



LATE ROMANTIC FIREWORKS

THE
35th SEASON FINALE

MAY 3 SAT 2025
7:30 PM

FIU Wertheim Performing Arts Center
10910 SW 17th Street, Miami 33199



DANIEL ANDAI, Conductor

Special Appearance by



GUEST: Celebrated Cellist Thomas Mesa



A Night of Unparalleled Musical Enchantment!



LATE ROMANTIC FIREWORKS



Greetings From The Management And Musicians,

Welcome to *Late Romantic Fireworks*, concluding the regular concerts of our 35th season. Tonight, we perform spectacular works by two unparalleled composers. However, we still have one more event before we take a summer break: an opera showcase on June 15 (details on page 13). We hope to see you there as we collaborate with outstanding singers.

Before the Alhambra Orchestra takes the stage this evening, we have a special treat for you. The young students from Whispering Pines Elementary's string program have been working with some of our musicians, in addition to receiving guidance from their exceptional teacher, Seth Patterson. They will perform a few short pieces to showcase their progress. We hope that their performance today reinforces your appreciation for and support of music education in our schools.

The adult musicians in our orchestra were once in the same position as these children. Whether they now make their living through performance or play purely for the joy of it, all of our adult performers have had their lives enriched by the early musical training they were fortunate to receive.

Following this, our orchestra will take the stage to perform the national anthem, with one of our fans conducting as a guest, before launching into Dvorák's spectacular *Cello Concerto*.

It is especially fitting to feature a public school music program at this concert, as our featured soloist, cellist **Thomas Mesa**, is a proud alumnus of Miami-Dade County Schools. We are particularly thrilled to collaborate with Mr. Mesa, an internationally respected soloist and recording artist who recently received the prestigious Avery Fisher Career Grant. We are proud to say that we were the first to recognize his extraordinary talent. In 2006, he was the winner of our Concerto Competition for middle and high school students, marking his first-ever competition victory. His impressive biography is printed later in this program. Even as a teenager, when we first met him, his playing was remarkable for its expressiveness and eloquence. Dvorák's *Cello Concerto* is a perfect showcase for his talents.

We will conclude the concert with the rousing *1812 Overture*, sure to thrill any audience with Tchaikovsky's masterful use of the full symphony orchestra's rich sound palette.



THANK YOU TO OUR GENEROUS SPONSORS

We are committed to the belief that music—and live performances in particular—are essential to the growth of our community. Made possible by the support of our generous sponsors, the Alhambra Orchestra is pleased to present tonight's program. On behalf of the Board of Directors and staff, we extend our heartfelt thanks to all the individuals who believed in our commitment to bring live music to our community and invested their personal time and effort to make this possible.



Elizabeth C. Lambertson Foundation



Ruth Anderson Foundation

The Trautschold Family Foundation



The Alhambra Orchestra's season is made possible with the support of the Miami-Dade County Department of Cultural Affairs, the Cultural Affairs Council, the Mayor and the Miami-Dade Board of County Commissioners.





PERSONNEL

Special Appearance by



Whispering Pines Elementary School in Cutler Bay, Florida, is an A-rated public school serving 483 students from pre-kindergarten through fifth grade. Whispering Pines Elementary School maintains high academic standards, with 66% of students achieving proficiency in math and 67% in reading—both surpassing state averages.

A full-time gifted program, providing advanced learning opportunities, is available for eligible students. Whispering Pines Elementary School also boasts a fantastic music program, which received an Early Childhood Music Grant to support the musical talents of its students.

The school maintains an excellent relationship with all stakeholders while fostering a supportive and collaborative educational environment. All students are provided with a solid foundation to become lifelong learners and productive citizens.

18929 SW 89th Rd, Cutler Bay, FL 33157



Please take a moment to complete our anonymous 11-question survey.

Your responses will help support our grant applications and assist in evaluating and planning our programs.

