

**BEETHOVEN**  
**AND**  
**BLUE JEANS**

2023-2024 SEASON

VALDOSTA  
SYMPHONY  
ORCHESTRA



Dear Friends,

Welcome to the 2023-2024 Valdosta Symphony Orchestra season at Valdosta State University. We are celebrating 34 years of the transformative power of music, and we are delighted to have you join us from your favorite seat in Whitehead Auditorium for what promises to be five inspiring live performances.

When the VSO performed its first concert in November 1990, VSU was the only institution of higher education in Georgia to have its own university-affiliated symphony orchestra — because we understand the undeniable role the arts play in bringing people together, fostering creativity, and driving innovation. As South Georgia’s flagship institution of higher education, having a professional orchestra playing live classical music in our backyard is just one example of how VSU is working to enhance communities through life-changing experiences.



The American Prize-winning VSO serves both the cultural life of Valdosta and the regional academic mission of VSU. Its membership is a unique blend of resident artist-faculty, students studying professional music disciplines, talented community performers, and carefully selected professionals from a five-state region. It attracts guest soloists of national and international renown.

The VSO contributes to the cultural life of the entire region. In addition to its concert performances, it offers musical enrichment grants to support VSU students pursuing creative endeavors. It provides exploratory string classes for children and adults through the South Georgia String Project, presents a special Youth Concert Series for school children and their teachers, and introduces the instruments of the orchestra to young children during the annual Tunes for Tots.

We are grateful for every member of the VSO for their tireless dedication to the musical arts and their willingness to share their talents with others. We are also grateful for the many individuals, families, and corporations who generously support, protect, and nurture our university community’s tradition of musical excellence.

Thank you for being a part of our audience.

Enjoy the performance!

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Richard A. Carvajal".

**Richard A. Carvajal, Ph.D.**  
President of Valdosta State University



Good evening,

Our Valdosta Symphony Orchestra is truly a unique enterprise, one of a select few in the entire country that operates collaboratively and benefits both the university and community. The VSO is a premier example of our campus and community's commitment to Arts and culture, fostering tourism, economic growth, and civic pride. As such, we have a responsibility to nurture a thriving arts community, to educate, mentor, and support our students, and enhance the cultural landscape of our region. Together, we embark on a musical journey that captivates and uplifts our community, leaving an indelible mark for generations to come.



I want to take a moment to express my deep gratitude to all our attendees, steadfast season ticket holders, generous donors, and visionary sponsors. Your investment in the performing arts and specifically the Valdosta Symphony Orchestra, is a testament to your belief in the power of music -- to educate, inspire, and entertain, and we are grateful for your continued support.

Year after year, the VSO assembles unique performances that feature talented guest performers and showcases the outstanding artistry of our faculty through solo performances and collaborative leadership to create music recognized across national and international stages, right here in our own community.

Regarding our outstanding faculty and student performers, the Executive Director, and Director/Conductor of the VSO -- their hard work, grit, and dedication to their craft brings the orchestra to life. We are truly fortunate to have such a passionate group of students, faculty, guest artists, professionals, and loyal supporters -- we couldn't do it without you.

My sincere thanks to each one of you for championing our Valdosta Symphony Orchestra. We appreciate your attendance and your unwavering dedication to the College of the Arts, the Department of Music, and to the Valdosta Symphony Orchestra. We are delighted that you have chosen to be part of this effort.

Enjoy the evening and the performance, we are in for a real treat.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Michael T. Schmidt".

**Michael T. Schmidt**  
Interim Dean, College of the Arts

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# About the Music Director



## Howard Hsu

Howard Hsu is the Music Director of the Valdosta (GA) Symphony Orchestra and serves as Associate Professor of Music and Director of Orchestra Studies at Valdosta State University. Under his leadership, the Valdosta Symphony was selected as the 2014 winner of the American Prize in Orchestral Performance (community division),

and has had performances aired statewide on Georgia Public Broadcasting Radio's "Midday Music" and "Orchestras of Georgia" programs. Hsu has performed with the Canadian Brass, Robert McDuffie, Simone Dinnerstein, Jennifer Frautschi, Wendy Warner, Christine Brewer, Rachel Barton Pine, Orion Weiss, Stanford Olsen, Alexander Ghindin, Alexander Schimpf, Katia Skanavi, Awadagin Pratt, Elena Urioste, Amy Schwartz Moretti, the Empire Brass, and the Melodica Men. He conducted the world premiere of James Oliverio's Trumpet Concerto No. 1: *World House*, the U.S. premiere of Ned McGowan's Concerto for iPad and Orchestra (Rotterdam Concerto 2), and has given the Georgia premieres of Fernande Decruck's Sonata for Saxophone and Orchestra, several of the Debussy/Matthews Preludes, and Jonathan Bailey Holland's *Motor City Dance Mix*.

