

CHESAPEAKE CHAMBER MUSIC INTERLUDE

Fall 2009

A Silver Celebration

by Lin Clineburg - A sense of excitement is growing as Chesapeake Chamber Music Festival Artistic Co-Directors, Marcy Rosen and J. Lawrie Bloom, together with Executive Director, Don Buxton, Nancy Mullen and a host of devoted volunteers, begin plans for the twenty-fifth Chesapeake Chamber Music Festival next year. Margaret Welch, former Board Treasurer, will be the chair of the twenty-fifth Festival year celebration. Highlights will include a new work by the award-winning composer Stacy Garrop, commissioned to celebrate this silver anniversary, and the June 4th, 2010 opening concert at the Avalon Theatre in Easton will feature a chamber orchestra arrangement of Mahler's Symphony #9.

The annual Festival has come a long way from the original impromptu concert performed in June, 1985, in the Tolchester bandstand at the Maritime Museum in St. Michaels. It has grown into a two week festival each June, with 11 concert and recital events performed by 12 renowned musicians, attended by music lovers who filled over 1250 seats this year. Margaret Welch intends that the silver anniversary be not only a special celebratory year for the Festival, but that it be also the "new look" of the Festival. Margaret hopes to add two more midweek concerts during the Festival's first week at attractive venues with accessible prices. Her ultimate goal is to "make Chesapeake Chamber Music a regional destination if not a national one."

Chesapeake Chamber Music Festival has enlarged its boundaries to include venues in Talbot, Dorchester, Queen Anne's and Kent Counties. The scope of CCM now includes Interlude concerts, the YouthReach Program, the biennial Competition and the annual Gala which opens the Festival season and raises operational funds

Each year at the conclusion of the Festival, one wonders how it would be possible to have a richer, more satisfying program, and each year since 1985, Chesapeake Chamber Music does it again. The offerings of magnificent music continue to enthrall concertgoers. The twenty-fifth CCM Festival year will begin on March 6 with the Gala chaired by Lisa Ghezzi. On March 27, the 4th International Chesapeake Chamber Music Competition led by Arnie Lerman and Anna Larkin will be held at the Avalon Theatre. So mark your calendars accordingly, and plan to be overwhelmed by the beauty, variety and sheer amount of inspirational and soul satisfying music coming your way in 2010. See you there!



Early Festival photo from CCM archives



Chloe L. Pitard, current CCM Board President and Rush Moody, Jr., Past President

Passing the Baton

by Cecily Lyle - This year, the presidency of the Board of Directors of Chesapeake Chamber Music will pass from the capable hands of Rush Moody into the capable hands of Chloe Pitard. With such continuity of leadership, the future of Chesapeake Chamber Music promises to be as exciting as the past. New Board members include Mike Bracy, Carolyn Thornton and Bill Geoghegan. Mike served nine years as Board Treasurer and will return to this position. Carolyn will head Venues and Bill will lead the Communications Committee.

Rush's connection with the Festival goes back to 1997 when, soon after he and his wife Ann attended their first performances of what was then The Eastern Shore Chamber Music Festival, Rush volunteered to help out. During 50 years of law practice he had not had time for such activities and he was delighted for the chance to give something back to his community.

Rush says his love of music dates back to 1947 when the band teacher at his high school encouraged the band to compete in the state band contest (where they won 1st place performing the Finale from Tchaikovsky's Fourth Symphony). Today, he is content to make music happen from the vantage point of the CCM boardroom.

One day, newly arrived on the Eastern Shore with her husband, David, Chloe Pitard chanced upon an article in the Star Democrat about a chamber music concert to be held at the Maritime Museum in St. Michael's. They went, and it was love at first hearing. Chloe was persuaded to organize a Gala and has been closely involved with the Festival ever since. She is thrilled by the fact that within the sleepy ambience of the Eastern Shore, such a sophisticated musical event has become a fixture of the cultural landscape.

2009 FESTIVAL HIGHLIGHTS



The 2009 Chesapeake Chamber Music Festival has received unqualified praise by concert-goers and musicians alike. There were 11 concerts with eight venues in Easton, including concerts at the Avalon Theatre, MEBA, the Academy Art Museum, 202 Dover and a street concert in Easton. The Aspen Institute at Wye River and Emmanuel Church in Chestertown hosted two concerts. The Angels Concert was held at the waterfront estate of Martha and David Tuthill in Talbot County. Three free concerts were held during the two week festival. The choice of music, the energy of the performances and the virtuosity of the musicians created a memorable two weeks of music.



