

# THE CHESAPEAKE INTERNATIONAL CHAMBER MUSIC COMPETITION

*Wonderful Years*

*Spectacular Competitions*

Join us in celebrating the Competition's rich contribution to Chesapeake Music and the careers of the many fine musicians who have competed. Inside we share comments from leaders, judges, and some of the winning ensembles who have made this program a resounding success.



While there have been many wonderful volunteers in the history of the Competition, Anna Larkin and Arnie Lerman not only inspired the project, but have also contributed their time and energy for all 20 years.

## Founders



**Anna Larkin, Director Emerita**

“When we began defining the Competition twenty years ago, we knew there was a place for it and we had strong support from Marcy Rosen, Lawrie Bloom and other professional musicians, but we had never done it before. It turned out that was a good thing. Though the rules were precise and the endeavor serious, the kindly atmosphere of

the Eastern Shore gave our Competition its happy reputation. The young finalists experienced gracious, free hospitality, ample rehearsal time, and uninterrupted performances to an enthusiastic audience, as well as constructive commentary from judges. They also gave next-day performances and had future engagements. Our ignorance had led us to wildly exceed the norm, and this new, tightly run professional endeavor benefitted from an overlay of warmth that made the Chesapeake Chamber Music Competition an early standout among its more established peers.”



**Arnie Lerman, Director Emeritus**

“ Wouldn’t it be wonderful, I thought, to hold a competition—not for high school students—but for young professional ensembles to help them launch their careers. We could run it as an independent event and offer the chance to perform at the Festival as a prize. We could shoot for the moon –hold a national competition every two years. With an

average ensemble age of 30 or 31 we could attract both student groups and others who had already started on their careers. With a call for ensembles of any type of acoustic instruments we could appeal not only to traditional ensembles, but to types of mixed ensembles playing both traditional and new chamber music. With a genuine concert format that allowed each group to perform for a substantial time, we would provide a window for an audience and for concert promoters to hear the groups.

[Since then], the Chesapeake Chamber Music Competition has been held every two years and recently held its 10th live competition and has acquired an international reputation.”

Over the past 20 years, the Competition has grown and thrived, thanks to the tireless and passionate efforts of its leaders.

## Presidents



**Courtney Kane, Former President**

“Through the years Chesapeake Chamber Music, now Chesapeake Music, has featured the very best of acclaimed musicians. Our Artistic Directors are themselves exceptionally accomplished, winners of international awards and prizes. Much as we are proud of our tradition of offering Eastern Shore hospitality, our first priority has been to bring stellar professional

performances to the Shore. Twenty years ago we undertook to invest in young musicians of superior talent, future outstanding performers. Our Competition founders crafted rules both thoughtful and demanding to attract the best contestants. Ensembles are all rewarded with expert coaching. Winners are invited to return as featured performers. Our supporters and sponsors have committed to providing significant prize money. It’s a credit to the dedicated musicians and volunteers who make the Competition happen that so many of our marvelous young players have gone on to professional acclaim.”



**Michael B. Bracy, Former President and Director Emeritus**

“I was Treasurer of Chesapeake Music when Arnie [Lerman], in his low-key way, made the first suggestion that we start a Competition. My immediate reaction was to fear that a competition would cannibalize contributions from the Chamber Music Festival, which had little to spare. But Arnie,

with a great deal of help from the late Rush Moody, designed the Competition fundraising so that it truly did not interfere with the Festival. The initial fundraising was also large enough that the Competition could offer prizes that would attract top-notch competitors. From the beginning, the winning group was given a slot in the Festival, which was an immediate success and created a strong link between the Competition and the Festival. I was lucky to be present at the creation.

From the outset, the Chesapeake Music Artistic Directors have served as Head Judges in both preliminary and final rounds of the Competition. This has insured a clear and appropriate standard for results for which we are grateful.



### Marcie Rosen, Artistic Director

“On the occasion of the 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Chesapeake Chamber Music Competition, I would like to express my deepest appreciation for all who have worked so hard to ensure the success of the Competition and my admiration for all of the ensembles who have participated over these years.

One thing that separates our competition from most others is the fact that it is open to ensembles of 3 or more, but with any combination of instruments. We do not ask for only the standard combinations of String Quartet or Piano Trio. We accept Saxophone Quartets, Percussion Ensembles, Recorder Quartets, Piano Quartets, Woodwind Quintets, Clarinet Trios or any other creative and viable group.