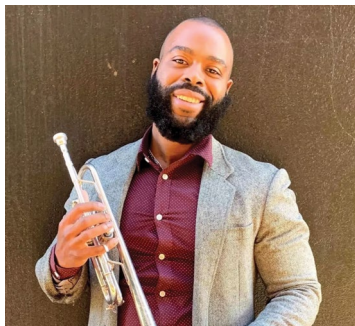
Howard Hsu has appeared as guest conductor with the Hartford (CT), Fox Valley (WI), Wyoming, Mankato (MN), Macon (GA), and New Britain (CT) Symphonies, as well as the Bronx (NY) Arts Ensemble, with whom he conducted the world premiere of Eleanor Cory's *O'Keefe's Flora*. He was a Visiting Assistant Professor of Music at the University of Connecticut and Associate Conductor of the University of Connecticut Symphony Orchestra, and was Visiting Instructor of Music and Director of the Orchestra at Connecticut College.

Howard Hsu received his D.M.A. from the University of Connecticut, his M.M. from the San Francisco Conservatory of Music, and his B.S. from the Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania.

# ABOUT THE ARTIST

## Javian Brabham, trumpet

Dr. Javian Brabham is the Assistant Professor of Trumpet and Brass Area Chair at Valdosta State University. Prior to his appointment, he served as Assistant Director of Bands at Young Harris College and on faculty for the South Carolina Governor's School for the Arts and Humanities Summer Music Academy.



As an active performer, Dr. Brabham serves as principal trumpet of the Valdosta Symphony and Albany (GA) Symphony Orchestras. He has also performed with the Bosie Philharmonic Orchestra, Tallahassee Symphony Orchestra, New Mexico Philharmonic, Northwest Florida Symphony, Sinfonia Gulf Coast, the Colour of Music Festival Orchestra, and completed his Carnegie Hall debut with the Gateways Music Festival

Orchestra. He has presented masterclasses and been a featured artist at universities across the country. He has performed and presented at multiple conferences including the International Trumpet Guild Conference, the National Association of College Wind and Percussion Instructors Conference, the Trumpet Festival of the Southeast, and more. As a chamber musician, he is a founding member of the Brookwood Trio which has completed regional tours throughout the country.

As a teacher, his students have been accepted in graduate and undergraduate programs across the country as well as K-12 job placements. His students have gone on to win International Trumpet Guild Conference (ITG) Scholarships, in addition to being selected as finalists and semifinalists at the National Trumpet Competition in both solo and ensemble divisions.

He holds a Doctor of Music from Florida State University in Trumpet Performance, with a certification in college teaching. He completed a Master of Music in Trumpet Performance from the University of New Mexico and a Bachelor of Music Education from Florida State University. His principal teachers include Christopher Moore, Jeff Piper, John Marchiando, and Gary Malvern.

**The Valdosta Symphony Orchestra**  
**34th Season**

**Howard Hsu**, Music Director

**“Beethoven and Blue Jeans”**

November 4, 2023

*This concert is sponsored by Stifel.*

**Serenade No. 13 in G Major,  
K. 525 “Eine kleine Nachtmusik” | 4 mins**

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756–1791)

I. Allegro

Ronald Pelham, conductor

***Don Giovanni* Overture, K. 527 | 7 mins**

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756–1791)

Howard Hsu, conductor

**Concerto for Trumpet in E-flat Major | 16 mins**

Johann Baptist Neruda (c. 1708–c. 1780)

I. Allegro

II. Largo

III. Vivace

Javian Brabham, trumpet

~ INTERMISSION ~

**Symphony No.8 in F Major, Op. 93 | 27 mins**

Ludwig van Beethoven (1770–1827)

