

 Valley Classical Concerts

In Association with the Smith College
Department of Music, presents

Camille Thomas, cello
and
Julien Brocal, piano



Saturday, March 7, 2026, at 3:00 PM
Sweeney Concert Hall / Sage Hall
Smith College, Northampton, MA

Camille Thomas, cello and Julien Brocal, piano

Program

GRACE

Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750)

Ave Maria (arranged by Charles Gounod (1818-1893))

Julien Brocal (b. 1987) and Camille Thomas (b. 1988)

Reflection No. 1 (Paix - Shanti)

Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750)

Viola da Gamba Sonata No. 3, BWV 1029

I. Vivace

II. Adagio

III. Allegro

WITH SURPRISES

Eric Satie (1886-1921)

Gymnopedie No. 3 in A minor

Julien Brocal/Camille Thomas/Radiohead

Reflection No. 4

Intermission

CHIMERA

Camille Saint-Saëns (1835-1921)

The Swan

Eric Satie

Gymnopedie No. 1 in D major

Julien Brocal

Reflection No. 2

Edvard Grieg (1843-1907)

Cello Sonata in A minor, Opus 36

I. Allegro Agitato

II. Andante molto tranquillo

III. Allegro molto e marcato

Camille Thomas and Julian Brocal appear by arrangement
with

Frank Salomon Associates Inc.

www.franksalomon.com, info@franksalomon.com

please, no audio or video recording of this concert is allowed.

About Today's Concert

John Montanari, VCC Artistic Director

Two of the most famous musical bonbons in all of classical music, both on today's program, were tossed off as larks by their famous composers. Camille Saint-Saëns, best known for his numerous symphonic, chamber and operatic masterworks, wrote his humorous zoological suite "The Carnival of the Animals" while taking it easy in an Austrian village in 1883. At his own request, it remained unpublished and unperformed in public settings until after his death in 1922. The graceful cello solo "The Swan" remains its best-known movement.

Charles Gounod, celebrated for such operatic hits as Faust and Roméo et Juliette, was introduced to the music of J.S. Bach by Fanny and Felix Mendelssohn. During a musical soirée at his Paris home, Gounod played the famous Prelude in C Major from Bach's "The Well-Tempered Clavier" while improvising a melody over its rolling chords. Impressed, his father-in-law wrote down the melody, which appeared in print in 1853 as a purely instrumental "Meditation on the First Prelude of Sebastian Bach." Vocal versions eventually followed, the best-known of which employs the Latin "Ave Maria" ("Hail Mary") text, making it a staple of weddings, funerals and Christmas albums.

About Today's Concert (cont.)

Speaking of Bach, though the viola da gamba had been mostly supplanted by his time by its upstart cousin the cello, Bach occasionally employed the older instrument to magical effect in his orchestral and sacred choral works – think the Brandenburg Concerto No. 6 or the St. John and St. Matthew Passions. In his three Sonatas for viola da gamba and keyboard, Bach imitates the three-line texture of the Trio Sonata, the most common chamber genre of his time, by employing the solo string and the keyboardist's right hand as the Trio Sonata's two melody instruments, and the keyboardist's left hand as the stand-in for the basso continuo, the standard baroque accompaniment typically consisting of a bass melody instrument (e.g., cello, viola da gamba or bassoon) along with a chordal instrument (e.g., harpsichord, organ or lute).

The viola da gamba Sonatas have long been standard works on cello & piano programs, the transfer from old instruments to new not damaging the integrity of the music in any way. More than that of any other composer, Bach's works not only survive but thrive on performances with forces other than that originally intended -- check out, for instance, the YouTubes of the famous Chaconne for solo violin played on guitar, harp, marimba, nyckelharpa, banjo and probably some I haven't yet discovered.

