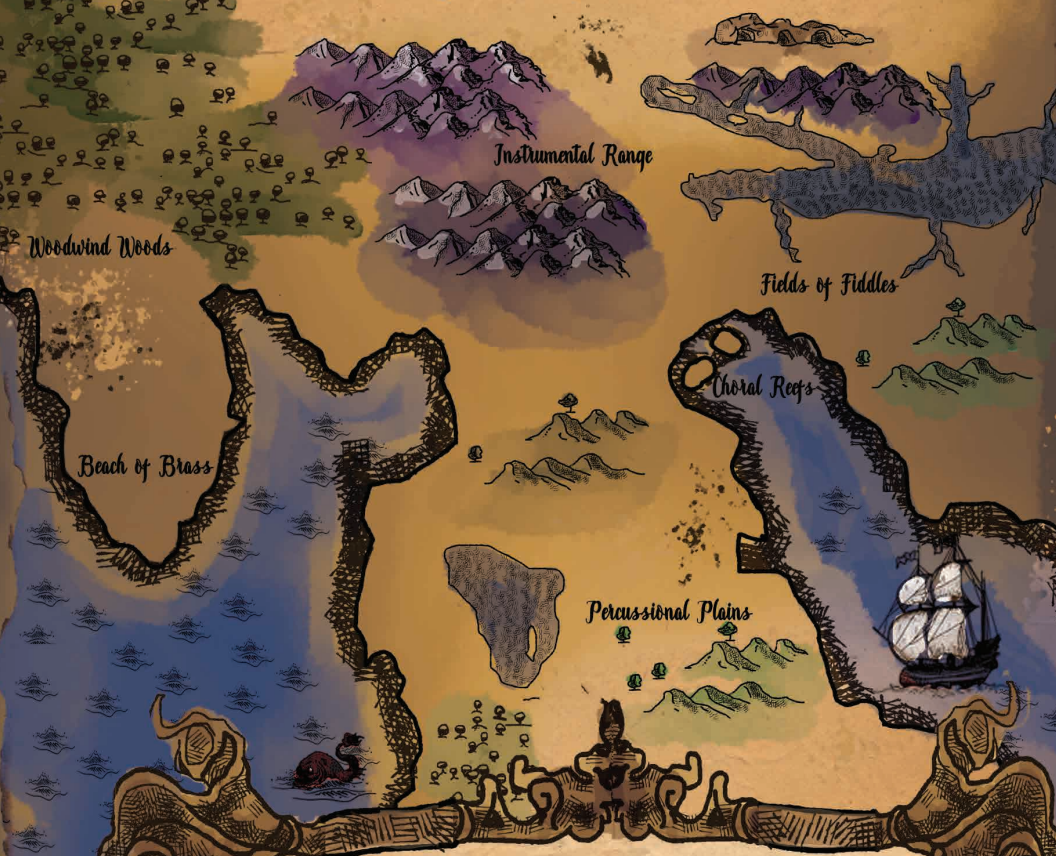


Washington Metropolitan Gamer Symphony Orchestra
presents

Worlds Beyond

An Evening of Video Game Music



Saturday, May 11, 2019, 4 p.m.
Montgomery College Cultural Arts Center
7995 Georgia Avenue
Silver Spring, MD 20910

\$12 online, \$15 at the door - wmgso.org/events
Student and Senior Discount Tickets Available



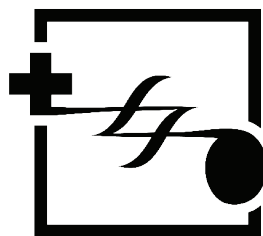
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WASHINGTON METROPOLITAN

Gamer Symphony Orchestra

The Washington Metropolitan Gamer Symphony Orchestra (WMGSO) is a community orchestra and choir whose mission is to share and celebrate video game music with a wide audience, primarily by putting on affordable, accessible concerts in the DC area.

Game music weaves a complex melodic thread through the traditions, shared memories, values, and myths of an entire international and intergenerational culture. WMGSO showcases this music that largely escapes recognition in professional circles.

The result: classical music with a 21st-century twist, drawing non-gamers to the artistic merits of video game soundtracks and attracting new audiences to orchestral concert halls.

