

THE GAMER SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA at the University of Maryland



Fall 2023 Concert

Dekelboum Concert Hall
Clarice Smith Performing Arts Center

Saturday December 16th, 2023, 2PM
Sunday December 17th, 2023, 7PM

Francesco Berrett, Conductor
Robert Morris, Conductor
umd.gamersymphony.org

About the Gamer Symphony Orchestra

In Fall 2005, student violist Michelle Eng sought to create an orchestral group that played the music of video games. With a half-dozen others who shared a love of video game music, she founded the Gamer Symphony Orchestra to achieve that dream. By the ensemble's first public performance in Spring 2006, its size had quadrupled.

Today, the Gamer Symphony Orchestra provides a musical and social outlet to 100+ members. It is the world's first college-level ensemble to draw its repertoire exclusively from the soundtracks of video games. The ensemble is entirely student-run, which includes conducting and musical arranging.

In addition to semesterly concerts at the University of Maryland campus, the GSO has performed in a number of special concerts throughout the years. In February 2011, the GSO's arrangement of "Korobeiniki" from Tetris was performed in collaboration with Video Games Live and the National Philharmonic to two sold-out houses at the Strathmore in Bethesda, MD. In May 2012 and 2015, as a part of the Art of Video Games Exhibit, the GSO performed at the American Art Museum in Washington, D.C. in the central atrium. Most recently, in March 2018, the GSO performed on the Millennium Stage of the Kennedy Center in a concert titled "From Bits to Brass: A Symphonic Adventure Through Video Game Music," as a part of the Kennedy Center's "Direct Current" event. The concert was played to a packed house, and served as a celebration of musical masterpieces across the video game repertoire for gamers, musicians, and enthusiasts alike.

Aside from its concerts, the GSO also holds the charity gaming tournament "Gaming 4 Life" twice a year. All proceeds from this multi-hour long video game tournament and social event benefit the Children's National Medical Center in Washington, D.C.