Erik Satie is best-known for his numerous piano miniatures, many with quirky, even nonsensical titles such as “Véritables Préludes flasques (pour un chien)” (“True Flabby Preludes (for a Dog)”) and “Croquis et agaceries d'un gros bonhomme en bois (“Sketches and Exasperations of a Big Wooden Man”). His spare, often hypnotic style has led to him being credited in some quarters as a prophet of such later musical trends as neo-classicism and minimalism. The *Trois Gymnopédies*, completed by 1888, take their name from the ancient gymnopaedia, annual festivals featuring naked, heavily-oiled young men dancing ritualistically in simulation of the movements of Spartan warriors – try not to think of that as the haunting melodies of the 1st and 3rd *Gymnopédie* sing out from the stage.

A miniaturist at heart, Edvard Grieg gifted the world with only seven works in the large classical forms – or eight, if you count the youthful *Symphony* he subsequently disavowed, though it

has been revived since. The Cello Sonata, composed in 1882-83, was introduced in Leipzig by Grieg and cellist Julius Klengel, the teacher of such notable cellists as Emanuel Feuerman and Gregor Piatigorsky. It was taken up by many of history's most notable cellists, such as Pablo Casals (who played it with both Grieg himself and Arthur Rubinstein), Leonard Rose, Pierre Fournier and Mstislav Rostropovich (whose performance with Sviatoslav Richter at the 1964 Alderburgh Festival is available on YouTube). Devoted Grieg lovers will detect his self-quotation in the Sonata of his "Funeral March in Memory of Rikard Nordrak" and the "Wedding March" from his Incidental Music for the play "Sigurd Jorsalfar."

About the Artists

Camille Thomas

Born in Paris in 1988, cellist Camille Thomas has emerged as one of the most compelling musical voices of her generation, recognized for an artistic philosophy that balances technical mastery with a profound humanitarian spirit. Her musical journey began at the age of four, an early start that allowed her to develop a natural, almost vocal relationship with the cello. Her formative years were spent at the Conservatoire National de Région de Paris, where she studied under Marcel Bardon. This early French schooling instilled in her a focus on elegance and the "bel canto" style of string playing. However, Thomas sought to broaden her musical horizons by moving to Germany at the age of seventeen. She immersed herself in the rigorous German pedagogical tradition at the Hochschule für Musik Hanns Eisler in Berlin with Stephan Forck and the legendary Frans Helmerson, later completing postgraduate work with Wolfgang-Emanuel Schmidt at the Hochschule für Musik Franz Liszt in Weimar. This dual education created a unique artistic identity, blending the fluid lyricism of the French school with the structural depth and technical precision of the German tradition.

In 2017, Thomas made history as the first female cellist to sign an exclusive contract with Deutsche Grammophon in over forty years. This partnership has allowed her to curate projects that reflect her deep-seated belief in the power of music to unite people across borders. Her 2020 album, *Voice of Hope*, recorded in partnership with UNICEF, featured the world premiere of Fazil Say's Cello Concerto "Never Give Up," a work composed as a

About the Artists (cont.)

response to global conflict. This commitment to contemporary relevance is a hallmark of her career; she frequently commissions new works and seeks out repertoire that resonates with modern global challenges, ensuring that the classical tradition remains a living, breathing entity.

Beyond her work as a soloist, Thomas is a prolific chamber musician and a frequent guest at the world's most prestigious festivals, including Verbier and Schleswig-Holstein. Her orchestral engagements have seen her collaborate with ensembles such as the Deutsche Kammerphilharmonie Bremen and the Warsaw Philharmonic, consistently earning praise for her intense emotional vulnerability and rich, signature tone. The physical foundation of Thomas's artistry is the "Feuermann" Stradivarius, a 1730 instrument on loan from the Nippon Music Foundation. The history of this cello provides a direct link to the golden age of romanticism, having been played by the virtuoso Emanuel Feuermann and Auguste Franchomme, a close friend and collaborator of Frédéric Chopin.