I am proud of the way we care for our competitors. Housing them in lovely homes with gracious hosts, welcoming them to the community of Easton and our organization—Chesapeake Music. I have yet to hear a complaint about the way anyone was treated while with us! The criteria that we ask our adjudicators to uphold in their judging of the competition is paramount. We are looking not for the flashy, shiny and flawless, but for the communicative, sensitive and compelling. I am so thrilled with all of our past winners and finalists. Many of the ensembles have gone on to quite stellar careers and we were the first step.

I say to all the groups who have been part of our Chesapeake Chamber Music Competition, it was our privilege to have you take part in our event.”



### Catherine Cho, Artistic Director

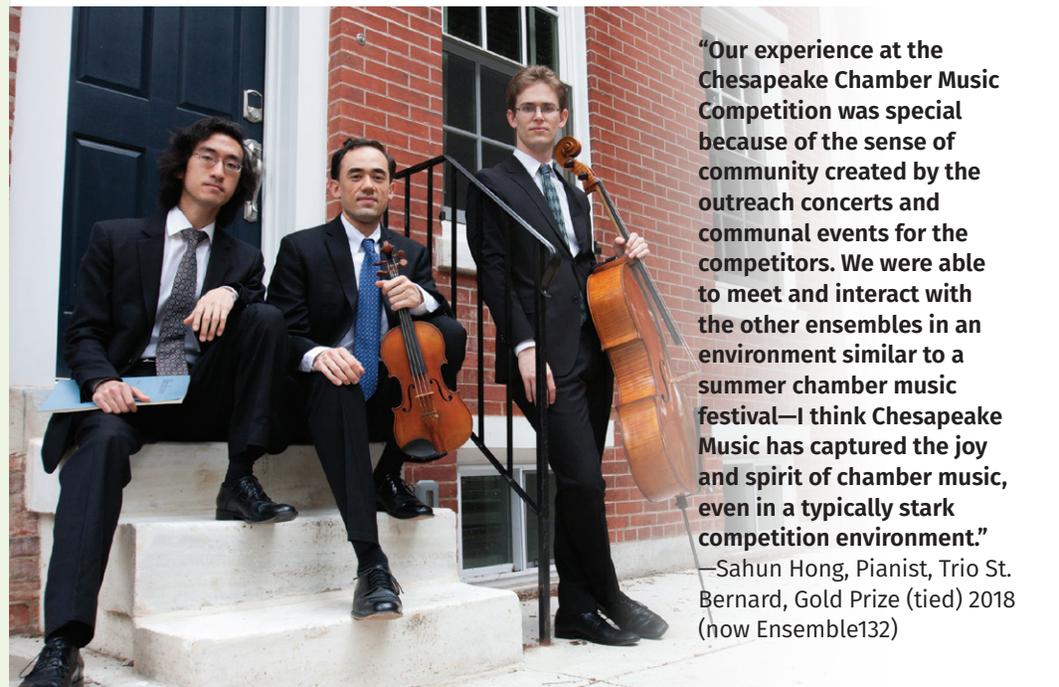
“It is with great excitement that we look back on the last 20 years of the Chesapeake Chamber Music Competitions where we have seen and heard first class emerging chamber music ensembles perform in the welcoming, inviting, and passionate community of the Eastern Shore.

As we reflect on the meaningful experience of meeting and connecting with these young artists through the energetic events of the Competition, we also look ahead to the growth of our Chesapeake Music family as we plan for future Competition events. We are invested in continuing and deepening our commitment to supporting young ensembles on their quest to share their visionary voices with broad audiences, to provide performance opportunities as building blocks for artistic exploration, and remaining passionate in our dedication to form meaningful connections with young artists through music.”

It’s been all about the musicians.

With 50 finalist ensembles through these years, we have tried to stay in touch and have enjoyed having many of them back for concerts beyond the Competition. Here are some of their comments about the experience.

