

AN EVENING WITH

Caplie Brockwell

& THE VCU SYMPHONIC WIND ENSEMBLE



7 PM | APRIL 17, 2024

W.E. SINGLETON CENTER
FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS

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PROGRAM

Celebration Fanfare	Steven Reineke
Victory at Sea	Richard Rodgers arr. Robert Russell Bennett
Tribute to Louis Armstrong	arr. James Stephenson <i>Rex Richardson and James "Saxsmo" Gates Soloists</i>
River City Sunset	Rob Blankenship <i>Rob Blankenship, conductor</i>
Black Horse Troop March	John Philip Sousa
Find a Way	Carrie Brockwell
Fake Love	Carrie Brockwell arr. Coston
He Lives In You from Lion King the Musical	Music and Lyrics by Mark Mancina, Jay Rifkin and Lebo M arr. Duane Coston

INTERMISSION

Galop	Dimitri Schostakovich/Donald Hunsberger
Desparado	Glenn Frey & Don Henley/Carrie Brockwell
If Even Years Go By	Carrie Brockwell
Teddy Bear	Carrie Brockwell arr. Taylor Barnett
March from 1941	John Williams/Donald Hunsberger
Armed Forces on Parade	Larry Clark
“America the Beautiful” as performed by Ray Charles	Agustus Ward/ arr. Coston
I Feel the Earth Move as performed by	Carole King arr. Coston

Symphonic Wind Ensemble Personnel

Piccolo

Tyler Miranda

Flutes

Nat Scida

Jalen Wise

Dylan Hood

Jason Leung

Medha Mani

Oboe

Melanie Aldhizer

Bassoon

Amelia Rose Sheppard

Clarinet

Raatib Rhaman

Jalen Wise

David Monserrate

Ashley Pavia

Lesley Torres

Bass Clarinet

Nathan Nguyen

Jacob Sheppard

Mari Munoz

Ashley Davis

Saxophone

Christopher Guzman-Monroy

Markal Washington

Joseph Meyer

Samuel Rutherford

Trumpet

Daniel Ramirez

John Rose

Alex Warnick

Johnny Tull

Henry Bingman

Horn

Joey Rutherford

Michah Honaker

Luke Sardinia

Cora Rowe

Trombone

Laney Hopkins

Caleb Hepburn

Kayla Hawkins

Dominic Bower

Bass Trombone

Isaac Murell

Euphonium

Owen Goddu

Andrew Joseph

Darius Reed

Percussion

BriAnn Graves

Indy Bennett

Skylar Novak

Ryan LeVault

Marshall Bates

Lydon Cameron

Tuba

Ethan Jenkins

Sean Bolas

Guest Artist Bios

Carrie Brockwell got her start early, performing in musical theatre shows in the Richmond, Virginia area – most notably the title role in the mainstage production of “Annie” at age 11. In November of 2021 (at age 15) Carrie independently released her first EP “Impressions”, receiving song placement on several national podcasts and also earned “EP of the Year” from the Josie Music Association. Carrie’s in-person 2022 American Idol audition in Austin, Texas for Luke Bryan, Katy Perry, and Lionel Richie impressed the judges enough to award Carrie a ‘Golden Ticket’ to Hollywood. In October of 2022 Carrie made her Nashville debut performing at JMA Fest and recently played in the Grand Ole Opry House (studio A) for the Josie Music Awards. In October of 2023 Carrie independently released her second EP titled “Dear Nashville” and in early November of 2023, released a new single that was co-written with Nashville producer/songwriter Britton Cameron titled “Even If Years Go By”. Carrie is currently under an artist development deal with Nashville-based PCG Worldwide and distributes her music through PCG Records, Nashville.

“A startling display of virtuosity... This was something very different, played by a performer of rare gifts indeed.” -- 4barsRest.com, in a review of Rex Richardson’s performance at the 2013 World Music Championship in Kerkrade, Netherlands

Renowned as champion of new, genre-busting music featuring the trumpet as a solo voice, Yamaha Performing Artist **Rex Richardson** was named the 2008 Brass Herald International Personality of the Year, has been called “One of the finest virtuosos of our time” (Brass Herald, 2018).

