

## ALUMNI NEWSLETTER

Winter/Spring 2017

### VYOA Names New Music Director!



The Vermont Youth Orchestra Association is thrilled to announce that we have named **Benjamin Klemme**, D.M.A. of Davenport, IA, to the position of music director, effective July 1, 2017. Edward Cumming, a member of the faculty at the Hartt School in Hartford, CT, served as interim Vermont Youth Orchestra conductor for 2016-2017 season while a national search was conducted.

Currently, Klemme holds concurrent positions as music director and conductor, Quad City Symphony Youth Ensembles, and associate conductor, Quad City Symphony Orchestra, both located in the Davenport area, as well as concert orchestra conductor, Greater Twin Cities Youth Symphonies, and orchestra

conductor, Augsburg College, both located in Minneapolis, MN. Previous experience includes positions as assistant and associate conductor for other professional orchestras such as the Cleveland Pops and National Repertory Orchestras, as well as the collegiate program at the University of Minnesota. He has also served as a faculty member at the MacPhail Center for Music, Minneapolis, Santa Fe Youth Symphony Association, and New Mexico School for the Arts.

"We are all looking forward to Benjamin's arrival," said Mike Noble, chair, VYOA Board of Directors. "This was a very competitive search, indicative of the amount of attention the VYOA receives from music organizations across the country. Benjamin brings a wealth of experience to the VYOA and he stood out as the unanimous choice to lead us forward. Paired with our executive director, Rosina Cannizzaro, the organization has an exciting future ahead."

"I am extremely honored to have been invited to join the VYOA as music director," said Klemme. "The VYOA is a cultural treasure with a strong tradition of musical and educational excellence. I look forward to working with the many individuals who comprise the VYOA community in order to sustain its artistic distinction, and empower its students to achieve their potential in ways that enliven and enrich Vermont's cultural atmosphere."

Klemme received a Bachelor of Music in Music Education from the University of Northern Iowa, a Master of Music in Orchestral Conducting from the Cleveland Institute of Music, and a Doctor of Musical Arts in Conducting from University of Minnesota. He and his family will be relocating to Vermont this spring. **Please join us in welcoming Dr. Klemme to the VYOA family!**

### A big thank-you: Alumni donated nearly \$10,000 last season!

AND, with your generous support, we are more than halfway to our alumni giving goal of \$9,000 for the 16-17 season. Can you help us reach that goal?

In today's world, giving young people the opportunity to create music together is more important than ever, and alumni donations are helping to make that possible.

Many alumni have chosen to give a small monthly gift that adds up over time through the **Bravo Club**. When you join with a gift of \$5 or more per month, we'll send you a free VYOA bumper sticker.

Visit [vyo.org](http://vyo.org) to make a donation or join the Bravo Club!

# ALUMNI NEWS

**Rachael Elliott (Bassoon, VYO '93-95, Lyndon Institute)** In the middle of winter, I'm recalling sweltering summer camp days at the White Mountain School rehearsing the Franck Symphony with David Dworkin and an arrangement of *Marriage of Figaro* in C for wind ensemble with Mr. Byars in the cafeteria.. Anyone else? Right now, I'm living in Jülich, Germany while my husband completes his post-doctoral work at the research center here. I'm keeping busy with our two kids (Julius, 3 and Eudora, 1). I play in the town orchestra and am preparing for my first recital here in May together with a pianist who lives down the block. We walk or bike everywhere (no car) and enjoy our town's outdoor market 3 days a week, especially the local Kaffee Rosterei, Beans & Friends. I'm excited to be back in Vermont this April to play with Heliand Consort—we're premiering a new chamber opera by my friend, Australian composer Padma Newsome. Performances are Friday, April 7th at 7:30pm at the Rochester Federated Church and Saturday, April 8th at 7:30pm at the York Street Meeting House in Lyndon. I hope those of you in Vermont can join us! More information at: [heliandconsort.org](http://heliandconsort.org)

**Travis Carpenter (Viola, Sinfonia '97-99, VYP '99-00, VYO '00-03 SBHS)** After graduating with a degree in music education from SUNY Potsdam in 2007, I worked at the Whitesboro, NY school district for five years, teaching elementary and middle school orchestra. I found that my strength lay in the one-on-one relationships between teachers and students, so I decided to leave the schools to focus on private teaching. I returned to my home city of South Burlington in 2012, teaching private lessons and serving as the Resident Life Director of the Green Mountain Chamber Music Festival, held at UVM.