2023–24 GSO Officers

President Stephanie Do

Vice President Jayden Andrews

Treasurer Matthew Doyle

Secretary William Wegand

Music Director Oscar Krug

Orchestra Manager Braidon Saelens

Social Director Eva Ginns

Officers-At-Large Saima Ahmad
Emma Brown

Conductors Francesco Berrett
Robert Morris

Choral Directors Neel Sanghvi
Aidan Wilbur

PR Directors Blaise Ryan
Meilin Yuan

Fundraising Director Daniel Xing

Tech Director Michele Imamura

Webmasters Jay Rana
Christine Zhou

Gamer Symphony Orchestra at UMD

Orchestra Members

**Section Leader **Concertmaster*

Violin I	Emma Roldan	Oscar Krug	Jake Rives
Ethan Chou	Olivia Rosen *		Landon Stone
Stephanie Do	Jenna Wollney	Clarinet	
Florian Grader-Beck		Matthew Doyle	French Horn
Minsi Hu	Cello	Faith Pak *	Aboli Dahiwadkar
Michele Imamura	Saima Ahmad	Seyong Park	Suerken Matsuyama
Gyuseok Kang	Serena Alamina	Emily Schultz *	Sunil Pateel
Katriel Kasayan	Alexander Barker	Amy Sheehan	Sara Riso *
Rafa Mondal	Sarah Blaufuss	Meilin Yuan	Arthur You
Garrett Peters	Nina Clarke		
Isaac Thomas	Grace Cong	Alto Saxophone	Trombone
Kevin Zhang	Noah Hamermesh	Maegan Blake	Nicholas Curtis
Cynthia Xi **	Jay Rana *	Nicole Cifuentes	Henry McCormack
Esther Yu	Benji Shin	Noah Goldberg	Quinlan Ngo
Joshua Zhu	Alexandro Wong	Blaise Ryan	Michael Shanny
	Hannah Yan	Zack Smith *	
		Davis Xu	Euphonium
Violin II	Bass		Christopher Assiryani *
Sam Cassetta	Jonathan Alonzo	Tenor Saxophone	Carlos Chen
Justin Chen	Patrick Torre	Dimitrios Angelakos	
Edith Corey		Rhea Jajodia	Tuba
Cai Diggs	Guitar	Peter Kozlov	Benjamin Smith-Hicks
Anton Doan	Shiham Siddiqui		
Jena Ialongo		Baritone Saxophone	Percussion
Kieran Khan	Electric Bass	Braidon Saelens *	Anika Aracan
Sanna Moore	Adam Martinson *		Anish Bhupalam
Isabelle Park		Bass Clarinet	Colin Eng
Abigail Shirima	Flute/Piccolo	Daniel Xing *	Christian Pascual
Alex Shrestha	Chaitanya Garg	Regina Yuengling	Wren Poremba *
Caroline Tanner *	Larissa Hsu		Hayden Miller
	Andrew Hui	Bassoon	Steven Zhang
Viola	Jeffrey Luo *	Will Duis	
Harshitha Balijepalli	Charu Mehta	Jacob Keeley	Piano
Elizabeth Barski	Jason Tang		Sean Cheng
Emily Blake	Christine Zhou	Trumpet	Claire Huang
Emma Brown		Beau Carter	Cassandra Meyer *
Taegon Hibbitts	Oboe	Antonios Eleftheriou	
Erin Hopper	Zander Barrow *	Michael Johannesson	
Michael Maroney	Jess Huang	Silas Rager *	

Chorus Members

**Section Leader **Choral Director*

Soprano	Alto	Tenor	Bass
Erin Lea *	Ciara Donegan	Egypt Butler	Jayden Andrews *
Theresa Menna	Mikayla Durr *	Matthew Evanusa	Michael Brown
Archita Naik	Eva Ginns	Sasha Goyal	Nicholas DeGraba
Audrey Wiswakarma	Marsh Hessler	Neel Sanghvi **	Ryan Goldsmith
Amy Zhong	Halimah Kargbo	Logan Swaisgood *	Max Howard
	Sarah Pierce	Aidan Wilbur **	Alex Miller
			Aaron Stephen
			William Wegand

Emeritus Members

Michelle Eng—Founder
President, 2005–2007

Rob Garner
President, 2008–2011

Alexander Ryan
President, 2011–2013

Joel Guttman
President, 2013–2014

Jonathan Hansford
Choral Director, 2015–2017

Suzie DeMeritte
Treasurer, 2016–2018

Alex Yu
President, 2017–2018

Hojin Yoon
President, 2019–2020

Matthew Evanusa
Conductor, 2018–2020

Nicolas DeGraba
Music Director, 2018–2020

Greg Cox
Conductor, 2006–2009

Chris Apple
Music Director, 2007–2010

Kyle Jamolin
Choral Director, 2012–2014

Jasmine Marcelo
Vice President, 2013–2015

Marin Chin
Music Director, 2016–2017

Michael Mitchell
Conductor, 2016–2018

Erin Estes
Webmaster, 2018–2019

Sami Louguit
Member, 2018–2020

Nicole Benner
Social Director, 2018–2020

Ciara Donegan
Music Director, 2021–2022

Peter Fontana
Conductor, 2010–2011

Kira Levitzky
Conductor, 2009–2013

Kevin Mok
Conductor, 2013–2015

Jesse Halpern
Treasurer, 2015–2016

Austin Hope
Webmaster, 2015–2018

Leanne Cetorelli
Conductor, 2015–2018

Bethany Riege
Secretary, 2018–2019

Samuel Harley
Conductor, 2018–2020

Austin Starnes
Treasurer, 2018–2020

Rachel Wattanarungsikajorn
Conductor, 2020–2022

Alola Region Theme

Pokémon Sun & Moon

Minako Adachi

Arr. Colin Eng

“The Alola Region Theme” is a vibrant musical journey that captures the essence of the *Pokémon Sun and Moon* games. With its lively beats and tropical melodies, the song invites you to the Alola region, where the sun always shines, and Pokémon adventures unfold. Immerse yourself in the rhythm of this catchy tune, reminiscent of the paradise-like atmosphere that awaits as you explore the unique Alolan landscapes and encounter new Pokémon on your thrilling journey.