Julien Brocal

French pianist and composer Julien Brocal is widely celebrated for his poetic insight and his innovative approach to the piano repertoire. His musical journey began at age five, leading to a debut at the Salle Cortot in Paris only two years later. He received his formal training at the Conservatoire National de Région de Marseille under Erik Berchot and later at the École Normale de Musique de Paris with Rena Shereshevskaya. A defining moment in Brocal's career occurred in 2013 when he was discovered by the legendary pianist Maria João Pires. This meeting resulted in an invitation to join the Queen Elisabeth Music Chapel in Belgium and led to several years of international touring and mentorship alongside Pires. Under her guidance, Brocal developed a philosophy of performance that prioritizes the human element over mere technical display, focusing on the organic connection between the performer, the score, and the audience.

Brocal's recording career has been met with significant critical acclaim, including being named "Newcomer of the Year" by BBC Music Magazine in 2018. His debut solo album, featuring Chopin's 24 Preludes and Sonata No. 2, was praised for its structural clarity and a sense of spontaneity that made the well-

known works feel newly discovered. His subsequent album, *Reflections*, showcased his dual identity as a performer and creator by pairing works by Maurice Ravel and Federico Mompou with his own original composition, *Nature Morte*.

In recent years, Brocal has focused on projects that integrate music with environmental consciousness and the concept of "musical permaculture." He is the founder of "Jardin Musical" in Brussels, an artistic residency and performance space designed according to the principles of sustainability and community. This venue serves as a laboratory for multidisciplinary collaboration, reflecting Brocal's belief that music should exist within a holistic ecosystem of creativity. His interest in the environment is also reflected in his book-album *Here*, recorded at the Tippet Rise Art Center in Montana, featuring compositions inspired by the natural world.

Keep Valley Classical Concerts Going

Please consider making a donation to help prevent price increases and to broaden our audience. You may go to the VCC donations page any time to give online, or mail checks to P.O. Box 60424, Florence, MA 01062.

*You may be able to maximize your impact by donating appreciated assets directly to Valley Classical Concerts. We now accept publicly traded securities: stocks, bonds, and mutual funds. You may eliminate capital gains tax while receiving a charitable deduction for the full market value of the asset.

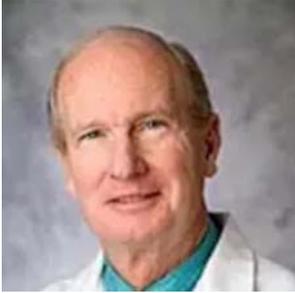
Donors making contributions through Donor Advised Funds may nominate their contributions to be matched by Resilient Valley - a fund created for Franklin, Hampden and Hampshire counties. Go to www.resilientValleyMA.org for details.

We thank you for helping us share the joys of chamber music. We are a 501(c)(3) non-profit. Our Tax ID, 22-247-4932, may be used to donate through a charitable fund or foundation.

*Please consult with your financial advisor or tax professional to determine the best giving strategy for your situation. If you have further questions please call the VCC office at (413) 239-0417 or write us at office@valleyclassicalconcerts.org.

From the Valley Classical Concerts Vice President

It is March and possibly moving towards spring and crocuses popping up in the garden. No matter what today's weather brings, I am looking forward to hearing today's concert of cello and piano music. Camille Thomas and Julien Brocal are in the vanguard of exciting young soloists coming from Europe.



With great sadness, I regret to inform you that our beloved Board President, William Harbison, passed away on February 21st after an incredible 5 month fight to live. His leadership and guidance for our Board was exceptional. Bill was a devoted music lover who worked tirelessly on behalf of VCC, the Springfield Symphony, and the cultural

life of the region, as well as a good friend to all. He will be sorely missed. Look for a memorial tribute at a future concert.

The board is grateful to all of you who have sent generous donations. We encourage those of you who have yet to contribute as well. Your gifts help us bring top quality musicians to Northampton, as well as offer free tickets to young students and Card to Culture patrons, who otherwise could not enjoy these concerts.

Thank you again for attending today. On reflection, I'm impressed by the variety of ensembles we've presented this season. I look forward to seeing each of you at our final concert for this year on Saturday, March 21st, 3:00 pm for the Boston chamber orchestra "A Far Cry" – performing works by Shelley Washington, Copland and Beethoven.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Laurel Rogers". The ink is dark and the signature is fluid and elegant.