In 2013, I moved to Ithaca, NY, where I taught privately and also served as the assistant conductor and publicity manager of the Ithaca Community Orchestra. At that time, I also took up the 5-string banjo and started playing bluegrass and old-time music. This past fall, I moved to northern Westchester County and began teaching private lessons at the Cortlandt School of Performing Arts and Northern Westchester Music School. I am working on developing those two studios and also taking part in the vibrant folk scene of the Hudson Valley. Any alumni in the area are encouraged to look me up—let's make some music!

**Bill Tortolano (Violin, VYO '74-77, MMU)** Bill is Music Director of the Snow Pond Center for the Arts in Sidney, Maine. He serves as the musical, educational, and administrative head of the faculty and students at New England Music Camp. Bill is an active freelance violinist in the Washington DC area. He regularly performs with the Washington Concert Opera, National Gallery Orchestra, and Washington Bach Consort. He served for over 20 years with The United States Air Force Band, performing at the White House, Vice President's Residence, State Department, and Pentagon. Additionally, he served as Chief Flight Arranger, Director for Audience Development, and Director of Alumni & Veterans Affairs. Bill conceived of, and programmed the well-received orchestral CD, "An American Dream," which received favorable reviews and was featured on NPR's "Performance Today." He is the recipient of two Meritorious Service Medals, a Commendation Medal, and two Air Force Achievement Medals. Bill received a Bachelor of Music from Oberlin College Conservatory of Music and an Arts Management degree from George Mason University. He also received a Master of Music from Yale University. Additionally, he was a scholarship student at Aspen and Tanglewood Music Festivals, and concertmaster at both the US and Italy Spoleto Festivals. His former teachers include Louis Fink, Stephen Clapp, and Paul Kantor. Prior to joining the Air Force, he was an Assistant Professor of Music at Earlham College where he taught counterpoint, music theory, violin, and conducted the college/community orchestra. He was also concertmaster, orchestra contractor and member of the Whitewater Opera Board of Trustees. Prior to that, he taught at Phillips Academy and played with Boston Pops-Esplanade Orchestra and the Boston Lyric Opera. In 1990 he was a Visiting Fellow at Trinity College, Cambridge University. He is published and recorded by GIA, Chicago.



**Erica Baron (French horn, VYO '96-99, Essex High)** and her wife Rachel had a son, Isaac, last December. At just over a year old, he is crawling everywhere and beginning to try some words. He also loves to bang on pots, pans, furniture—anything that makes a good sound. Future percussionist, perhaps?

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**Crystal Lynn Egli (Violin, VYS '92-96, VYO '96-02, U-32)** In 2015 I moved from Los Angeles to Colorado to pursue a better work-life balance, and boy did I find it! I landed my dream job shortly after the move working for Colorado Parks & Wildlife, where I make videos about our beautiful state parks, the abundant wildlife that graces our state, research projects that are going on, as well as videos for hunters, anglers, and wildlife watchers. In addition to working with Parks & Wildlife, my husband and I began a website about hiking and fishing. [TheEglisOutdoors.com](http://TheEglisOutdoors.com) talks about where to hike and fish, and provides tips and gear reviews for both activities. Writing for this site encourages us to visit new places every time we get outdoors, and between that and traveling all around for work, I have come to fall in love with my new home state.