Cool Cool Mountain

Super Mario 64, Mario Kart: Double Dash, Mario Kart 64

Koji Kondo, Kenta Nagata, Shinobu Nagata

Arr. Zack Smith

From the shivery slopes of *Super Mario 64* to the festive frosty circuits of *Mario Kart*, this medley explores some of Super Mario’s snowy adventures through the lenses of midcentury orchestral styles. Join Mario as he climbs down chimneys, slips down slopes, builds up snowmen, and (carefully, with a tender hand) escorts lost baby penguins to their mothers in the opening light music arrangement of “Cool Cool Mountain.” Then, feel the allure of winter romance as shy guys figure skate between ice sculptures illuminated by the cozy glow of rainbow lights in a serenade of “Sherbet Land.” Finally, slip, slide, jump, and grasp for coins with Mario all the way down through the mountain’s secret ice cavern in a Broadway-style rendition of “Slider.” From the music of the Super Mario series, please enjoy “Cool Cool Mountain.”



Tough Guy Showtime

Mario and Luigi: Bowser's Inside Story

Yoko Shimamura

Arr. Jayden Andrews

Ft. Jayden Andrews (Bass)

Mario and Luigi: Bowser's Inside Story is a roleplaying game on the Nintendo DS. The antagonist of the game, a bizarre mad scientist named Fawful, is plotting a plan to take over the Mushroom Kingdom. Fawful tricks Bowser, the archnemesis of the Mario Brothers, into eating a "Vacuum Shroom" as part of this plan. After consuming the "Vacuum Shroom," Bowser gains the ability to inhale things and is sent into a mindless craze. During his rampage, Bowser unknowingly inhales Mario and Luigi into his body, shrinking them down to a microscopic size in the process. From here, the Mario Brothers must learn to work together with Bowser from inside of his body in order to save the Mushroom Kingdom from Fawful. "Tough Guy's Showtime" is a dynamic suite of two enemy boss themes. Its intense, high energy rhythms are sure to please.

Still Alive

Portal

Jonathan Coulton

Arr. Ciara Donegan, Nicholas DeGraba

Updated by Neel Sanghvi

Ft. Ciara Donegan (Alto)

Attention all test subjects. Due to an improvement in test results, it is protocol to administer a suitable reward. Thus, the Aperture Science Enrichment Center would like to provide you with an a cappella production. However, due to unforeseen technical issues, our sentry turrets will not be able to perform at this time. The Gamer Symphony Orchestra choir will be taking their place as their vocal talents will be an adequate substitute. You will notice a variety of percussive elements, as well as a prominent vocal solo line designed to capture your attention during the event. You may rest assured that this is not a test, rather it is an opportunity for you to enjoy the finer aspects of this facility. Hold tight to your Companion Cubes and enjoy this rendition of the Aperture Science-sponsored classic, "Still Alive." Cake will be available in the lobby after the performance.

Spring (Stardew Valley)

Stardew Valley

ConcernedApe

Arr. Alex Barker

Ft. Saima Ahmad, Alex Barker, Sarah Blaufuss, Neen Clarke, Grace Cong, Neel Sanghvi, Adam Martinson, Wren Poremba, Jay Rana, Benji Shin, Hannah Yan

Stardew Valley is an indie pixel art farming game made by a single developer, Eric “ConcernedApe” Barone. He created the game’s mechanics and produced the music all by himself. *Stardew Valley* is more than just a farming game with many different objectives to accomplish. Some main mechanics include fishing, mining, foraging, growing crops, and interacting with the villagers in the Pelican Town side of Stardew Valley. Fishing is a fun challenge because the difficulty of catching a fish is affected by weather, season, and the kind of fish. Mining is an exciting yet difficult task as monsters roam each level of the mines. Foraging provides materials that improve your farm and recover your energy and health. Farming, of course, is a great source of money and improves the aesthetic of your very own farm. Finally, the 34 villagers all have conversations with you, host events, and can even fall in love with you. All of this comes together in a serene yet deep experience that you happily advance at your own pace.