About Our Music Director

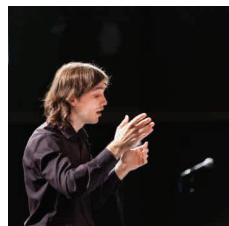


Nigel Horne is an experienced conductor, clinician, and composer, with a degree in band studies from the University of Sheffield, England, and a Master of Philosophy in Free Composition from the University of Leeds. Nigel has also directed the Rockville Brass Band since 2009.

Staff

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About Our Chorus Master



Jacob Coppage-Gross served as the conductor for the Gamer Symphony Orchestra at University of Maryland, College Park for two years and has performed in collaborations with the National Symphony at the Kennedy Center, as well as at local churches and with other small groups in the area.

Board of Executives

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WMGSO is supported in part by funding from the Montgomery County Government and the Arts and Humanities Council of Montgomery County.

WMGSO is a 501(c)(3) tax-exempt organization. Please consult your financial advisors to determine whether your contribution may qualify for a tax deduction.

Roster

Piccolo

Jess Bateman

Flute

Mary Beck
Jessie Biele

Oboe

Elise Favia
Jenn Ganss

Clarinet

Ashton Parker
Angela Small

Bass Clarinet

Yannick Joseph

Alto Sax

Joseph Wang
[sub]

Tenor Sax

Greg Danis

Baritone Sax

Olivia Smith-Elnaggar

Bassoon

Doug Eber*
Kristi Engel
Amelia Myers

French Horn

Bill Burns
Jamin Morden*
Mainh Vu

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Rob Garner*
Richard Gray*
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Bass Trombone

Vasudevan Kushalnagar

Tuba

Fabio Moreira

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Benjamin Downey
Scott Luxenberg
Nadine Markham-Itteilag
Lee Stearns*

Piano, Keyboard

Jules Metcalf-Burton

Acoustic Guitar

Daniel Bae

Bass Guitar

Julius Verzosa

Harp

Claire Bradfuhrer

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Melissa Apter
Tori Buckshaw
Amanda Cavanagh
Erin Detty
Meredith Chen
Zeynep Dilli*
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Erica Henderson
Tegan Hendrickson
Charlotte Johnson
Nicole Pennington
Michelle Sloan
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Holly Wu*
Soumya Yanamandra
Ashleah Younker

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Benton Green
Kevin Hencke
Dante Hicks
Kyle Jamolin
Jimyo Lin
Rainar Manteuffel
Anthony McMannis
Robb Saffell
Drew Thatcher
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Sheldon Zamora-Soon*

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Christian Carlsson
Jacob Coppage-Gross†
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Lauren Barefoot
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John Umble
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Jess Yuen

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Claire Bradfuhrer*
Adrian Francisco
Alexandra Golway
Victor Ontiveros
Darrah Treleaven
Paula Williamson

Cello

Joe Ichniowski*
Taylor Kim

Double Bass

Isabel Martinez
Stephen Miskimins

** CONCERTMASTER

* SECTION LEADERS

† CHORUSMASTER

* MASTER OF CEREMONIES

START!

Forcing Our Way

Final Fantasy VIII (1999)

Nobuo Uematsu

Arr. Michelle Eng

This colorful orchestrated piece is a battle song for one of Final Fantasy VIII's boss fights. The heavily synthesized melody, originally called "Force Your Way," encapsulates the heroes' strengths and their will to lead. "Force Your Way" first plays when the protagonist (mercenary Squall Leonheart) and his instructor (Quistis Trepe) reach the end of their journey into the Fire Cavern. There, they battle Ifrit, a clawed, horned beast whose scorching flames are hot enough to turn the world to ash. Immerse yourself in this heart-pounding, fast-paced fight and cheer on the protagonists as they summon Shiva, the Empress of Ice, and Quetzalcoatl, a lightning element Guardian, to defeat Ifrit in the song's grand finale.

Metroid Medley

Metroid (1986), Super Metroid (1994) & Metroid Prime (2002)

Hirokazu Tanaka & Kenji Yamamoto

Arr. Mary Beck

The original Metroid games combine the platforming of Super Mario Bros., the adventuring of The Legend of Zelda, and a dark science fiction atmosphere to tell the story of bounty hunter Samus Aran. Samus protects the galaxy from the Space Pirates, who want to harness the power of the parasitic Metroid creatures.

Despite Metroid's overall popularity, the soundtrack doesn't spring to mind for many gamers when discussing video game music. The composer of the original Metroid game, Hirokazu "Hip" Tanaka, wanted to write a score that sounded like encountering a "living organism" and had no distinction between music and sound effects. The resulting Metroid soundtracks are primarily atmospheric and minimalistic, with little to no melodic structure. What melodies do appear often have a dark and unsettling mood, quirky time signatures, and seemingly random musical ornamentation.