I. Allegro vivace e con brio

II. Allegretto scherzando

III. Tempo di menuetto

IV. Allegro vivace

Howard Hsu, conductor

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Megumi Terry

Elma Sanabria

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Milik Green

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Valerie Holton Smith, *Principal*



# Valdosta Symphony Orchestra

## ABOUT THE MUSIC

by Alan M. Rothenberg

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### **Allegro from Serenade No. 13 in G Major, K. 525 “Eine kleine Nachtmusik”**

**Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756–1791)**

The genesis of many pieces by Wolfgang Mozart is shrouded in mystery, often due to the lack of sketches or preliminary versions. Apparently, Mozart frequently worked out an entire composition in his head and then put it on paper with virtually no corrections or cross-outs. The Serenade in G Major, written in the summer of 1787 while Mozart was working on the opera *Don Giovanni*, is one example.

The eighteenth-century serenade was often used as background music at a royal social event. Mozart wrote a number of serenades, almost all on commission, and there is usually evidence that tells us about the occasion where the music was performed or the circumstances of its composition. However, the Serenade in G, the thirteenth and last serenade Mozart wrote, is never mentioned in any of his letters, and there is nothing to indicate the composer ever heard it performed.

Mozart entered this serenade in his personal catalogue of works on August 10, 1787, and it has become known by the phrase he included in the entry: *Eine kleine Nachtmusik* (literally “a little night music”), although Mozart would have considered this a description rather than a title. H. C. Robbins Landon, one of the greatest Mozart scholars, wrote, “The public has always been attracted by its formal precision and by the beauty and delicacy of the slow movement; this might, quite simply, be considered the most beautiful piece of occasional music ever written.”

### ***Don Giovanni* Overture (K. 527)**

**Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756–1791)**

Mozart had a special relationship with the music lovers of Prague. For his first visit in 1786, the composer brought his opera *The Marriage of Figaro* and Symphony No. 38 (K. 504), now known as the “Prague” Symphony. The success of these pieces led to a commission for a new opera, which premiered in October 1787. That work was *Don Giovanni*, Mozart’s version of the Don Juan legend. Its blend of comedy and drama was unique for its time, and it received a warm reception in Prague, then Vienna, and eventually the rest of the world.

At first hearing, the seriousness of the opening minutes of the overture might seem out of place next to the jocular and sprightly music that follows. But the forceful, fearsome sounds that open the overture are later heard when the father of one the Don's conquests comes back from the dead to take his revenge.

## **Concerto for Trumpet in E-flat Major**

**Johann Baptist Neruda (c. 1708–c. 1780)**

Composer, violinist, and cellist Johann Baptist Neruda was born in Bohemia (now part of the Czech Republic) to a family of musicians. His musical training took place predominantly in Prague, where he played in a theater orchestra. In 1750, he became a member of the court orchestra of Count Rutowski in Dresden, where he stayed until his death. He composed eighteen symphonies, fourteen concertos, one opera, and numerous chamber pieces.

The trumpet concerto heard tonight was written for Johann Georg Knechtel, a horn virtuoso, composer, and member of the Dresden orchestra. It was originally scored for a valveless hunting horn, also known as a “post horn.” It was typically played by a horn player used to playing entirely in the upper register of the instrument, a challenging task. The resulting sound probably resembled a modern trumpet more than a modern French Horn. As a result, this horn concerto is almost always performed as a trumpet concerto. Its three movements follow the typical three movement classical-era format of fast-slow-fast.

## **Symphony No. 8 in F Major, Op. 93**

**Ludwig van Beethoven (1770–1827)**

*Composed in 1812. About the same time – 1810: Bavaria holds the first Oktoberfest in celebration of the Crown Prince's marriage. 1812: The Boston Gazette coins the term “gerrymander” in a political cartoon. The Brothers Grimm begin publishing fairy tales. 1813: The London Philharmonic is founded. Jane Austin's “Pride and Prejudice” is published anonymously.*

Beethoven's Seventh and Eighth symphonies were sketched simultaneously in 1811, completed the following year, and share an emotional buoyancy not found elsewhere in Beethoven's orchestral output. Critic Ernest Newman wrote the Eighth “takes the overflow of the Seventh,” and both symphonies exhibit “a mood of joyous acceptance of life and the world.”