A veteran of the acclaimed chamber ensemble Rhythm &

Brass, jazz legend Joe Henderson's Quintet and Sextet, William Russo's Chicago Jazz Ensemble, and the world-renowned Brass Band of Battle Creek, his hundreds of soloist appearances include festivals and ensembles on six continents, such as the Phoenix Symphony and Thailand Philharmonic Orchestras, the U.S. Army Field Band and Tokyo Symphonic Winds, England's Fodens Brass Band, and the U.S. Air Force's Airmen of Note Jazz Ensemble.

His latest CD Freedom of Movement: 21st Century Trumpet Concertos was released to critical and public acclaim, and named a top-ten finalist for 4barsrest.com's 2018 Solo CD of the Year. The Journal of the International Trumpet Guild called it "A triumph of virtuosity and musicianship" (March, 2019).

Richardson has taught at Virginia Commonwealth University since 2002, served as International Tutor in Trumpet at England's Royal Northern College of Music from 2012-2015 and at Austria's JAM Music Lab University since 2018.

James "Saxsmo" Gates is one of Richmond's premier musicians. As a saxophonist, Saxsmo has a flaming passion that is evident in every note played. Undeniable passion along with his bell-like tone quality ignites a fire that is sure to light the hearts and souls of all true jazz enthusiasts.

Saxsmo is a Richmond native and graduated from John F. Kennedy High School in 1978. He attended Virginia State University and later transferred under a full scholarship to the prestigious Berklee College of Music. He received his Bachelor of Music degree from Berklee in 1984. Also with a full scholarship, he received his Masters in Jazz Studies

at North Carolina Central University 2011. Saxsmo is the Founder/Director/Coordinator of the Dr. Billy Taylor Jazz Studies Program at Virginia State University. Richmond Public Schools Education Foundation (Key To The City Award) Living Legacies 2015. Gates has played and traveled extensively in the United States and abroad in performing with such notable artists as Joe Kennedy, Jr., Art Blakey, and the Jazz Messengers, Dizzy Gillespie, Clark Terry, Walter Davis, Jr., Walter Bishop, Jr., The Temptations, Dianne Reeves, Jimmy Cobb, Hod O'Brien, Larry Willis, Roberta Flack, Marvin Gaye, Larry Carlton, Jeff Lorber, Alex Bugnon, Terrance Blanchard, Delfeayo Marsalis, Billy Kilson, Patrice Rushen, Steve Wilson, Lonnie Listen Smith, Steve Turreand The Main Ingredients.

Saxsmo credits the forefathers and Masters of Jazz for his musical foundation and passes it along every chance he gets by serving as a teacher and instructor of jazz.

Saxsmo released his first CD in August 1993 entitled “Yes I Can” and has released his newest CD “C’Mon Over To My House.” Saxsmo’s Brand New Exciting Recording called “It’s Time” on the 804jazzLabel featuring the great Fred Wesley has not only made the Smoothjazz.com Top 50 Indie Charts but was also nominated for the 2009 Grammy Awards for Best Contemporary Jazz Album of the Year.

Saxsmo’s new recording “Gates Wide Open” was released January 1, 2013, with many of his best friends such as Fred Wesley, Freddie Fox, and Walter Beasley. Nominated twice for the 2013 Grammy Awards for Best Arranger and Best Soloist (# 18on the Smooth Indie Charts).

Saxsmo’s new Single recording and video “Together We Can Make It” was released on September 8, 2017, nationally and internationally around the World. October 2017, “Together We Can Make It” Made #4 on the Billboard Charts. Saxsmo’s

next Full recording “Stepping Out” will be released April 3, 2020. Stay tuned!