**Harlow Carpenter (Trumpet, Sinfonia '01-02, VYP '02-03, VYO '03-06, SBHS)** has been playing in Balkan brass ensembles, rock bands, and musical theater pits since moving to the Bay Area in 2010 after completing a Bachelor of Music degree in performance and musicology at Boston University. Last October, Harlow was part of Taylor Mac's 24-hour marathon performance art piece *A 24-Decade History of Popular Music* in New York City, which received a glowing review in the *New York Times* and was awarded five stars by the *Guardian*. Harlow's playing can be heard on records by Beats Antique, the Dear Hunter, Kill Moi, and Fanfare Zambaleta. Harlow also frequently records and performs with songwriter and guitarist Briget Boyle, whom Harlow married in October 2016. When the Trumpet is in its case, Harlow is an editorial project lead in the online education department at the Academy of Art University, and also works as a freelance editor for local musicians and arts organizations. Harlow was the manuscript editor for the book *The Creative Formula* by Holly Shaw and is completing the UC Berkeley Extension Program's Professional Sequence in Editing. Harlow and Briget live in Oakland, California with their cat Mali, and guinea pigs Pockets and Wallet.

**Lydia Herrick (Violin, VYO '10-13, Montpelier High)** Since I graduated from high school and VYO, I've been pursuing an undergraduate in Spanish Studies at Bard College in the beautiful Hudson Valley. Although my college doesn't technically offer minors, I consider myself an unofficial music minor; classical music plays an essential role in my life in addition to my passion for Latin American/Iberian Studies. My classes have nourished a deep passion for Latin American and Spanish Literature, and I've even

had the fantastic opportunity to study abroad in Oaxaca, Mexico and Granada, Spain to hone my language skills and experience true cultural immersion. While pursuing my major, I have been very involved in Bard's diverse music scene. For the past 4 years, I've been a part of the Bard Baroque Ensemble (where we play traditional Baroque music with Baroque bows), the Bard College Orchestra, various Bard chamber music groups, and I've studied under a fabulous violin instructor: Marka Gustavsson. I have also enjoyed participating in Bard's vibrant extracurricular scene. I'm a co-captain of Bard's co-ed Ultimate Frisbee team, the co-head editor of our translation magazine, *Sui Generis*, and I have an internship at the Worker Justice Center of New York in Kingston, NY. I often reflect on my time at VYO and how it has enriched my life. I am immensely thankful for the deeply gratifying experience I had playing with such a unique youth orchestra; VYO somehow manages to foster a supportive community through a highly creative approach to academic musicality, all the while ensuring students are having fun and making meaningful friendships. One experience that will always stick with me is when I was performing in Prague during the 2011 tour of Germany and the Czech Republic. We were playing Edward Elgar's "Nimrod" from his *Enigma Variations*, and during a particularly emotional section, I glanced down into the audience to see a woman in the first row moved to tears. I locked eyes with this stranger, and though we didn't even share the same language, we could connect. Unfolding before me, I truly felt and saw the universal power of music for the first time. Like many other members of the orchestra, I had never played for an audience entirely comprised of strangers nor had I performed in a foreign country. When I listen to that piece, I can still remind myself of the purity of music's power. In a much less flashy way though, VYO gave me the little moments—giggling loudly with friends during a break, learning a creative bowing technique during sectionals, or sharing pre-concert nervous excitement backstage at the Flynn. These moments taught me the true meaning of playing in a large youth orchestra, which for me was honestly an invaluable experience. Outside the social climate of my high school, VYO gave me an opportunity to flourish in a community of kids who shared similar interests and goals. I still keep in good contact with many of my friends from the orchestra; some of the friendships I made will truly be life-long. I am immeasurably grateful for VYO, and I'll always carry its lessons (no matter how small or big) with me wherever I go.