Cycling Suite

Pokémon Diamond & Pearl

Hitomi Sato, Go Ichinose

Arr. Colin Eng

Ft. Alexander Barker (Cello), Silas Roger (Trumpet)

“Cycling Suite” is a two piece suite, blending the two iconic *Pokémon Diamond and Pearl* tracks: “Route 206” (aka “The Cycling Road”) and “The Cycling Theme.” The Cycling Road consists of a downhill, paved slope that can only be traversed once the player has acquired their bicycle. The joyful fanfare that the player is greeted with upon arrival solidifies the feeling of achievement and desire to push forward in their journey. “The Cycling Theme” is a fast paced tune that invokes feelings of the Sinnoh environment flashing by as the wind blows across your face. Together, these two pieces create a suite that is the perfect soundtrack for a virtual journey on two wheels.

Gerudo Valley

The Legend of Zelda: Ocarina of Time

Koji Kondo

Original arrangement by Chad Seiter

Adapted for the GSO by Ciara Donegan

Ft. Larissa Hsu (Flute)

An arrangement created for its 25th anniversary, this rendition is of one of the most iconic and memorable themes in the *Legend of Zelda* series, “Gerudo Valley.” In *Ocarina of Time*, this infamous guitar-centered theme plays in the desert area of the same name and has been adapted for a full symphonic orchestra, featuring energetic and dramatic brass parts for an exciting performance.



Rafa Mondal

The Hollow Knight

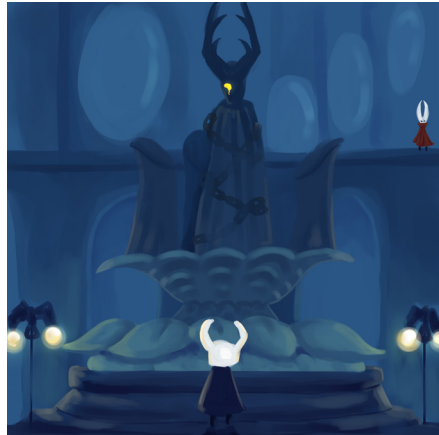
Hollow Knight

Christopher Larkin

Arr. Samuel Harley

Ft. Cynthia Xi (Violin)

Hollow Knight is an atmospheric adventure through the beautiful world of Hallownest, an abandoned insect kingdom whose haunted depths draw in the adventurous and brave with promises of treasures and answers to ancient mysteries. The game tells the story of an insect-like, silent, nameless knight on a quest to uncover the land's secrets. Wielding only a nail and the power of Soul magic, players must uncover the mystery of what happened to this lost civilization.



Emily Schultz

Intermission!

Tears of the Kingdom

The Legend of Zelda: Tears of the Kingdom

Manaka Kataoka, Maasa Miyoshi, Masato Ohashi, Tsukasa Usui

Arr. Ciara Donegan, Nico Benner, Neel Sanghvi

Ft. Maegan Blake (Alto Sax), Rhea Jajodia (Tenor Sax), Cynthia Xi (Violin)

With the defeat of the Calamity, the kingdom of Hyrule has finally begun to rebuild and recover. *The Legend of Zelda: Tears of the Kingdom* presents a fractured but hopeful land, brimming with a populace that is only just enjoying their newfound peace. Yet in this eternally cursed land, such a peace cannot last. Deep below Hyrule Castle, the King of Evil awakens. Fueled by malice and ancient power, he sunders the very foundations of the kingdom, distorting scarce prosperity into endless gloom. Link must once again fight to save Hyrule, journeying throughout the lands, plunging into the Depths, and soaring high through the skies. Unearthing the secrets of mythic tribes, he bridges the divide between the people of Hyrule. Zora and Gerudo, Rito and Goron, Hylian and Sheikah -- only will the world united stand a chance at defeating the one who eclipses even the Calamity.