This medley arrangement highlights some of the most iconic themes from the series, from the very first 8-bit tune the player hears in Metroid, through tense boss fights, to one of the series' cathartic, victorious closing fanfares. The instrumentation reflects the minimalistic feel of the original compositions, then builds and explodes into bigger sounds and chord structures.

Somnus

Final Fantasy XV (2016)

Yoko Shimamura

Arr. Justin Yoon

"Somnus," or "sleep" in Latin, is the first theme heard in Final Fantasy XV and also one of the last. The protagonist, Noctis Lucis Caelum, is chosen as the True King, destined to sacrifice his life to cleanse the world from darkness. "Somnus" represents the emotions felt by those in the royal line of Lucis: Ardyn, who was denied his right to the throne; Regis, who loves the son he knows was born to die for the world; and Noctis, who must come to terms with his duty as the True King.

This arrangement represents both versions of “Somnus”: the serene violin solo from the opening and the emotional vocal solo from the final confrontation in the city of Insomnia.

“Somnus” features Nicole Pennington as the alto vocal soloist.

Grand Ecosystem Tour

Pikmin (2001)

Hajime Wakai

Arr. Thomas Ashcom

The *Pikmin* series begins when a meteor strikes a freight captain’s spaceship, forcing him to crash on the nearest planet. Most of the planet’s wildlife and atmospheric conditions are deadly, except for a lowly producer species that take a liking to the marooned captain. He dubs this producer species *Pikmin*. When he learns that the *Pikmin* can accomplish the impossible when organized, he initiates a symbiotic relationship: He keeps the *Pikmin* safe while they help him gather the scattered pieces of his spaceship.

The three themes that serve as the foundation of “Grand Ecosystem Tour” collide jokingly with one other in sudden tempo and key changes. These collisions represent the surprise of the unknown and nature’s unpredictable predictability, made humorous by the use of the game’s bizarre bestiary in lyrics both sung and spoken. Strict chromatic movements (notes moving only by semitones, unlike regular diatonic scales) and heavily dissonant harmonies achieve a playful, chaotic sound that most casual listeners would not hear from standalone chords and melodies. As this piece has no concrete structure, keep your ears open for strange pivots and have fun guessing where this miniature suite will end!

Lacrimosa (from “Requiem in D minor,” K.696)

BioShock Infinite (2013)

W. A. Mozart & F. X. Süssmayr

Arr. Zeynep Dilli

BioShock Infinite takes place in a flying, theocratic city-state ruled by a man named Father Comstock. Although Columbia floats out of reach in the skies, its culture and music are strongly influenced by the outside world—including past, future, and alternate timelines. “*Lacrimosa*” first plays when the player enters a memorial dedicated to the late Father Comstock’s wife. As the player progresses through exhibits that depict the tragedy of Lady Comstock’s death with weeping statues and enormous fountains, the exhibit’s music progresses through different movements of Mozart’s *Requiem in D minor*, evoking Father Comstock’s grief, supplication, and wrath with similarly larger-than-life music.

Requiem, commissioned by a real-life count for the anniversary of his wife’s death, was the last work Mozart started before his own death in 1791. He left behind only eight complete bars for “*Lacrimosa Dies Illa*,” or “This Tearful Day,” the last movement of the third section (“*Sequentia*”) of the *Requiem*. Franz Xaver Süssmayr, a contemporary composer, delivered the finished version.

The original instrumentation consists only of the choir backed by the strings, basset horns, bassoons, trumpets in D, and timpani. In this version adapted to WMGSO instrumentation, nearly the full woodwind and brass sections, including our saxophone quartet, are in use. The original’s three-bar instrumental interlude

has been expanded to fourteen bars, restating the second and third melodic phrases of the piece to showcase the fuller instrumentation.

Gaur Plain

Xenoblade Chronicles (2010)

ACE+

Arr. Lee Stearns

Xenoblade Chronicles takes place atop the corpses of two titanic gods who are forever locked in combat from an epic battle long ago. Their bodies are now home to a diverse ecosystem of biological and mechanical species and several intelligent races. Gaur Plain, a lush region on the leg of one of these gods, is one of the largest explorable areas in the game.