Laurel Rogers, Vice-President

From another great cellist: "Music is the divine way to tell beautiful, poetic things to the heart."

Pablo Casals

Be a VCC Volunteer

Valley Classical Concerts (VCC) is an all-volunteer organization dedicated to presenting world class chamber music to the Pioneer Valley. Being a volunteer organization helps keep ticket prices affordable and provides access to many who would otherwise not be able to attend our performances.

Help is needed for bookkeeping, managing correspondence, editing concert programs, and designing promotional materials. As a volunteer, you'll enjoy access to concerts and gain an insider's view of our behind-the-scenes operations.

VCC is a virtual organization, so there is no office to commute to. Just bring your own computer! If you are interested in volunteering, write us at office@valleyclassicalconcerts.org or leave a message at (413) 239-0417.

The Valley Classical Concerts 2025-2026 Season

The Harlem Quartet, Sunday, October 12, 2025

Quartetto di Cremona, with David Shifrin, clarinet
Sunday, October 26, 2025

**Winds of the Boston Symphony Orchestra with
Jiayan Sun, piano**, Sunday, November 16, 2025

The Isidore String Quartet, Sunday, February 1, 2026

Camille Thomas, cello, with Julien Brocal, piano
Saturday, March 7, 2:00 PM *preconcert discussion,
3:00 PM performance

"A Far Cry" Chamber Orchestra Saturday, March 21
2:00 PM *preconcert discussion, 3:00 PM performance

*A lively and informative Q&A with artistic director John Montanari, ensemble members and you. Beat the parking and ticket rush too!

Valley Classical Concerts Board of Directors

William Harbison, President
Laurel Rogers, Vice President
Richard Teller, Clerk & Publicist
John Montanari, Artistic Director
Jeffrey Saltzman, Treasurer & Office Manager
Andrea Bonsignore, Concert Manager
Pam Coe
Ian Fraser
David Gang
Amy Gates
George Luke Goodridge
Kylie Johnson
Richard Ranti
Michael Sorrell
Gary Turku
Peter Van Pelt

Valley Classical Concerts Contact Information

Telephone

Box Office - (413) 586-0458

Office - (413) 239-0417

E-Mail

Box Office - boxoffice@valleyclassicalconcerts.org

Office - office@valleyclassicalconcerts.org

Address

Valley Classical Concerts, Inc.

P.O. Box 60424

Florence, MA 01062

Website: <https://valleyclassicalconcerts.org>

Thank You for Your Support!

These businesses have made contributions to Valley Classical Concerts' 2025-26 season.

- **\$1,000 and above**

- Easthampton Savings Bank
- Florence Bank
- Greenfield Savings Bank
- Greenfield Cooperative Bank
- Lathrop Community
- NFP Private Capital Group LLC
- St. Germain Investments
- West Branch Capital, LLC

- **\$500 to \$999**

- Curtiss, Carey, Gates & Goodridge, LLP†
- Kari Leeper, Certified Public Accountant, LLC†
- Finck and Perras Insurance
- Johnson Woodworks
- River Valley Market
- Stamell Stringed Instruments, Inc.

- **\$250 to \$499**

- Downtown Sounds
- Ostberg & Associates
- Wohl Family Dentistry, LLC

- **Up to \$249**

- Alber Hearing Services
- Blackmer Insurance
- Broadside Books
- Ernie's Garage

†In-kind donation

Thank You for Your Support!