Many Singles made the charts such as “Together We Can Make It! - #18 on the SmoothJazz Listener Charts! “Hero” Made #6 on the SmoothJazz Listener Charts! January, February, March, April 2021, “Living For The Love Of You” - #7 on the SmoothJazz Listener Charts, “I Want You”- #7 on the SmoothJazz Listener Charts Twice and the Record “Stepping Out” #7 on the on the SmoothJazz ChartBound 50 Below! Killing Me Softly #4 on the SmoothJazz Listener Charts! Saxsmo’s next recording (Single – “Georgia” Featuring Strings) on the 804Jazz Label will be next moth! The entire recording Titled (Saxsmo’s Den) June 2024.

Duane Coston is an Assistant Professor of Music at Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU). At VCU, he oversees all band activities, conducts the Wind Ensemble, University Band, serves on university committees, and teaches courses about marching band techniques, technology and arranging, brass methods, and supervises student teachers.

Coston has 22 years of successful teaching and performing experience at the secondary-level, and in higher education. Throughout his career, he and his ensembles earned awards and recognition for outstanding performance quality and professionalism. In 2009, Coston had the honor of performing at the Virginia Music Educators Association (VMEA) conference with the Lee-Davis High School Wind Ensemble. In 1995, Coston was a semi-finalist at the Leonard Falcone International Euphonium Soloist Competition.

Coston is in demand as a performance conductor, clinician, and regularly receives invitations to collaborate with honor bands throughout the Commonwealth of Virginia. Recent

honor bands include Hanover County High School Honors Band, Henrico Middle School Honors Band, and Henrico High School Honors Band. In addition to guest conducting, he regularly serves as a presenter and performance adjudicator.

The National Band Association awarded Coston with the “Citation of Excellence” award. He was also recognized as a “10 Year Virginia Honor Band Director.” In 2022, Coston presented “Better Intonation Now” at the VMEA Conference in Richmond Virginia.

Coston completed his Bachelor of Music Education Degree at Virginia Commonwealth University and his Master of Music from James Madison University where he studied Euphonium Performance with Kevin Stees. Coston resides in Hanover County Virginia with his wife Leanne, son Darren and daughter Anna.

Mr. Tony “Baba D” McCain is a professional dancer, choreographer, adjudicator, consultant, and costume designer. Since 1982 Coach McCain has instructed 1000's of students, numerous award-winning teams, high schools, workshops, clinics, camps, organizations, and independent ensembles. He currently serves as The Color Guard Coordinator for Powhatan High School, The Founder, Chairman, Creative Coordinator of The Akoma Dance & Drum Performance Ensemble, Artistic Director of The Ngoma African Dance Ensemble at University of Richmond. Also serves as an instructor on JMU's Summer Band Camp Guard Staff. Mr. McCain has also performed with The Carolina Gold Drum & Bugle Corps-Charter member and The Light Brigade World Winter Guard, which was The European Champions in 2007. He has also been awarded numerous Outstanding Performer Awards, served as a dance liaison in Senegal, West Africa, is a member of

the Dzifa Masquerade Society.

This marks his 42nd year of experience in the Pageantry Arts. His educational background includes studying at VCU with a concentration in Physical Education and a minor in Dance/Choreography. In 2015, he was inducted into The Atlantic Indoor Association's Hall of Honor.

The Akoma de Gado Performance Dance & Drum Ensemble is dedicated to the promotion of African diaspora principles, culture, and appreciation of pageantry performance arts. We desire to build, motivate, and inspire generations through performance theatre, workshops, conferences, seminars, and classes. We promote educational and quality entertainment with our programs to our youth, audiences, donors, and diversified community at large. Founded in 2019 and under the founder, chairman, creative coordinator of Babadunjo Olagunke', Akoma de Gado is devoted to preserving African-Black folkloric art forms within the diaspora, telling our stories from the African- American perspective, and with a connection to the 21st Century. Peace and Love...Ase' ohhhhhhhh

Dr. Christopher Hansen (Chris) is Director of Choral Activities at Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU) in Richmond VA. At VCU, he oversees the Choral Department, conducts Commonwealth Singers and Choral Arts Society, and teaches music education courses about vocal/choral methods and techniques. Before coming to VCU, Hansen served as Assistant Professor of Music at Anderson University (SC), where he conducted the Anderson University Chorus, and taught graduate and undergraduate courses in music education and performance. He also taught as an Instructor and Graduate Teaching Assistant at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro. Prior to his

collegiate career, Hansen taught for a decade at Cedar Ridge High School in Hillsborough, North Carolina, where he was named the 2011-2012 Teacher of the Year for both the school and district.

