXON THEATER, CLAY & JAY BARRETT EDUCATION CENTER
MARCH 29	ALL THINGS EQUAL - THE LIFE AND TRIALS OF RUTH BADER GINSBURG ATTUCKS THEATRE
MARCH 30-31	MEOW MEOW ROBIN HIXON THEATER, CLAY & JAY BARRETT EDUCATION CENTER
MARCH 31 - APRIL 5	MRS. DOUBTFIRE - THE NEW MUSICAL COMEDY CHRYSLER HALL
APRIL 8-26	MALCOLM X & REDD FOXX WASHING DISHES AT JIMMY'S CHICKEN & HACKIN HARLEM THE WELLS THEATRE
APRIL 9-12	40 WHACKS, THE NIGHTMARE OF LIZZIE BORDEN THE HUNTER HOUSE VICTORIAN MUSEUM
APRIL 10-11	ROUBLE, STRUGGLE, BUBBLE, AND SQUEAK ROBIN HIXON THEATER, CLAY & JAY BARRETT EDUCATION CENTER
APRIL 24-26	DEAR EVAN HANSEN NSU BROWN MEMORIAL HALL MAIN STAGE THEATRE

NORFOLK NATO FESTIVAL



JOINT NAVY CONCERT

In a celebration of friendship, please join us for a special performance between the French Navy and the United States Fleet Forces Band. This special performance will honor the 400th anniversary of the French Navy.

SUNDAY, APRIL 12, 3 PM
HARRISON OPERA HOUSE, NORFOLK
FREE AND OPEN TO PUBLIC; TICKET REQUIRED



NATO FLAG RAISING CEREMONY

Enjoy a cultural sampling of music and a colorful display as military representatives from all NATO Member Nations present their national flags. Includes live music performed by the United States Fleet Forces Band.

THURSDAY, APRIL 16, 5 PM - 6 PM
SCOPE PLAZA, NORFOLK
FREE AND OPEN TO PUBLIC



ENJOY THESE FREE EVENTS!

Media Sponsor: *VEER Magazine*



PARADE OF NATIONS

Over 75 parade units! You will see colorful floats representing each of the NATO Member Nations as well as U.S. and international military bands, local and visiting high school bands, drill teams, and more!

SATURDAY, APRIL 18, 12 PM (NEW TIME)
DOWNTOWN NORFOLK
FREE AND OPEN TO PUBLIC
RESERVED SEATING AVAILABLE FOR PURCHASE AT VAFEST.ORG



INTERNATIONAL VILLAGE

Experience the sights, sounds, and tastes of the NATO Member Nations and travel the village with your very own NATO Passport! Enjoy performances and free fun for all ages, plus international cuisine, beers, and wine for purchase.

SATURDAY, APRIL 18, 1:30 PM (NEW TIME)
TOWN POINT PARK, NORFOLK
FREE AND OPEN TO PUBLIC

PANFEST



VIRGINIA INTERNATIONAL PANFEST

This annual two-day festival joins aspiring pan players and world-class artists for a celebration of Caribbean music at the Oceanfront. Free and open to the public, steel bands from across the U.S. and Caribbean engage in friendly competition throughout the day, while grooving to Supernovas Steel Orchestra in the evening. Experience a taste of the islands through sea breeze, cuisine, and the sounds of sweet, sweet pan!

FRIDAY, MAY 8
6:30 PM *2 Islands*
8 PM *Supernovas Steel Orchestra*

SATURDAY, MAY 9
10 AM PANFEST ADJUDICATION & COMPETITION
12:30 PM *Ricky Micou*
7 PM *Ezra on Sax*
8 PM AWARDS CEREMONY
8:30 PM *Supernovas Steel Orchestra*

24TH STREET PARK, VIRGINIA BEACH OCEANFRONT
FREE, NO TICKETS REQUIRED

Co-presented with



ARTS EDUCATION

OPEN A STUDENT'S EYES TO WORLDS BEYOND THEIR OWN.

THE ARTS UNLOCK LEARNING

Every year, the Festival reaches more than 30,000 area students through student matinees, in-school performances, and opportunities to interact with and learn from professional artists through masterclasses, workshops, and more.

To learn more about getting your students involved, email education@vafest.org.

BE INSPIRED. INSPIRE OTHERS.

The Festival offers education outreach to all schools at a deeply discounted rate. For some schools, \$10 per student matinee ticket is a hardship. Your corporate or individual gift (even a gift of \$10!) makes full or partial financial aid available so that these inspiring experiences are available to any student at any school, no matter what.

Visit vafest.org or call 757-282-2807.



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Virginia Arts Festival is grateful for the support of the community in which we serve. Donations are the backbone of support needed for the realization of the Festival's mission. With these gifts, donors support our guest artists, public performances, education outreach and community engagement programs, and other vital programs throughout the season. Help the performing arts reach **everyone** in our community. We are deeply grateful to our entire family of supporters.

For more information, please reach out to the Development Office at 757-282-2814 or greville@vafest.org.



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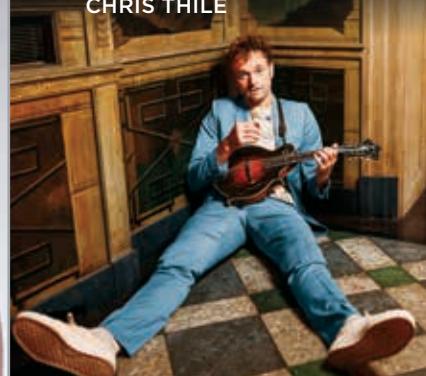


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