Opening Notes: A Festival Begins

by Carol Rizzoli - It started with a son, his dad, and fond memories of sailing the Chesapeake Bay. What has grown over the last 25 years into the Chesapeake Chamber Music Festival was Lawrie Bloom's idea but he says, "My dad must be credited with making it happen." After Ralph and Evey Bloom bought a house in St. Michaels, Lawrie who was then principal bass clarinetist with the Chicago Symphony, came to visit. "This is such a beautiful area we should start a chamber music festival," he remembers thinking. Like many musicians, Lawrie considers chamber music "the most intimate and satisfying form of music-making." The senior Bloom, a chemical engineer by training, offered to run the business side. "My dad was completely tone-deaf," Lawrie says. "He couldn't sing in any known key."



CCM founders and early participants J. Lawrie Bloom, Don Buxton, Marcy Rosen

But his management experience proved invaluable. He organized focus groups to determine if there was interest in a festival in Talbot County. There decidedly was. Lawrie's dad and a committee raised money and found venues for performances. Later came a board of directors, incorporation, and all the rest.

Lawrie quickly involved his long-time friend and colleague, cellist Marcy Rosen, who brought musicians, contacts, programming ideas, and herself as performer. From the official start in 1985, Lawrie and Marcy have worked as the Festival's Artistic Co-Directors.

The programs have expanded but the concept they established at the outset remains firmly in place. "We made two and only two rules, invite great players and only people you want to

spend a week with," Lawrie comments. "Unlike orchestral musicians who play and go home we spend a lot of time together. We even eat most of our meals together."

Festival audiences have evolved, too. "The audience is very important," Lawrie observes. "When you're playing you can tell if they're involved, if they get it, too." The fact that he knows so many in the audience is exciting and equally exciting is seeing new faces.

Arriving at his enviable position might seem like a smooth streak of luck but the route that brought Lawrie and the Festival to Talbot County took him, after graduation from Temple University, to the Phoenix Symphony, the Lyric Opera of Chicago, then in turn to the symphonies in Vancouver and Cincinnati before Sir Georg Solti invited him to join the Chicago Symphony Orchestra in 1980.

Exit 9 Thrives After Gold Medal Win

by Beth Schucker - I knew *Exit 9* was the name of a percussion ensemble, but it stymied me - perhaps because it seemed a name more fitting for a freeway hamburger joint than a high-brow chamber music quintet. For sure, I would ask Ken Riehmman, spokesman for *Exit 9*, when we talked about what happened after the big win.

has a reputation as the outsider or the newcomer to the realm," he explained. Beethoven and Mendelssohn wrote music for percussion instruments, but for orchestral settings. Solo percussion didn't begin to take on significance in America until the 1930s, thanks to compositions by John Cage.

In 2004, *Exit 9*, then a neophyte ensemble, was the first gold medalist of the Chesapeake Chamber Music Competition. Riehmman recalls how "surprised" the quintet was to win the award. Their instruments and their music, including ragtime xylophone, steel pan calypso, and West African drumming aren't that familiar to chamber music audiences. "Percussion

Riehmman was emphatic when I asked if winning the gold medal made a difference for *Exit 9*. "Absolutely! We began thinking seriously about career opportunities." There was also the "boost" to their resume, the longer list of professional contacts, and the fuller engagement calendar, including 50-60 children's concerts a year. The most profound change was on their repertoire. The dazzle of their gold medal caught the attention of composers. New music was written for them. The group also used part of their winnings for commissions. There was more music. That was exciting -- the lifeblood of performance.



Exit 9, first Competition gold medalists

Finally, Riehmman satisfied my curiosity about their name. It refers to the New Jersey Turnpike exit to Rutgers University where the group's members were music students. During this year's Chesapeake Chamber Music Festival in June, it was clear that Eastern Shore chamber music aficionados don't dwell on issues like names. They came out in force to support *Exit 9*'s third Easton concert since its award-winning one in 2004. Gathered for the street concert, the crowd of all ages (even a few four-legged creatures) participated enthusiastically, on cue and off, with toe-tapping, hand-clapping and tail-wagging.