The three-person team ACE+ (Tomori Kudo, Hiroyo “CHiCO” Yamanaka, and Kenji Hiramatsu) composed this somewhat bittersweet theme for Gaur Plain. The original recording consists of the ACE+ band accompanied by a string quartet, but this WMGSO arrangement has been expanded for a full string section and soprano/alto choir.

Majesty

FEZ (2012)

Richard “Disasterpeace” Vreeland

Arr. Thomas Kresge

FEZ, an independent puzzle-platform game, is based on an innovative, mind-bending gameplay element: In a flat world of only two dimensions, the main character, Gomez, can perceive three, thanks in part to a fez he receives from a wizened mentor. Gomez can also rotate the landscape to look at the world from multiple viewpoints at once, solving puzzles and tracking down cube- and anti-cube fragments.

“Majesty” is an arrangement for choir and orchestra, in which we praise the unspeakable majesty that is the third dimension and all it represents in terms of the new perspectives it affords and the freedom that it grants beings with previously only two dimensions of perception.

PAUSE

Are you enjoying the show so far?

- ☐ Yes.
- ☐ Of course!

Intermission is the perfect time to drop off your feedback form or make a donation at WMGSO's booth in the lobby!

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Level 2 – START!

Songs of Courage

Inon Zur & Trevor Morris

Dragon Age: Origins (2009) & *Dragon Age: Inquisition* (2014)

Arr. Holly Wu

In *Dragon Age: Origins* (DA:O), you are a Grey Warden, one of a legendary group of guardians sworn to protect the world. Whether you are a human mage, elven rogue, or warrior dwarf -- your background shifts as you choose a story to tell. As civil war wracks your country, you must reunite the land to fight the return of the archdemon, an enemy only the Gray Wardens can defeat. What will you sacrifice to save the world? In *Dragon Age: Inquisition* (DA:I), you are the leader of the Inquisition. Despite the archdemon's defeat, the world is again in political upheaval, aggravated by a tear in the Veil, which kept demons at bay. You must choose a side and lead an army to defeat the otherworldly threat and close the breach in the sky.

Bardic music plays a small, but integral role in the world of *Dragon Age*. DA:O uses the bard as a combat class, with the ability to rally your allies' spirits with a song of courage or stun your enemies with a captivating song. DA:I reprises music



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Classical Music. **Play On!**

from both games as tavern songs by a bard observing the happenings of the world.

This arrangement combines music from both games. It begins with the DA:O main theme, a gentle but foreboding melody sung by a female soloist, eventually overwhelmed by blaring brass instruments indicating the onset of war. A phrase echoes repeatedly in “Rise,” a tavern song on gathering the courage to fight (DA:I), and in “In Uthenera,” an elvish lullaby mourning the dead (DA:O). “I Am the One” appears in both games in different languages, telling the bittersweet viewpoint of one who must live on to recount the stories of sacrifice in the aftermath of war. “The Dawn will Come” is sung as a hymn in DA:I to summon hope in desolate times. In a mirroring reprise, the bard in DA:I expresses her despair as the war rages on in “Maker.” Throughout the hardship and tragedy of a war-torn world, bardic music keeps the people’s spirits alive with glimmers of hope, calling the dawn to come with songs of courage.

“Songs of Courage” features XX as the tenor vocal soloist and XX as the alto vocal soloist.

Hearthome City

Pokémon: Diamond (2006), Pokémon: Pearl (2006)
& *Pokémon: Platinum (2008)*

Hitomi Sato
Arr. Carlos Eiene

“Hearthome City” depicts a bustling city near the center of the Sinnoh Region of the Pokémon world. This arrangement reimagines Hitomi Sato’s original composition as a Bossa Nova, a style of Brazilian music first popularized to American and world audiences by Antonio Carlos Jobim, Stan Getz, and others in the 1950s and 1960s. Influenced by Claus Ogerman’s orchestration of Jobim’s composition “Wave,” this arrangement features lush soli and unison flute melodies, supported and answered by tenor saxophone and piano, floating over a subdued Bossa Nova rhythm section groove.

“Hearthome City” features Jacob Coppage-Gross (piano), Scott Luxenberg (drums), Jessie Biele (flute) Mary Beck (flute), Jenn Ganss (flute), Stephen Miskimins (upright bass), Greg Danis (tenor saxophone), and Joseph Zavodny (electric guitar).