**These individuals have made contributions to
Valley Classical Concerts' 2025-26 season.**

Pace-Setters • \$3,000 and above

Marguerite S. Bedell

*Pamela Coe

John & Pamela Hanold

*William & Marsha Harbison

Eva Lohrer

Gail Markley

Partners • \$1,000 to \$2,999

Anonymous (2)

Lewis Cohen

*David Gang & Roberta Hillenberg-Gang

Ruth Kjaer

Kathleen Lovell

Daniel Lyons

*Richard Ranti & Andrea Bonsignore

*Laurel Rogers & Jeffrey Saltzman

*Michael Sorrell

Eleanor B. Rothman

*Karen Tarlow & John Montanari

*Richard Teller

Peter Van Pelt

Lewis & Sally Popper

Sustainers • \$500 to \$999

Ann Errichetti and Mark Keroack

*Ian Fraser & Pamela Bartlett

Bruce & Rita Bleiman

Craig Felton & Richard Trousdell

Ira Helfand & Deborah Smith

*Kylie & Bill Johnson
*George Luke Goodridge
Mark & Judith Pohlman
Eli & Ina Porth
Kit Sang Boos
*Gary Turku & Romina Kostare

Patrons • \$250 to \$499

Judy & Bob Dowd
Judith & Stephen Ellenburg
James Mceathron
Catherine Nagel
Harriet Pollatsek
*Erin Walther & Colleen Foerster & Family

Supporters • \$100 to \$249

Katharine Baker	Lisa Middents
Jeffrey Birth	**Peter Morford
Nancy & John Brady	Robyn Newhouse
Therese and Peter Eiff	Sara (Sally) Perreten
Kent & Lorena Faerber	Dale Peterson
Patricia Farrington	Clifford Ridley
William Feinstein	Catherine Riessman
Rhonda FrankelFein	Peter Rose
Ken & Karen Furst	Joanna Rosenthal
Douglas Gnepp	Margaret Sanders
Peter Haas	Alice Swersey
Herbert & Janet Hodos	Frances Volkmann
*Lathrop Northampton Residents Association	Thomas Wartenberg Donald Wheelock

Friends • Up to \$100

Audrey Bernstein	Roger Brown
Michael Bixler	Albert & Janet Chevan
Marcia Blomberg	Ian Clements
Kevin Brennan	Rafael Coelho Lopes de Sa

Friends • Up to \$100 (cont.)

Stacey McG. Coleman	Elissa Rubinstein
Charles Dudek	Ilana Schmitt
Susan Fentin	Cathy Schoen
Teresa Herrneckar	Peter Siegelman
Mary Jaffee	Wendy Sinton
Carol Jolly	Serena Smith
Edith M. Kliman	Norman Spier
Walter Kwass	Gennifer Sussman
Jonathan Lash	Oren Trischwell
Jennifer Lewis	John Toms
Nancy Logan	Janet Van Blerkom
Sarah McArdle	Ann Wall
Michael Moran	Katherine Wyatt
Carol Pope	Amanda Walling
Jane Record	Anne Wing
Margo & Thomas Roland	Faina Zilberberg

*In memory of Peter Van Pelt (partially or fully)

*In memory of Mark Morford

**WEST  BRANCH
C A P I T A L**

Investments, Financial & Retirement Planning

West Branch Capital and its division Singer Potito Associates. FEE ONLY, SEC Registered
Investment Advisers. Investment Managers, Retirement & Financial Planners.

9 Research Drive, Suite I
Amherst, MA 01002

99 Derby Street, Suite 200
Hingham, MA 02043

29 West Road
Orleans, MA 02653

CALL 413-256-1225 - WESTBRANCHCAPITAL.COM

With GSB's Mobile App,
you can bank anywhere,
any time you choose

*...except during this
performance.*



Unplug, Relax and Enjoy the Show!

Supporting Valley Classical Concerts

The GSB Banking App is available for FREE* at:



Celebrating **150** YEARS

Member FDIC/Member DIF
Equal Housing Lender

(413) 774-3191 • (413) 584-4441
greenfieldsavings.com

* Mobile carrier charges may apply.