Q & A with J. Lawrie Bloom

by Carol Rizzoli - When I met with Lawrie Bloom there was so much to discuss that a planned 30-minute interview ran an hour and a half. He answered questions any lover of chamber music and any music festival fan might want to know.

Highlights:

As a musician how does playing chamber music differ from work with the Chicago Symphony?

"In an orchestra the conductor makes the decisions. Here, the musicians decide together how a piece will go. Most of our musicians play only chamber music so they're used to exchanging ideas and asking, 'What else can we do with this piece?'"

What's the hardest part of the Festival work for you?

"Programming is a balancing act deciding what comes first, the musicians or the program. We want contrast, balance, and flow in the program. We also like to introduce new works and want the audience to trust that we'll bring in a composer worth knowing.

Another programming dilemma is "undiscovered masterworks" and the saying goes that there aren't any. "Sometimes you unearth a piece," Lawrie says, "and you discover as you play through it that there's good reason it's never performed."

Once performers and programs are set, next comes an equally difficult part of the work. "We arrive on Sunday and prepare for three concerts the first week. Sometimes we'll spend eight hours a day rehearsing." With characteristic understatement he adds, "That's a challenge."

What is the greatest joy of the Festival for you?

"Discovering a composition, old or new, that is new to us, and introducing people to it."

How do you see the Festival evolving over, say, the next ten years?

"The Board is challenging us to fill in the non-concert days of each week so that it becomes a destination festival—in other words, you could come for a week and hear music every day."

You play orchestral, chamber, and solo repertoire, and how many different clarinets?

"I play all the clarinets: E flat, C, B flat, A, basset horn and clarinet, and contrabass clarinet."

Between 150 concerts a year, teaching at Northwestern University, and the Festival, do you find any time for leisure activities?

"Yes, tennis, biking, sailing, backpacking and theater. My wife Nan is a theater costume designer and teaches at the DePauw University Theater School, so we see many plays."

Would you agree with Mozart that the clarinet comes closest in tone to the human voice?

"Yes, growing up I was fortunate to have much vocal training. My concept of sound is greatly influenced by singing. I heard opera recordings at home; my mother was an opera singer."

A soprano?

Yes, coloratura.

So you've heard singing all your early life...even before you were born?

That's true.



J. Lawrie Bloom, CCM Artistic Co-Director

Carol Rizzoli's forthcoming book, "Eden Is That Old House," will appear in spring 2010. She and her husband, Hugo, are ardent fans of chamber music and the Festival.

FIVE MEMBERS RETIRE FROM CCM BOARD

by William H. Geoghegan - The Chesapeake Chamber Music Board of Directors offered its thanks for a combined 43 years of dedicated service when five of its long-time members retired from "active duty" this summer. Pat Barbis, Jim Campbell, Margaret Welch and Dyanne Welte had all served three terms of three years each, while Phil Webster had put in a total of seven years. During interviews, they spoke of the changes in CCM's organization and programs and the challenges they saw ahead.

If a single word could capture what the five board "retirees" saw during their tenure, it would be "growth." The retirees pointed to the Chesapeake Chamber Music Competition that Pat Barbis helped create ("the most exciting thing that could have happened," according to Dyanne Welte), the YouthReach Program that Jim Campbell played a key role in launching, the annual Gala (Phil Webster's brainchild) and, most recently, a foray into the world of jazz.

They all agreed an expanding program was accompanied by a need for increased funding. Phil Webster headed the effort to grow CCM's funding base and long-time Treasurer Margaret Welch emphasized the need for fiscal discipline. Pat Barbis arranged to move the office from one room to a two-room suite with new computers to help CCM, as she put it, "move into the 21st century."

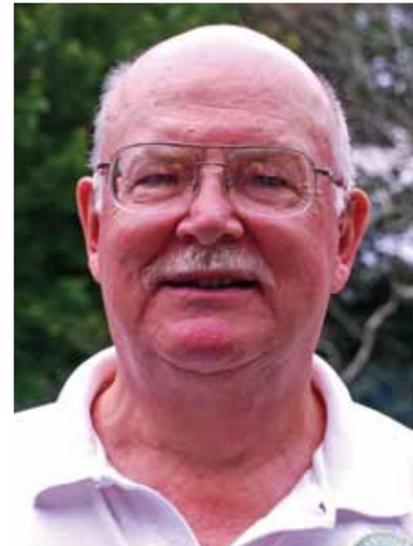
To shape CCM's future, Phil Webster led a strategic planning effort that contributed to many changes during the last six years; increased marketing of CCM programs, a focus on expanding visibility outside the mid-Shore region, development of a CCM web site and a "re-branding" under the new "Chesapeake Chamber Music" umbrella.

