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ENTERTAINMENT

Get to know 3 Sarasota Music Festival musicians

Susan L. Rife, Special to the Herald-Tribune

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The theme for the final Festival Friday concert of the 2022 Sarasota Music Festival is “Mix and Mingle,” which in this case has two meanings.

First, like all Festival Friday concerts, the performances bring festival faculty and students, called fellows, together onstage for collaborative and intergenerational performances of chamber repertoire.

And secondly, the three works to be performed all mix string and wind instruments. Amy Beach’s Theme and Variations is an early 20th-century Romantic composition for five instruments. Jean Francaix’s “Dixtour” combines wind and string quintets. And Beethoven’s Septet in E-flat Major from 1800 adds two brass instruments to five strings for what was an instant classic.

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We spoke with three fellows to get their impressions of the festival after the first week and with next week’s finale in view.

Daniel Kaler

Instrument: cello

Hometown: Wilmette, Illinois

Age: 24

Education: Cleveland Institute of Music, class of 2019; Rice University, class of 2022, cello performance

Years at Sarasota Music Festival: Three.

Work to be performed: Beach, Theme and Variations. “Once you start reading a piece of music, you really get a sense of the piece’s potential,” he said. “Not only the piece but the other people. One of the things about chamber music is going to that first rehearsal and imagining what the end result could be and working toward that.”

Sharing the stage with: Demarre McGill, flute, Yuqi Liang, violin, Liana Branscome, violin, and Teng Li, viola. “Liana and I have known each other for about nine years,” he said. “We play on and off whenever we’re at the same festival. She’s very good at engaging with her emotions as a player and conveying that to the audience immediately.”

What he loves about chamber music: “It’s kind of a microcosm of an orchestra. You also have the closeness of just a few people instead of 30. I really enjoy it.”

A new home: Sarasota Orchestra plans to leave city of Sarasota for a new home on Fruitville Road

Bramwell Tovey: New Orchestra director eager to meet Sarasota audience in debut concert

Katrina Dunkle

Instrument: French horn

Hometown: Albany, California

Age: 22

Education: McGill University, Montreal, class of 2022. Starting this fall on an artist’s diploma in French horn performance at the Glenn Gould School in Toronto.

Years at Sarasota Music Festival: One. “I think the biggest thing that’s grabbed me is just how talented and high level all the other musicians are,” she said. “Often (at other festivals) there are maybe one or two people who aren’t at the same level. What I’ve been

hearing here, everyone is so advanced and so talented. That's great to play with and make music with."

Work to be performed: Beethoven's Septet in E-flat Major. "I just played it this past year. I really love it," she said. "It's a great piece, a great work. It's really interesting to play with strings. I learned a lot about different types of playing, ways to show musicality, from watching the string players."

Sharing the stage with: Charles Neidich, clarinet, Nancy Goeres, bassoon, Martin Beaver, violin, Weilan Li, viola, Michael Song, cello, and Matt Peralta, bass.

Her musical journey: She began playing the violin at age 4, then switched to viola. In fourth grade, "we were required to pick a band instrument because we didn't have an orchestra. My brother played trombone. I kinda wanted to copy him but not too close. I chose trumpet then in sixth grade switched to horn. I really love how versatile it is. We can play in woodwind groups, brass groups, strings and mixed groups. It's also versatile, we can play big loud Mahler works or more sweet, more melodic woodwind repertoire."

Madeline Pintoff

Instrument: viola

Hometown: New York City

Age: 20

Education: Third-year student at the Juilliard School

Years at the Sarasota Music Festival: One. "I thought I would get lots of amazing opportunities to work closely with all these musicians from all over the world," she said. "It's interesting to get different perspectives."

Work to be performed: Francaix, "Dixtour." "I'd never heard of it before," she said. "And I've never done a large mixed group." She's been listening to and playing along with a recording of "Dixtour" to familiarize herself with it. "It's a little tricky because it sounds like my part is not always easily heard. It's a nice piece."

Sharing the stage with: Graeme Sugden, flute, Nancy Ambrose King, oboe, Nicole Martin, clarinet, Michelle Reed Baker, horn, Marissa Takaki, bassoon, Francesca

Anderegg, violin, Yun Lee, violin, Lucia Ticho, cello, and Ryan Sujdak, bass.

Chamber music or orchestra: “Chamber music allows for a more intimate relationship with your coworkers, your peers. You get to know them very well as players or people,” she said. “I’d really love to do both, or either. Orchestra has a special place in my heart.”

Coincidence: Her childhood piano teacher, Jean Schneider, is on the festival faculty. “She accompanied me the other day on a masterclass when I played my Brahms Sonata,” said Pintoff.

Read more arts stories by Susan L. Rife.

Sarasota Music Festival

Five programs mark the final week of the 2022 Sarasota Music Festival. Composers Caroline Shaw and Gabriel Kahane take part in a “Creative Voices” program at 7:30 p.m. June 21 in Holley Hall, 709 N. Tamiami Trail. tickets are \$15-\$22. Artist Showcase 3 “Triumphs” is at 4:30 p.m. June 23 in Holley Hall (\$29-\$40). Rising Stars 3, featuring Festival Fellows, is at 2:30 p.m. June 24. \$15-\$22). A “Mix and Mingle” is at 7:30 p.m. June 24 in the Sarasota Opera House, 61 N. Pineapple Ave., Sarasota. (\$29-\$50) and the final Festival orchestral concert “From America to Italy,” conducted by Artistic Director Jeffrey Kahane, is at 7:30 p.m. June 25 in the Opera House (\$29-\$65). 941-953-3434; sarasotaorchestra.org