Sumeru

Genshin Impact

Yu-Peng Chen@HOYO-MiX

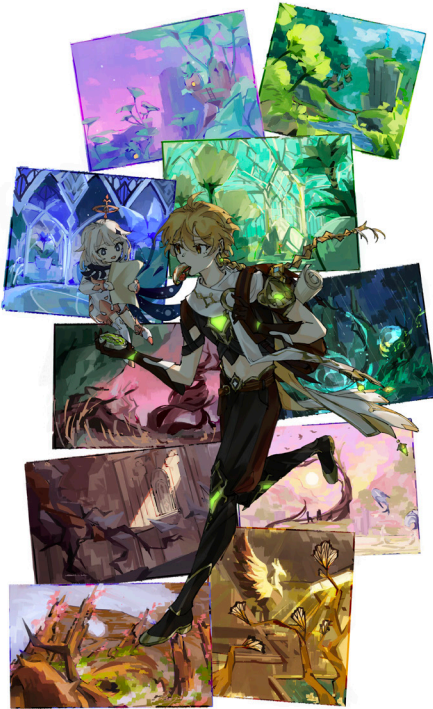
Transcribed by Mayuki Kozakura

Arr. DanimalCrossing

Ft. Dimitrios Angelakos (Tenor Sax), Zander Barrow (Oboe), Andrew Hui (Flute), Oscar Krug (English Horn), Adam Martinson (Electric Bass), Emily Schultz (Clarinet), Shiham Siddiqui (Electric Guitar), Davis Xu (Alto Sax)

The city of scholars located in the west-central part of Teyvat.

A fantastical nation of both lush rainforest and barren desert, where countless fruits of wisdom grow and are buried. Whether Travelers travel from afar through the forest to reach the academy city or delve deep into the desert to discover the historical ruins of the red desert, a wealth of valuable knowledge awaits them here.



“Sumeru” was originally composed by Yu-Peng Chen for an eclectic mix of traditional South Asian and Middle Eastern instruments with a classical symphony orchestra to accompany the nation’s complex landscape. The original composition draws reference from classical works such as Rimsky-Korsakov’s *Scheherazade* while incorporating instruments such as the sitar, duduk, ney, and hammered dulcimer along with prominent saxophone features seldom heard in a classical context.

Our first glimpse of Sumeru is with the burning of Irminsul, the world tree... but don’t worry, it was just a little dream. Following the theme of “drizzling rain and flying sand,” this arrangement takes us through the towering flowers and trees of the rainforest, then crosses into the desert’s endless sand dunes and their buried secrets before concluding with the Sumeru main theme.

Fall of the Queen Bean

Fall Guys

Daniel Hagstrom, Jukio Kallio

Arr. Colin Eng

Ft. Zander Barrow (Oboe), Landon Stone (Trumpet), Cynthia Xi (Violin)

“Fall for the Queen Bean” is a whimsical and energetic tune that captures the colorful world of *Fall Guys*, known for its chaotic and charming multiplayer gameplay. This piece is just a snippet of the incredible soundtrack based around jellybean-like characters competing in a hilarious battle royale game show. From the second season, this tune captures the medieval-themed excitement as players compete (and fall) for the coveted crown.