As growth continues, the organization must focus on its goals: fund-raising and enlarging its audiences. There is a sense that the Festival be even more "festival-like," as Dyanne Welte put it, becoming a "destination event," and providing CCM the leverage to build closer ties with local businesses.

Jim Campbell noted that Chesapeake Chamber Music has benefitted from continuity since most of its founders are still actively involved in the organization. With 43 years of combined service, and even more years of experience, we hope the five retirees will continue their involvement with CCM in one capacity or another. Margaret Welch noted that "the warm interaction between the CCM Board members, performers and volunteers is what makes Chesapeake Chamber Music an organization that invites dedicated service."



Margaret Welch, chair of the silver anniversary year celebration



Philip Webster, retiring Vice President, Communications Committee



Patricia Barbis, retiring Board Vice President



Dyanne Welte, retiring Board Secretary



James Campbell, retiring Past President and Board member

YOA Chamber Orchestra... "an extraordinary experience"!

By Leslie Westbrook - The Chamber Orchestra of the Youth Orchestra of the Americas played to a capacity audience on August 11 at the Academy Art Museum. The YOA full orchestra, 75 musicians, just concluded their 2009 Canada/USA Tour in Washington. The decision to add a concert in Easton before returning to their homes across North, Central and South America, was a collaboration between CCM Board members Leslie Westbrook and Michael Smilow with YOA founder Hilda Brillembourg.

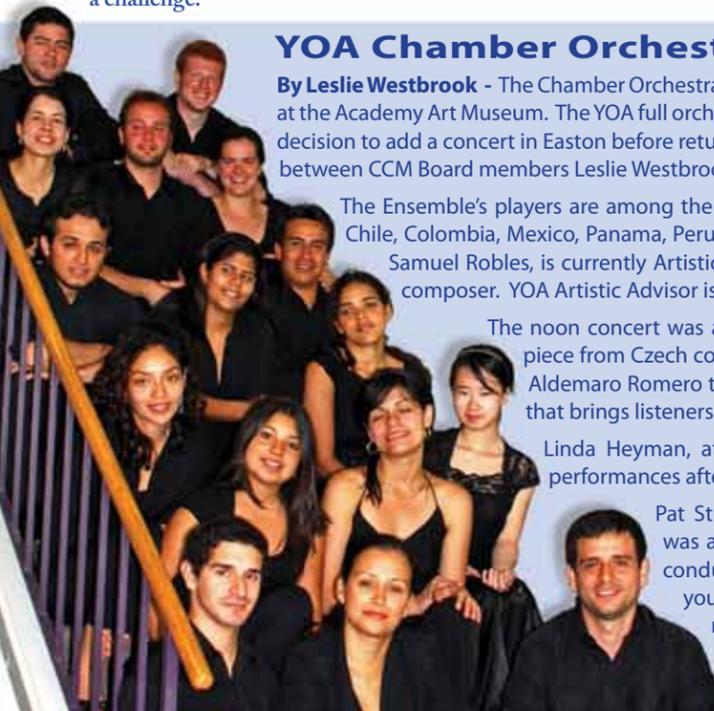
The Ensemble's players are among the finest young professional musicians in the world, representing Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Mexico, Panama, Peru, United States, Uruguay and Venezuela. Conductor for this concert, Panamanian Samuel Robles, is currently Artistic Director and Conductor of Orquesta Sinfónica Juvenil Istmeña and a prominent composer. YOA Artistic Advisor is Plácido Domingo.

The noon concert was a delightful blend of classical compositions by Mozart and Elgar and an unusual piece from Czech composer Leoš Janáček. The final exciting spark was from contemporary composer Aldemaro Romero titled Fuga con Pajarillo. In the style of Piazzola, Venezuelan Romero creates music that brings listeners to their feet! A reception followed, catered by Gourmet By the Bay.

Linda Heyman, attending her first CCM venue, said she would definitely seek out future CCM performances after this uplifting and inspired concert.