ALHAMBRA ORCHESTRA PERSONNEL

Conductor
Daniel Andai

Violin 1

Steffen Zeichner (concertmaster), Jacolyn Alvarez, Roda Buenconsejo, Joy Castro, Sofia Causa-Dumay, Chandler Finley, Idanis Gallimore, Smiley Hsu, Luz Maria Luque Sanchez, Wendy Ocando, Roraima Omana, Katie Pena, Verónica Pereira, Katerina Rancano, Dolores Stabilini, Celine Thum

Violin 2

Xiomara Sepulveda Rueda, Faye Albert, María Consuelo Armas, Cennet Çevik, Janice Coker, Janet Copeland, Orlando Correa, Francisco Jimenez, Joy Hyams, Ana Paulette Ortega, Silvina Parra, Michelle Pelletier, Marianna Pineda, Peter Vertes

Viola

Michelle Sanchez, William Burrows, Robbie Christian, Marjory Fontalvo Cabarcas, Carolina De Leon, Mariangely Diaz, Teiko Hashimoto, Gabi Huget, April Queen, Paul Strassburg, Leo Walz

Cello

German Marcano, Suzanne Gottlieb Calleja, Starina D'Haiti, Sophie Hager, Isabelle Mencia, August Neal, Isabell Sanchez, Ruth Alexandra Smith, Flor Stabilini, Barbara Tria, Richard Woodworth, Pamela Yen

Bass

Joe Yeargin, Susie Blank Wolfe, Leilani Ellis, Danny Montana, Sofia Suarez

Flute, Piccolo

Carol Naveira-Nicholson, Sophia Camejo, Aldo Fernandez

Oboe & English Horn

Camber Flick, Cesar Rangel, David Sucik

Clarinet

Evan Eldridge, John A. Garcia

Bassoon

Gail Harrison, Robert Lossino

French Horn

Carlos Briceno, **Alejandro Retana**, Seth Patterson, Russell Seifter

Trumpet

Jean-Claude Misset, Antonio Abreu, Jeffrey Doll, Miles Lawrence, Nelson Martinez

Trombone

Jon Hutchison, Jaden Saul Chairez, Joseph Shearin

Tuba

Horby Lopez

Percussion

Andrey Kovalenko, **Damien Llevada**, **Guillermo Ospina**, **Lucas Sanchez**

Bold Indicates Section Principal

Thank you to Aman Martin and Pam Yen for building the stage cannons.



PROGRAM

CONDUCTOR
Daniel Andai

SPECIAL GUESTS

String Ensemble from Whispering Pines Elementary School

Directed by Seth Patterson

Hot Cross Buns
Traditional

Grandparent's Day
American Folk Song

Ode to Joy
Ludwig van Beethoven

Bile 'Em Cabbage Down
American Fiddle Tune

Allegro
Shinichi Suzuki

ALHAMBRA ORCHESTRA

The Star-Spangled Banner
John S. Smith (1750–1836), arr. Arthur Luck
Silvia Espinoza, guest conductor

Cello Concerto in B minor, Op. 104
Antonín Dvořák (1841–1904)
Thomas Mesa, cello soloist

10-MINUTE INTERMISSION

The Year 1812, Solemn Overture, Op. 49
Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky (1840–1893)



WERTHEIM PERFORMING ARTS CENTER



The Wertheim Performing Arts Center (WPAC), opened in 1996, is a prominent cultural hub located on the Modesto Maidique Campus of Florida International University (FIU) in Miami. Named after Dr. Herbert Wertheim, a renowned inventor, engineer, and philanthropist, and his wife Nicole, who played a significant role in the development of FIU, the center reflects their dedication to the university and the arts. The facility serves as the home for the FIU Department of Theatre and the FIU School of Music, providing a vibrant space for students and faculty to engage with the arts.



As one of Miami's premier collegiate venues, WPAC hosts a wide range of performances, from theatrical productions to concerts by world-class musicians and artists. The center's state-of-the-art facilities and acoustics make it a key location for both academic performances and community events, contributing to the cultural richness of the region. With a capacity to accommodate diverse audiences, it has become a cornerstone of Miami's artistic landscape.

The \$14 million Wertheim Performing Arts Center underscores Florida International University's strong commitment to the performing arts, enhancing both the educational experience for students and the cultural life of the local community. By providing a platform for artistic expression and creativity, WPAC continues to serve as a vital center for the exploration and celebration of theatre and music in Miami.



DANIEL ANDAI

DANIEL ANDAI, *Artistic Director, Conductor*



of numerous competitions and soloed with orchestras around the world.

Daniel Andai is concertmaster of Miami Symphony Orchestra (MISO) with whom he made special solo appearances, including a performance on a violin from the Holocaust surviving Violins of Hope collection and a feature during a private induction ceremony for JAXA Astronaut Soichi Noguchi's to the Genius 100 Visionary roster, while he orbited Earth aboard the International Space Station. Andai was concertmaster and soloist of the Philharmonic Orchestra of the Americas in New York and recorded multiple Billboard rated SONY Classical CD's. He appeared as guest concertmaster with orchestras in Mexico, Brazil, Switzerland, and France, and performed in the sections of New York Philharmonic and Miyazaki Festival Orchestra (Japan). He also worked closely with members of major string quartets, symphony, opera, and ballet orchestras from around the world.