## Carnegie Hall's Link Up: *The Orchestra Rocks*



Above: VYO bassist Rainbow Chen works with VSO's Luke Baker  
Below: Students in the audience get ready to play along with the orchestra

On March 9, 2017, members of the **Vermont Youth Orchestra** and **Vermont Symphony Orchestra** came to together to perform Carnegie Hall's Link Up concert, *The Orchestra Rocks*. This marks the second of a three-year partnership with the Flynn Center's school-day matinee program. During 2016, nearly 800 students and teachers filled the Flynn Theater to participate in the Vermont premier of this program. The level of excitement that came from the students in the audience was like nothing our VYO students had experienced before making it a very special performance for everyone.

Link Up is a music education program provided by Carnegie Hall's Weill Music Institute and designed specifically for students in grades 3 – 5. These concerts are unlike any other school-day orchestra program. All students are guided by their school music teachers through a yearlong, hands-on curriculum that focuses on specific concepts including rhythm, melody, tempo, orchestrations, and composition. All materials are provided free of charge, including a recorder for each student. As they learn to play the melodies they will hear at the concert, students foster a deeper understanding of the concepts that will be covered in the concert through active music-making.

The culmination of this year-long program is a live performance at the Flynn Center for the Performing Arts where students have the opportunity to sing and play the recorder along with the orchestra from their seats. This performance often serves as a student's first concert experience and provides them with the opportunity to apply the music concepts they have studied.



What's special for the Vermont students who are attending is that unlike our orchestra counterparts across the country, our students will both see and hear young musicians performing alongside seasoned musicians, and in some cases, the VYO students' own private music teachers. The collaboration between the VYO, the VSO, and the Flynn Center is the first in the country where Link Up is performed by a youth and regional side-by-side orchestra and presented in partnership with the area performing arts center's community engagement program. We are proud to be able to share with our colleagues across the country the benefits of presenting this concert in this way.

## Introducing: Summer Symphony Camp

**Music Day Camp** has been a staple of our June schedule for decades. Due to changes with the Saint Michael's College campus, we're excited to launch a new camp experience for young musicians in our area. **Summer Symphony Camp** is designed as an introduction to playing in a symphonic orchestra for band (including saxophones) and string students entering grades 6 - 9 (5th grade for string players). Unlike our yearlong programs, we are excited to offer a jazz orchestra experience with this camp. Along with two unique full orchestra experiences, students will perform in small chamber groups and combos and have the chance to participate in exciting electives.

To create an authentic symphony orchestra experience, instrument sections will be closed once all seats in that section are filled. No audition is necessary, and enrollment is on a first-come, first-served basis. We hope this unique camp structure will introduce new and rewarding musical experiences to young musicians from throughout our region and inspire a passion and appreciation for symphonic orchestra playing.

## UPCOMING CONCERTS & EVENTS

**Saturday, April 8th — 1:00 pm**

Vermont Youth Strings @ ELMC

**Sunday, April 9th — 5:30 pm**

Vermont Youth Philharmonia @ ELMC

**Tuesday, April 11th — 7:00 pm**

Spring Choral Concert @ ELMC

*VYC performs the Complete Frostiana*

**Monday, May 8th — 7:30 pm**

Vermont Youth Orchestra @ the Flynn

**For more information, visit [vyo.org](http://vyo.org)**

# VYOA ONLINE AUCTION

April 25-May 9, 2017

## A fundraiser for student financial aid

Starting April 25th, bid on exciting items such as a Caribbean cruise for two, Broadway tickets with private backstage tour, artwork, jewelry, gift certificates, and much much more. Our goal is to raise \$10,000 in student financial aid funding!

Visit **[www.vyo.org/auction](http://www.vyo.org/auction)** to learn more

**VYOA**  
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ALUMNI NEWSLETTER  
WINTER/SPRING 2017



**FLASHBACK FEATURE:** Cello invasion! Do you recognize these young cellists? If so, send an email to [martha@vyo.org](mailto:martha@vyo.org) and let us know!



## WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU!

Send your stories and address updates to [martha@vyo.org](mailto:martha@vyo.org). Let us know what's going on in your life and share memories and photos of your time with the VYOA!