Oath

Kingdom Hearts III (2019)

Utada Hikaru
Arr. Holly Wu & Lee Stearns

All Kingdom Hearts games have several things in common. One: They revolve around the main protagonist, an island boy named Sora, who wields the Keyblade to unlock worlds and people’s hearts. Two: Friendship is a big deal. Three: The

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internal and external battle between light and darkness is a constant struggle. And Four: Every game features a song by Japanese pop artist Utada Hikaru, written in Japanese and rewritten in English to appeal to the American audience. The English lyrics are never a direct translation of the Japanese lyrics, but evoke a similar meaning.

In Kingdom Hearts III, Utada Hikaru presents the song “ ” (pronounced “chikai”), which translates to “oath.” She renames the song to “Don’t Think Twice” in the English version. Both versions explore the insecurities and resolve involved in the act of making an oath with another person. The Japanese version projects the insecurities inwards, towards the singer, while the English version projects the insecurities outwards, towards the other person. This arrangement combines the Japanese and English lyrics to pay homage to both versions.

“Oath” features Holly Wu and Sheldon Zamora-Soon (vocals), Zeynep Dilli (piano), Laura Stayman (violin), Victor Ontiveros (viola), Joe Ichniowski (cello), and Lee Stearns (drum kit).

Green Garden

*Atelier Sophie: The Alchemist
of the Mysterious Book (2015)*

Daisuke Achiwa
Arr. Paula Williamson

Atelier Sophie: The Alchemist of the Mysterious Book is the 17th game in the Japanese roleplaying Atelier series. The titular character, Sophie, is a novice alchemist who discovers a talking book in her grandmother’s workshop. The book once knew many alchemical secrets, but has lost its memory. Sophie, hoping to master alchemy herself, sets out to restore the book’s memories by finding more alchemy recipes to add to the book.

“Green Garden” is the musical theme of the Forgotten Nursery—a grassy clearing in the game marked by free-standing columns and archways overgrown with flowering vines. Although there are monsters to encounter, the music reflects the peaceful atmosphere of a place where Sophie can collect ingredients for her recipes. The instrumentation changes seamlessly as time passes from day to night, but the melody remains the same.

“Green Garden” features Paula Williamson as the piano soloist.

Rito Village

The Legend of Zelda: Breath of the Wild (2017)

Hajime Wakai
Arr. Benjamin Emberley

Rito Village is a mountainside domain in The Legend of Zelda: Breath of the Wild. A revised development of Desert Roost Island music from The Legend of Zelda: Wind Waker, “Rito Village” conveys the solitude, seclusion, and contemplation of the mountainous terrain surrounding the village.

As the music grows in confidence and volume, its magisterial surroundings become more and more prevalent in the symphonic nature of the music. The various colors and timbres used in the orchestra portray the Rito people as they take to the air, revelling in their dominance of the skies.

Song of Healing

Koji Kondo

The Legend of Zelda: Majora's Mask (2000)

Arr. Benjamin Emberley

In *The Legend of Zelda: Majora's Mask*, "The Song of Healing" is a meditative, psychological piece designed to relax the mind and bring about a mental healing process. The game's protagonist, Link, plays its melody on his ocarina to heal people of their torment. Their suffering then manifests in the masks that he uses throughout his journey to find and defeat Majora's Mask.

This arrangement replicates the original composition, then develops the piece to convey the elation and relief Link's listeners feel when the music releases them from suffering to continue living without pain. The ending of the arrangement aims to convey inner peace, leaving the listener with contentment.

The Stars over Weyard

Motoi Sakuraba

Golden Sun (2001)

Arr. Ben Ryer

Golden Sun, a roleplaying game for the Game Boy Advance, follows the story of four friends on a journey across the land of Weyard as they unlock the secrets of the elemental stars. When two mysterious strangers steal the stars from their resting place, Isaac and Garet set out from the town of Vale to recover the stars before the strangers unleash destructive powers across Weyard. Isaac and Garet, soon joined by Ivan and Mia, must traverse forests, deserts, and mountains in pursuit of their adversaries. Along the way, the group develops their magical abilities and finds help from creatures known as djinn and de. To this day, *Golden Sun* and its two sequels remain cult classics, beloved for their deep stories and captivating environments.

This *Golden Sun* medley opens with the theme from the cave where the elemental stars are found, then launches into the game's main theme. The next three themes represent the towns of Lunpa, Kalay, and Tolbi, followed by the sad and haunting music from the cursed Kolima Forest. The medley ends with a restatement of the main theme as the heroes' journey comes to a close ... or does it?

GAME OVER?



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