PIONEER VALLEY SYMPHONY

CREATIVE RESILIENCE

87TH SEASON | 2025 - 2026



TICKETS AVAILABLE NOW

PVSOC.ORG/TICKETS



Music can be timeless.
It's the way it nurtures our souls.
It's a salve that reduces the
calamitous anxiety of our times.
It's how Valley Classical Concerts lifts
and reminds us that we can be better.



www.stgermaininvestments.com

Sage Chamber Music Society *Sweeney Concert Hall*

free concerts featuring Smith faculty and guest artists



Monday, March 23 - 1 pm

Music Mondays: Max Wareham, banjo

Thursday, March 26 - 7:30 pm

Celebrating Pianos! PianoDuo Festival
Music for piano four-hands and two pianos
by Mendelssohn, Debussy, Rachmaninoff, and more!

Sunday, April 5 - 3:00 pm

Quartett Mosso: Beethoven and T.S. Eliot

Friday, April 10 - 7:30 pm

Robyn Quinnett, violin; Jiayan Sun, piano; Marie-Volcy Pelletier, cello

Full details and many more arts events at smith.edu/smitharts



GREENFIELD
Cooperative Bank

NORTHAMPTON
Cooperative Bank A Division of Greenfield
Cooperative Bank

Come on over to the Co-op!

To us, providing financial services to our customers
and serving our community go hand-in-hand.

Amherst • Florence • Greenfield • Northampton Northfield
Shelburne Falls • South Hadley • Sunderland • Turners Falls

BestLocalBank.com



MEMBER FDIC
MEMBER DIF



FOUR CONCERTS. SO MUCH STILL TO HEAR.

PLANET EARTH | MENDELSSOHN, GERSHWIN & A WOMAN'S VOICE
GLORIA! | BRAHMS & A MODERN VOICE



TICKETS AT SPRINGFIELDSYMPHONY.ORG

Johnny Gandelsman, violin | Sunday March 8, 4pm

CHAMBER @ THE DRAKE

An eight part series of classical music

chamberatthedrake.com

\$20 advanced, \$25 at the door, \$5 student tickets



44 N Pleasant St, Amherst, MA

ARCADIA PLAYERS 2025-26

Vicente Lusitano and his Circle
Saturday, November 15, 2025 at 2:00pm
Music Room, Wistariahurst Museum, Holyoke
introductory lecture at 1:00 pm

A German Holiday: Works for Advent & Christmas
by Bach and Zelenka
Saturday, December 20, 2025 at 3:00pm
Grace Episcopal Church, Amherst

Music for Good Friday for viols and voices
Saturday, Mar. 28, 2026 at 3:00pm
Abbey Chapel, Mt. Holyoke College, South Hadley

Making Overtures
Saturday May 2, 2026 at 2:30pm
Wesley Methodist Church, Hadley



Arcadia Players

ARTISTIC DIRECTOR, ANDRUS MADSEN

WWW.ARCADIAPLAYERS.ORG

Be inspired... by Lathrop's passion for music and the arts!



With a commitment to enhancing the quality of life,
Lathrop fosters a vibrant sense of togetherness where you
can continue to enrich your life and the lives of others.

LATHROP
KENDAL AFFILIATE

lathrop.kendal.org
413-437-5892



A Not-for-Profit Community Serving Older Adults in the Quaker Tradition.



WEALTHSPIRE
ADVISORS

MUSIC TO OUR EARS

We are a proud sponsor of
Valley Classical Concerts and their mission
to bring internationally recognized
chamber ensembles to the Pioneer Valley.

WWW.WEALTHSPIRE.COM

*Wealthspire Advisors LLC is a registered investment adviser
and subsidiary company of NFP Corp.*



S T A M E L L
STRINGED INSTRUMENTS



Violin • Viola • Cello • Sales • Rentals
Experts • Dealers • Makers • Appraisers • Restorers

18 Kellogg Ave, Amherst MA 01002

www.stamellstring.com
(800) 766 0936



river valley co-op
wild about local



Johnson Woodworks

Custom Furniture, Built-ins, and Cabinetry

"Quality woodworking with an artisan's touch"

www.johnson-woodworks.com

jwwremodeling@gmail.com ☎ (413) 835-1157