“Winning the Chesapeake International Chamber Music Competition provided us with one of our first concert tours, giving us the chance to connect with audiences across the region and introducing us to some of our longtime friends and supporters. It helped us understand what it means to be a professional touring ensemble through experience, which is the most valuable lesson a group can learn in the early stages of its career.”—Ryan Meehan, Calidore String Quartet, Gold Prize 2012



“Our experience at the Chesapeake Chamber Music Competition was special because of the sense of community created by the outreach concerts and communal events for the competitors. We were able to meet and interact with the other ensembles in an environment similar to a summer chamber music festival—I think Chesapeake Music has captured the joy and spirit of chamber music, even in a typically stark competition environment.”

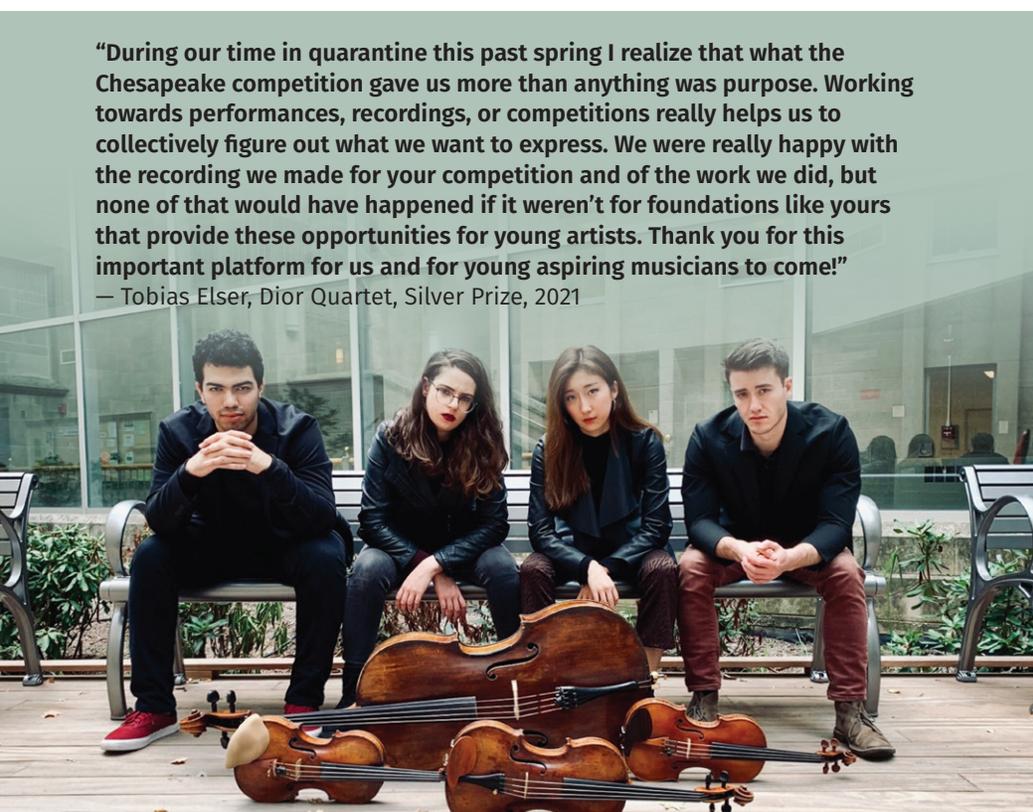
—Sahun Hong, Pianist, Trio St. Bernard, Gold Prize (tied) 2018 (now Ensemble132)