Pat Strongin, who has attended CCM concerts for years, offered this comment: "This was a perfect summer experience—an intimate setting for chamber music; a talented conductor with wonderful rapport with the orchestra; a superb performance by gifted young musicians of a beautifully crafted program. All this on the Eastern Shore—what more could we want!"

YOA will next perform at Carnegie Hall on February 18, 2010, conducted by London Symphony Maestro Valery Gergiev with soloist Joshua Bell.



Members of the Youth Orchestra of the Americas



CCM AND CORPORATE SPONSORS MAKE SWEET MUSIC TOGETHER

by Philip J. Webster - Several corporate sponsors have discovered Chesapeake Chamber Music and the value of an underwriting investment in the Festival, the Competition, the Gala and YouthReach. Their support has totaled nearly \$70,000 in the past three years, an invaluable boost to CCM's programming.



Bonnie Stein,
Managing Director, PNC Wealth Management

Bonnie Stein, Managing Director of PNC Wealth Management in Baltimore, has been one of CCM's most generous supporters, underwriting the last two Festivals and Competitions. In Bonnie's words, "PNC and the PNC Foundation have long histories enriching the lives of our neighbors. For decades, we have provided resources to seed ideas, foster development initiatives and encourage leadership in non-profit organizations where imagination and determination are at work. Chesapeake Chamber Music enriches the Eastern Shore community with a music genre many enjoy."

Elizabeth Spurry, Senior Vice President of Wye Financial and Trust in Easton, is another committed Chesapeake Chamber Music underwriter, having supported the last two Galas, Interlude Concerts, and an Angels Concert. "The quality of the programming and diversity of the venues was a key element in our choosing to support Chesapeake Chamber Music," she says. "We are proud to be associated with Chesapeake Chamber Music that brings people together from all age groups, all walks of life and a broad geographical area. We feel that the Board of Directors of Chesapeake Chamber Music is a responsible steward of our gift."

Tom Hill, Principal at The Hill Group at Morgan Stanley Smith Barney, brought Jane Osgatharp, Trustee of the Aubrey "Dick" Walker Trusts, and Chesapeake Chamber Music together, resulting in the second largest gift in CCM's history to the 21st Century Fund. His firm has been a generous supporter of the Festival and the Family Concert. He says "Chesapeake Chamber Music is a high quality organization that attracts people we want to reach with our advertising dollar. I am impressed with the excellent programs and talented musicians."

Thanks to these major underwriters, and Paris Foods, Exxon Corporation, Eastern Savings Bank, Talbot Bank, and a broad range of corporate advertisers in the Chesapeake Chamber Music Festival program book; corporations and Chesapeake Chamber Music are increasingly teaming up to make beautiful music together. And what an ensemble they make!!!



Elizabeth Spurry,
Senior Vice President, Wye Financial and Trust



The Monty Alexander Trio perform at the Avalon Theatre

Monty Alexander at the Avalon

By Al Sikes - Joyous comes to mind; the detail: Chesapeake Chamber Music's opening night of a new jazz program. The energy was symbiotic as the audience response was returned by The Trio. Monty Alexander and his bassist, Lorin Cohen, and drummer, George Fludas brought the crowd to its feet and responded imaginatively in a rousing encore. Monty Alexander's virtuoso appearance will become a part of the lore of The Avalon.

The Trio blended a range of musical influences

drawing on classical, reggae, bebop, and gospel and always with the touches of Jamaica not far from the surface. Monty, whose birthplace was Jamaica, infuses island originality as he draws on Bob Marley, Duke Ellington and Charlie Parker. Alexander performed his own compositions, including Hope, but one had the sense that the improvisations on other's work would leave the composer smiling. Chesapeake Chamber Music, encouraged by its inaugural jazz event, is excited by this reportorial expansion.



George Fludas, Monty Alexander, and Lorin Cohen

Don Buxton and his Musical Family

by Shar McBee - If you live on the Eastern Shore, chances are you have been entertained by, learned from, or performed with a Buxton - Don, Merideth, Ian or Willoughby - the Chesapeake Chamber Music first family of musicians. Not only does the Executive Director of Chesapeake Chamber Music, Don Buxton, work tirelessly and joyfully for CCM, he and his family encourage the magic of music all over Delmarva.