Curiously, both of these symphonies were written during one of Beethoven's most emotionally difficult periods. Beethoven had been engaged in a passionate affair

with Antonie Brentano, a married woman who offered to leave her husband and children to live with the composer. But Beethoven realized he could not give her the same devotion she gave him and ended the affair. Today, many scholars believe the famous “Immortal Beloved” letter of July 1812 was written to Brentano.

The Eighth was first performed in February 1814 in a concert that included the Seventh Symphony and *Wellington’s Victory*, an overblown tribute to the defeat of Napoleon. Both these pieces overshadowed the relatively modest Eighth, which nevertheless became immensely popular within a year of the premiere, resulting in it being arranged for various instrumental groupings.

The Seventh begins with a long introduction, but the Eighth gets down to business right away and then zips along with almost continuous rhythmic inventiveness. Unusual for a sonata-form movement, it reaches a dramatic climax at the beginning of the recapitulation, rather than during the development. The second movement, usually the place for a contemplative moment, is instead taken up with a joke that is another link between the Eighth Symphony and *Wellington’s Victory*. The latter was originally written to be performed on a Panharmonicon, a sort-of mechanical military band, invented by Beethoven’s friend Johann Nepomuk Maelzel (1772–1838). The Panharmonicon never amounted to much, and Beethoven re-scored *Wellington’s Victory* for standard orchestra. Another of Maelzel’s supposed inventions was more interesting to Beethoven—the metronome. (“Supposed” because Maelzel’s device was essentially a copy of the metronome devised a few years earlier by the Dutch inventor Dietrich Nikolaus Winkel.) One day, as the possibly apocryphal story goes, Maelzel was demonstrating the metronome to Beethoven and some friends. The composer was taken with the device and sang a little tune to the accompaniment of the ticking device, which became the theme of the Eighth’s second movement.

The conventional Classical-era symphony would feature a minuet as the third movement, but in almost all of his symphonies Beethoven substituted a faster movement he called a *scherzo*. In the Eighth Symphony he returned to the earlier practice, but with its unusually accented beats this minuet is far from something Haydn or Mozart would have written. The finale returns us to the mood of the first movement, complete with jocular themes, unexpected syncopations, and playful incongruities.

Beethoven biographer Maynard Solomon wrote the Eighth Symphony exists “in a festal paradise, outside of time and history, untouched by mortality. [It] transports us into a sphere of laughter, play and the exuberant release of bound energy.” It is a small jewel nestled between the towering masterpieces of the Seventh and the Ninth and was, by some accounts, Beethoven’s favorite of all his symphonies.

# Valdosta Symphony Orchestra

## Upcoming Events

**November 11, 2023**

**VSO SYMPHONY BALL**

**December 1, 2023**

**VSU Holiday Concert**  
**Save the date!**

**February 17, 2024**

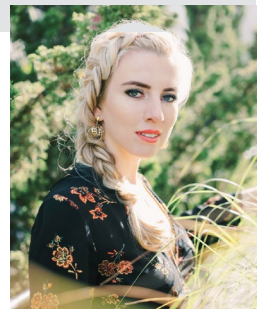
**“Turbulent”**

Schumann *Manfred* Overture, Op. 115 | 12 mins

Hindemith *Nobilissima visione* Suite | 21 mins

Rachmaninoff Piano Concerto No. 3  
in D Minor, Op. 30 | 40 mins

Natasha Paremski, piano



- Rachmaninoff performed his Third Piano Concerto with the New York Philharmonic under the baton of Gustav Mahler
- The Third is considered one of the most difficult and demanding piano concertos
- Natasha Paremski won the Gilmore Young Artist Prize when she was eighteen





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## PLEASE DO

- Turn off your pager and watch alarms.
- Consult the program for the number of movements in a piece to know when to clap at the end.
- Unwrap your cough drop before the music starts so it's ready if you need it.
- Cover your mouth to cough/sneeze to muffle the sound.
- Put your cell phone on silent.

## PLEASE DON'T

- Talk or whisper during the performance.
- Sing, or tap your fingers/feet to the music.
- Bring young children to the concert – our Youth concerts are specially geared towards developing attention spans.
- Leave or take your seat during the music (unless you did not follow the previous rule - in that case, please escort your disruptive child out as quickly as possible). Please wait until you hear applause.
- Clap between movements thinking it's the end of the piece. When in doubt, wait for others to clap first.
- Use flash photography or recording devices during the concert (these actions are illegal in this hall).



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