Dr. Daniel Andai is an educator and Dean of the Music Division at New World School of the Arts (Miami, Florida) where he is the Chief Academic Officer, responsible for operating an institutional partnership between Miami Dade College, University of Florida, and Miami Dade County Public Schools. He is Artistic Director and Principal Conductor of Alhambra Orchestra in Miami, and previously served as Artistic Director of Killington Music Festival (Killington, Vermont), and as violin professor and Marialice Shivers Endowed Chair in Fine Arts at University of Texas in Edinburg. He has participated in over 30 summer music festivals and performed with countless recognized artists in the pop and classical fields.

He has served on boards and advisory boards, been invited to serve as a panelist for Jeb and Columba Bush's Arts4Life organization, and performed for numerous world dignitaries, including Hillary Clinton, Donald Trump, Lech Walesa, Al Gore, Benjamin Netanyahu, among others.

Daniel Andai is an alumnus of University of Miami (DMA), Manhattan School of Music (PS & MM), Lynn University (BM), New World School of the Arts (HS) and Miami Dade College.



STEFFEN ZEICHNER



STEFFEN ZEICHNER, *Concertmaster*

Dr. Steffen Zeichner is a creative violinist who actively performs within jazz, classical, klezmer, and a variety of other musical genres.

A native of Gainesville, Florida, Steffen plays with several ensembles and orchestras throughout the South Florida area. He is the leader of 5 String Swing, a lively jazz violin driven band that regularly presents shows of Jazz, Swing, and American Standards.

Steffen is a passionate educator with a focus on developing the creative potential of string players, particularly through exposing them to musical genres outside of the classical world and through helping students to develop improvisational and real-world performance skills. He has an international studio of private violin students learning various styles of music with him both in-person and virtually, and is the adjunct Lecturer of Jazz Violin at Florida International University.

Throughout his career Steffen has shared the stage with many top artists including Chick Corea, Gloria Estefan, Cyrille Aimee, Nestor Torres, Kenny Loggins, Ben Folds, Maria Schneider, Terence Blanchard, and George Benson, with whom he was featured as the violin soloist and concertmaster for Benson's 2013 album, "Inspiration".

Steffen is also an experienced studio musician, credited on a Grammy winning CD, multiple Downbeat awarded recordings, and many other albums and commercial releases within a myriad of genres.

He holds a BM in Violin Performance from Indiana University (studying with Henryk Kowalski, Federico Agostini, Jorja Fleezanis, David Baker) and a Masters and Doctorate of Musical Arts from the University of Miami (Glenn Basham, Charles Castleman, Gary Lindsay, Stephen Guerra Jr). Steffen has also studied jazz violin with acclaimed jazz violinists John Blake Jr, Mark O'Connor, and Jeremy Cohen.



THOMAS MESA



THOMAS MESA, Cello Soloist

ONE OF THE MOST CHARISMATIC, INNOVATIVE, AND ENGAGING PERFORMERS OF HIS GENERATION.

Cuban-American cellist Tommy Mesa has established himself as one of the most charismatic, innovative, and engaging performers of his generation. The recipient of the Sphinx Organization's 2023 Medal of Excellence, its highest honor,

Mesa has appeared as soloist at the Supreme Court of the United States on four occasions and with major orchestras including the Los Angeles Philharmonic at the Hollywood Bowl, The Cleveland Orchestra, The Philadelphia Orchestra, and the symphony orchestras of Indianapolis, Madison, New Jersey, San Antonio, and Santa Barbara, among others. Mesa gave the world premiere and subsequent tour of Jessie Montgomery's cello concerto in the 2022-23 season, with performances at major halls across the United States and Brazil including Miami's New World Center and Carnegie Hall.

Orchestral highlights of the 2023-24 season include an extensive performance tour of Cuba and performance debuts with the Calgary and Fort Wayne Philharmonic Orchestras; the Ann Arbor, Bay Atlantic, Columbus, Greenwich, Gulf Coast, Knoxville, Quad City, Reading, Waterbury Symphony Orchestras; and Boston's Pro Arte Chamber Orchestra.