Twinkle, twinkle little star:

After 25 years with CCM, the Buxtons have left an imprint on most Eastern Shore musicians. Third grade students at local schools get their first taste of Mozart when they learn Twinkle on the violin from Merideth.

How I wonder where you are:

The Buxton family quartet can hardly find a moment together for an interview. In addition to his responsibilities at CCM, Don teaches private piano lessons, conducts the Dover Symphony, guest conducts and performs. Merideth plays and teaches violin and viola and she and Don teach at Washington College.

Growing up, the Buxton children were required to take music lessons (Ian plays cello; Willoughby violin, clarinet, guitar, piano) but they were not required to become musicians. Ian is away at Nashville Auto Diesel College. Willoughby graduated Salutatorian from St. Michael's High School and is at St. Mary's College. Despite the distance, the Buxtons are in sync on the subject of music: they love music and sharing it with others.

Like a diamond in the sky:

In addition to the Chesapeake Chamber Music Festival's wildly popular Family Concert, the Buxtons started First Strings under the YouthReach Program. With 20 violins Merideth teaches groups of third graders ten violin lessons, at no charge. She's received stacks of thank you notes. A favorite says, "I didn't think that I would like the violin but I really enjoyed the class. Now I know I want to play the drums."

If you could wish upon a star:

Given one wish for music on the Eastern Shore, Don's dream is to see more young families involved in the Festival concerts, as they would go to a movie. Merideth wishes for small town orchestras with inter-generational participation and support. Willoughby wants a First Strings Program in high school.



Merideth and Donald Buxton



Bernice Michael, current Board member

With gratitude to Bernice Michael, Interlude Editor 2005-2009

by Susan Koh - Since 2005, Bernice Michael has applied her literary and journalistic gifts as editor of Interlude. Bernice will continue to serve as a member of the CCM Board of Directors. Her stewardship of Interlude has taken this publication to a high level of excellence featuring a lively range of articles about the people who make and enjoy chamber music.

Bernice is "a believer in classical music done well and made available locally." Her professional background in corporate retailing and international consulting in human resources led her to the CCM Marketing Committee, which she chaired for two years. With degrees in medieval poetry, college teaching experience, and development

of marketing programs and materials, Bernice was drawn to editing Interlude. Apart from her volunteer responsibilities, Bernice is a consultant at the Wye River Aspen Institute for Marriott International.

Over the years, Bernice's commitment to the excellence of Interlude intrigued her husband Jerry. His talent as an amateur photographer and skill using PhotoShop were invaluable to Bernice as newsletter editor. The publication of Interlude became a joint effort for this couple who complement each other in so many ways.

As we sat in Bernice's sunroom for this interview, Bernice shared the following thoughts about Chesapeake Chamber Music. "There is something magical about having this quality of music here on the Eastern Shore. All of us on the Board are committed to the CCM priorities of growing the offerings of great music to share with engaged audiences. Examples are the new concert additions during the year as well as the Festival season and the broader spectrum of music played in recent years. As CCM has grown and diversified, so has the approach to promoting it. An expanded Interlude and the establishment of an interactive website are both important to the success of Chesapeake Chamber Music."

As the incoming editor of Interlude, I thank Bernice for her guidance and I hope to continue her standard of excellence in future issues.

Mark Your Calendar: Fourth International Chesapeake Chamber Music Competition

Saturday, March 27, 2010 at the Avalon Theatre

Deadline for entry November 30, 2009 Selection of finalists January 16, 2010

Further information at www.chesapeakechambermusic.org





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We would like to keep you informed of the latest events in our growing series of year round programs.
 To help us reach you, please sign up on the website www.chesapeakechambermusic.org.



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AN EVENT NOT TO BE MISSED

Chesapeake Chamber Music Fall Interlude Concert
 Saturday, October 24, 2009
 8 p.m. at the Academy Art Museum

The World Renowned

LIONS GATE TRIO

performing:

Shostakovich Trio no.1 in C minor Op.8
 Ravel's Duo for Violin and Cello
 Brahms Trio in B Major, Op.8

Wine, cheese and dessert reception will follow the concert.
 Order tickets online at www.chesapeakechambermusic.org
 or call the CCM office at 410-819-0380.



The Lions Gate Trio, Marcy Rosen, cello; Katie Lansdale, violin; Florence Millet, piano. Photo credit to the Hartt School of the University of Hartford.