Hansen had his Carnegie Hall conducting debut in June of 2022, where he collaborated with the New England Symphony Ensemble and a large national chorus. Following this Carnegie Hall performance, he received invitations to return to Carnegie Hall as a Guest Conductor in 2023 and 2024. Hansen looks forward to his next Carnegie Hall appearance this June!

In addition to his university conducting and teaching, Hansen is an active member of the National Association for Music Education and the American Choral Directors Association. Currently, he serves Virginia ACDA as their Four-Year Collegiate Choral Repertoire and Resources Chair. Prior to coming to VA, he served as the Collegiate Choral Activities Chair for the South Carolina chapter of ACDA and the Collegiate Membership Chair for the South Carolina Music Educators Association. He also served as the High School Choral Division Activities Chair for the North Carolina Music Educators' Association. Hansen earned his Doctorate and Master degrees from The University of North Carolina at Greensboro. He earned his Bachelor of Music from The University of North Carolina at Pembroke.

Choirs under Hansen's direction performed at state, regional, and national music festivals and competitions receiving Superior ratings at all levels. He is active as choral conductor and clinician, and is regularly invited to collaborate with choral ensembles at every level. His primary scholarly work on 'perceptions of choral performance quality' has been presented at state, regional, and national levels.

Dr. Hansen believes that all music serves an important role

in the development and nutriment of the human condition: our need to belong, be loved, grow and learn, and have purpose. He believes all music has value and utility by virtue of their existence—each genre and style contribute to the nourishment of all peoples across all time and places. He believes himself to be a culturally responsive teacher and conductor who practices culturally relevant pedagogy by broadening and deepening his understanding of himself, singers in choirs he collaborates with, and the music they explore together.

Rob Blankenship is a native of Richmond, Virginia and has been teaching music in Henrico County, just outside the city of Richmond, since 2001. He spent the first five years of his teaching career as an elementary school music teacher before moving to the high school level. Since 2006, Mr. Blankenship has served as the Director of Bands and Orchestras at his alma mater Douglas Freeman High School. Under his direction, all of Freeman's instrumental ensembles have earned numerous and consecutive superior ratings and awards at local, regional and state events.

Mr. Blankenship graduated from high school in 1992 and enlisted in the United States Army where he attended the Armed Forces School of Music in Little Creek, Virginia. He then served with the 26th Army Band at Ft. Hamilton, NY and the 1st Cavalry Division Band at Ft. Hood, TX. While in the Army, he was active as a clarinetist, saxophonist, vocalist and arranger. After leaving the Army, Mr. Blankenship attended Longwood College (now Longwood University) in Farmville, Virginia where he earned a degree in music education. At Longwood, he studied theory and composition with Dr. Gordon Ring and clarinet and music history with Dr. Charles Kinzer.

Mr. Blankenship's professional affiliations include

membership in the National Association for Music Education, the Virginia Band and Orchestra Directors Association and the Phi Beta Mu International Bandmasters Fraternity. He is a regular performer with the Commonwealth Winds and The Richmond Pops Band. Mr. Blankenship has also had the honor and privilege of working with and performing under the baton of Dr. Terry Austin. As a composer and arranger, Mr. Blankenship's music has been performed by numerous ensembles around central Virginia including the Richmond Concert Band, Commonwealth Winds, Longwood University Wind Symphony, University of Richmond Wind Ensemble and the Richmond Pops Band. In 2012 he wrote "Hail To Longwood U" for Longwood University and it was later chosen by the University as their new fight song. Mr. Blankenship lives in Henrico County with his wife, Angie, and their two children, Jesse and Julie.



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