



Live Music
reimagined



Master Players

CONCERT SERIES



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reimagined



China Magpie



Juilliard String Quartet



Sixwire Project





The Master Players

Concert Series is a flagship, in-residence concert organization at the University of Delaware that presents classical, crossover, world and jazz music; dance; musical theatre; and family pops concerts. As a proud recipient of Delaware Division of the Arts annual project support grants since 2011 and a competitive Chamber Music America grant, Master Players has gained popularity by providing audiences with world-class concert programs on the campus of

"The most creative concert presenting organization in the area."

—DELAWARE DIVISION
OF THE ARTS

Handel's Messiah



the University of Delaware. Our popular series of Saturday afternoon concerts attracts a wide range of family audience and retirees from the region.

our mission and values

Through presentation, education and the creation of new compositions and productions, Master Players informs, inspires and serves UD and communities in the tri-state area through an ongoing series of live performances with distinguished artists and ensembles that represent the diverse spectrum of today's performing arts world.

Master Players values the power of live music to illuminate, transform and heal, and treasures the positive impact music has on people of all walks of life.



Because Master Players believes live music is an essential element of the human experience, we have an uncompromising commitment to music education that extends from the UD campus to the next generation of Americans, including pre-college students, children with special needs and those from impoverished backgrounds.

We proudly create a stage that encourages interdisciplinary collaboration, promotes creativity and inspires the imaginations of non-musician artists and creative students, enabling them to fully express themselves. Through

unconventional presentations that feature young and future performers and attract future audiences, Master Players keeps the work of professional musicians and performers vital and ensures their continuity.

how it all began

With the support of the University of Delaware administration, Master Players was founded in 2004 by producing artistic director and UD Distinguished

"A lot of fun and educational."

**—DELAWARE GOVERNOR
JACK MARKELL**

Professor of Music Xiang Gao, in an effort to serve local audiences of all backgrounds through an ongoing series of distinguished live performances. The past few seasons have seen a number of original projects come to fruition, and upcoming seasons will continue to feature original productions and concerts that transform the way live music is experienced.

looking ahead

Master Players is initiating an expansion—both in organizational aspects and creative direction of the series. The creation in 2014 of its first Advisory Council is one reflection of these expansion efforts. The Council, a group of inspirational business and community leaders, will lend their professional and creative prowess to our growing organization during a critical time.

Baltimore Chamber Orchestra



our vision

Master Players seeks to bring acclaimed performing arts programs offered in major concert venues worldwide to the tri-state region. With additional private and corporate support, Master Players seeks to fully develop the capabilities necessary to secure a position for Newark, Delaware, as the cultural center of the region. For the community, Master Players' notable activities will assist in the rapid economic growth of the area, as research has demonstrated that creative cultural organizations have successfully helped accomplish growth in other regions. The scope and quality of UD's Newark campus make it an ideal location for a world-class concert series with national visibility. Master Players will also maintain and build friendships between the University and its alumni, friends, patrons and members of the local community.

artists roster

Each year, Master Players continues to be innovative and highly selective in its presentation of concert programs. Over the years, Master Players has presented legendary musicians of such prestigious ensembles as:

- The Philadelphia Orchestra
- The Detroit Symphony
- The Baltimore Symphony
- The National Symphony
- The Metropolitan Opera
- YoYo Ma's Silk Road Ensemble
- The Guarneri String Quartet
- The Emerson String Quartet
- The Juilliard String Quartet
- The Canadian Brass
- The Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center

Master Players' roster also proudly includes winners of top international music competitions, including the Van





Canadian Brass

Cliburn International Piano Competition, the Tchaikovsky International Music Competition and the Concert Artist Guild International Music Competition.

artistic leadership

Master Players founding artistic director Xiang Gao enjoyed a successful international career as a concert violinist, composer, song writer and

creative concert producer before settling as a resident of Delaware. In 2014, Gao was granted a Delaware Governor's Award for the Arts for his contributions to the state as a musician and innovator. As the UD Trustees Distinguished Professor of Music, Gao is also the only Chinese-born violinist with an endowed professorship in the U.S. – a unique quality that has given him an incomparable ability and passion to bring Eastern and Western cultures together in harmony.



MPCS Jazz Concert

Under Gao's artistic direction, an original Master Players concert project (for example, CSI Beethoven—A Chamber Music Play and Campus Chatter: a New Musical) brings together artists and creative scholars from a wide range of disciplines to create a multimedia concert with effective and entertaining artistic elements. Gao's goal for Master Players is to promote music and other art forms while producing a live-audience experience that is multifaceted and more intricate than most traditional entertainment or educational programs. The result is an outlet for local audiences

of all backgrounds and ages to enjoy and engage in Master Players concerts with their families and friends.

serving our community

By bringing the best artists in the world to the University of Delaware, Master Players has boosted the level of cultural quality in the local community to a higher standard.

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For Newark, a small city that has achieved an impressive amount of growth in recent years and continues to thrive more by the day, this function is more crucial than ever. With its high artistic caliber and uniquely creative concepts, Master Players has contributed considerably to Newark's burgeoning reputation as a flourishing center of cultural development.

Master Players tickets also cost a fraction of the price of a ticket at most world-class concert venues, ensuring that cultural enrichment is available to all members of the community, regardless of their age or budget. For example, the student subscription package for seven concerts in the 2014-2015 season was priced at \$56—lower than a single concert ticket in New York or Philadelphia. And in December 2014, for the second time, Master Players made its popular Holiday Pops concert performed by the

legendary Canadian Brass free of charge to any child 14 and younger.

The presentation of these world-class artists serves the dual purpose of supporting Master Players' integral mission of providing service-based education to Delawareans. Through Master Players, many of today's most respected and sought-after concert artists and pedagogues—from New York to Paris to Vienna—have come to Delaware to teach master classes; to encourage and engage local high school and college students in meaningful conversations; and to deliver performances that inspire the next generation of Americans. Such rare opportunities have motivated students to work hard and achieve the caliber of artistry and scholarship that will bring them success.

Alongside master classes given by most visiting artists, other educational endeavors that benefit the community



include the Master Players Festival, the Little Masters Project, and the Master Players Community Outreach Project. For more information on these programs, please visit www.masterplayers.udel.edu.

it takes a village

Master Players could not accomplish all that it has without an extensive network of volunteer work, coupled with its staff under the direction of general manager, Melissa Kitchen. Master Players is

grateful for financial support from UD's College of Arts and Sciences, which helps to cover artist and facility fees. We also thank our generous community of donors and friends. Such ongoing support will enable Master Players to continue to offer affordable and feasible programs.

Master Players also maintains a commitment to measuring the success of its performance projects in order to plan accordingly for the future. We continue to invite on-site evaluators from local organizations and corporations funding the series to evaluate current projects and determine their success.





Anne-Marie McDerwott



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iMusic 5: Encounters



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