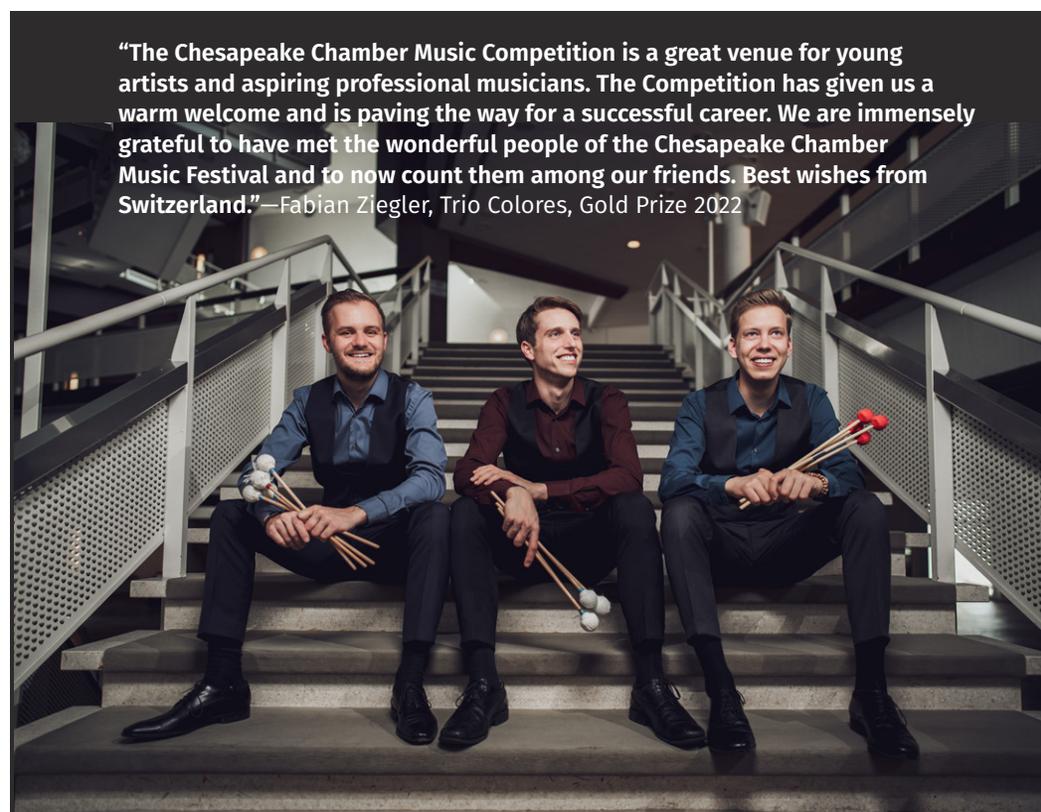
**“When we came to the Competition we had no expectations of winning. Our goal was to perform a great concert to the best of our ability! Not to mention that we were competing against so many respected peers, all extraordinary musicians, many of whom we still interact with even today. Winning the Grand Prize was a shock, an honor, and a big part of what inspired us to seriously pursue String Quartet as a career, winning the Audience Prize showed us the exceptional bond that you can create with an audience by sharing a genuine love for what you do.”—Abigail Rojansky, Wasmuth Quartet, Gold Prize 2014 (now Verona Quartet)**



**“Our experience at the Competition was a wonderful one! Hearing all of the wonderful talent was extremely inspirational for us and receiving in-depth insights about our performance as well as career advice from the judges, has helped us learn and develop so much as a quartet. Everyone, from our hosts to the competition organizers to the Easton community, made us feel so welcome. The audience’s energy at the Final Concert was so palpable, it allowed us to perform at our very best. The opportunity to be a part of the Competition truly is a valuable part of our career, and we are ever grateful!”  
—Allan Hon, Zelter String Quartet, Gold Prize 2021 (Covid delay from 2020)**



**“During our time in quarantine this past spring I realize that what the Chesapeake competition gave us more than anything was purpose. Working towards performances, recordings, or competitions really helps us to collectively figure out what we want to express. We were really happy with the recording we made for your competition and of the work we did, but none of that would have happened if it weren’t for foundations like yours that provide these opportunities for young artists. Thank you for this important platform for us and for young aspiring musicians to come!”  
— Tobias Elser, Dior Quartet, Silver Prize, 2021**



**“The Chesapeake Chamber Music Competition is a great venue for young artists and aspiring professional musicians. The Competition has given us a warm welcome and is paving the way for a successful career. We are immensely grateful to have met the wonderful people of the Chesapeake Chamber Music Festival and to now count them among our friends. Best wishes from Switzerland.”—Fabian Ziegler, Trio Colores, Gold Prize 2022**

## Interlude Concerts with prior Competition finalists and winners:

### Rising Stars—Aero Quartet

Saturday evening, April 22, 2023 at 7:30 PM

### Aero Quartet

School Visit & Concert at Easton Middle School  
and Easton High School  
Monday, April 24, 2023

### Rising Stars—Abeo String Quartet

Saturday evening, October 7, 2023 at 7:30 PM

### Rising Stars—Ensemble 132

Sunday afternoon, March 10, 2024 at 2:00

Next Competition Live Final Round on Saturday, April 13, 2024.



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Paul and Joanne  
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