Zack Smith

Gear Getaway

Donkey Kong Country Returns

Kenji Yamamoto, Noriyuki Iwadare

Arr. Braidon Saelens, Blaise Ryan, Zack Smith

Ft. Anish Bhupalam, Maegan Blake, Noah Goldberg, Rhea Jajodia, Adam

Martinson, Wren Poremba, Blaise Ryan, Braidon Saelens, Zack Smith, Davis Xu

In the midst of their mission to save the animals of DK Island and (more importantly) their hoard of bananas from the Tiki Tak Tribe, Donkey Kong and Diddy Kong must infiltrate the island's recently un-abandoned factory. The Tiki Taks have reactivated the rusted old machinery of this sprawling mechanical wasteland to process DK's bananas into a mystic life-imbuing goo, which they use to animate wooden minions. From the overgrown edges of the industrial complex to the cavernous machinery-filled rooms in the heart of it, the Kongs must scramble, climb, and punch their way to the source of the nefarious assembly line. "Gear Getaway" is a racing big band chart that accompanies our simian heroes as they pilot a rocket-powered wooden barrel they found through a steel jungle of giant turning gears and slamming pistons, soaring deeper into the factory. Arranged for saxophone ensemble (and our lovely rhythm section), please enjoy this energetic, eccentric, big-ol'-ape-on-a-rocket. . . -ic tune!

So Let Us Melt

So Let Us Melt

Jessica Curry

Arr. Jonathan Hansford

So Let Us Melt is an on-rails virtual reality game developed exclusively for the now-discontinued Google Daydream platform. The main plot places the player in the role of Custodian 98, one of many anthropomorphic robots tasked with preparing a planet for habitation by cryogenically frozen humans over a period of several million years. The robots communicate with each other primarily through singing, which is accomplished by pointing the hand controller at an interactable object and holding a button. The frame story, which depicts a woman telling Custodian 98's story to a group of children around a campfire at night, and the cartoon-like art style give the game a fairy-tale atmosphere. This song, which bears the same title as the game, is not heard during the gameplay until the credits. The lyrics quote portions of the poem "A Valediction: Forbidding Mourning," written in the early seventeenth century by English poet John Donne. Writing to his wife, Donne assures her while they will be apart for some time, because their love is already strong, the separation will strengthen it further.

Darkness of the Unknown: A Kingdom Hearts Medley

Kingdom Hearts: Dream Drop Distance and *Kingdom Hearts III*

Music by Yoko Shimomura and Yasunori Nishiki

Lyrics by Yasunori Nishiki and Isaac Thomas

Arranged by Isaac Thomas and Sami Louguit

Ft. Jay Rana (Cello), Cynthia Xi (Violin)

“They can take your world; they can take your heart. Cut you loose from all you know. But if it’s your fate, then every step forward will always be a step closer to home.”

These words are spoken at the beginning of *Kingdom Hearts III* by Sora, the main protagonist of the series. The *Kingdom Hearts* series is a beloved crossover between Disney and Final Fantasy properties that follows the adventures of a boy named Sora who was chosen by the keyblade, a mystical weapon that has the power to open and close the hearts of both people and worlds. Sora must travel to different Disney worlds in order to seal the keyholes that guard each world’s heart and prevent them from being swallowed by the darkness. Although the series starts with a simple premise, it quickly grows into a narrative that describes the constant struggle between light and darkness, good and evil, and hope and despair. This medley is a reflection of that struggle, and includes the pieces “Distant from you…” and “L’Oscurit  dell’Ignoto” from *Kingdom Hearts: Dream Drop Distance* and finally “Forza Finale” from *Kingdom Hearts III*. The final piece is itself a grand medley of many of the previous boss themes spread throughout the series, and plays as Sora and his friends make their final stand against Xehanort and his allies, the ones responsible for the pain our heroes went through. In this life and death struggle, the outcome remains uncertain, but Sora must trust in the strength of his heart and the bonds he forged to prevail.

All that’s left is to press forward, and face the Darkness of the Unknown.

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Dr. Laura Schnitker

Prof. Marybeth Shea

and...

YOU!