This season celebrates several new recording releases and subsequent tours, including albums with pianist Michelle Cann and with bandoneonist/composer JP Jofre. In the spring of 2023, Mesa was featured in an exclusive artist showcase on NYC's classical station WQXR that included selections of his upcoming album of world-premiere recordings by Black and Latinx composers with Cann. He also has an album release scheduled with pianist Olga Kern in 2024 and with The Crossing Choir in 2025.

"As a Cellist, it's not enough to play well, you need to engage your audience and show them who the composer is through your ideas and convictions...."



PROGRAM NOTES



ANTONIN DVORAK (1841-1904) was a Czech composer whose extensive body of work—symphonies, operas, and chamber music—is prominently influenced by the rhythms and melodies of Bohemian and Moravian folk music. Dvorák displayed his musical gifts at an early age, excelling as a violin student. He also worked as a professional organist and, for many years, earned his living as an orchestra violist.

The first public performances of his works took place in Prague in 1872, and with particular success in 1873, when he was 31 years old. Seeking recognition beyond Prague, he submitted scores of symphonies and other works to German and Austrian competitions. It wasn't until 1874, when Johannes Brahms joined the jury of the Austrian State Competition, that Dvorák won a prize. In 1877, after his third win, Brahms recommended Dvorák to his publisher, who commissioned what would become the beloved *Slavonic Dances*, Op. 46. The sheet music's high sales and critical acclaim led to the composer's international success. Dvorák was soon invited to London, other European capitals, and America.

In 1892, Dvorák became the director of the National Conservatory of Music in New York City. While in the United States, Dvorák composed his two most successful orchestral works: *Symphony No. 9 "From the New World"*, which spread his reputation worldwide, and his *Cello Concerto*. In chamber music, his famous "American" String Quartet also dates from this period. Dvorák returned to Bohemia in 1895, where he spent his final years composing in his homeland.

Among all cello concertos, Dvorák's *Cello Concerto*, which premiered in London in 1896, has been called "supreme," "the greatest," and "the king." The concerto has been recorded by nearly every well-known cellist.



PROGRAM NOTES



PYOTR ILYICH TCHAIKOVSKY (1840–1893) was the first Russian composer whose music made a lasting impression internationally. His works, including the ballets *Swan Lake* and *The Nutcracker*, the *1812 Overture*, his Piano and Violin Concertos, several symphonies, and the opera *Eugene Onegin*, are some of the most beloved pieces in the classical repertoire.

Although musically gifted, Tchaikovsky was initially trained for a career in civil service, as there were limited opportunities for music in czarist Russia. He later entered the Saint Petersburg Conservatory, from which he graduated in 1865, and his music blends Russian folk melodies with Western European principles of form, melody, and harmony. This fusion brought him international acclaim, though it sometimes put him at odds with the nationalist composers of The Five (Mussorgsky, Balakirev, Cui, Borodin, and Rimsky-Korsakov).

Tchaikovsky's brilliant orchestration, a hallmark of his work, uses timbres and instrument combinations in striking and innovative ways. Despite his success, his personal life was marked by turmoil, including a failed marriage and other crises, and he died at the age of 53, purportedly from cholera.

The *1812 Overture* was commissioned for a grand industrial exhibition in 1883 to commemorate a victory by Tsar Alexander I's forces over the armies of Napoleon. Tchaikovsky's composition became enormously popular and has been adapted into various contexts. The *1812 Overture* is often used in the United States as a symbol of America's Independence Day, a tradition dating back to a 1974 performance chosen by Arthur Fiedler at the Boston Pops July 4th concert. The piece is renowned for its use of cannons as percussion instruments, which is why indoor performances, such as this one, substitute very loud drums (as you will experience this evening).

Program Notes by Helen Hauser

Sources: Wikipedia

Burton F. Beers, *World History: Patterns of Civilization*

Julius H. Jacobson II, *The Classical Music Experience*





VOLKER ANDING



We dedicate this concert to Volker Anding, a beloved musician whom we recently lost at the age of 82. Music was his lifelong passion, and he was a cherished member of our cello section, participating in nearly every concert, as well as in our chamber music workshops and the Alhambra Quartet. We first met Volker and his cello around 2002 when he was serving as the Consul General of Germany in Miami. Throughout his career, Volker enjoyed playing his cello in the many parts of the world to which his work took him.

Volker not only performed with us but also actively promoted The Alhambra Orchestra wherever his career led him in this community. In 2004, he was appointed German Ambassador to Uruguay, where he served for several years, before retiring to Miami and returning to us. Volker served on our board from 2008 to 2023, after which he became our “community liaison,” thanks to his extensive network within the arts, diplomatic, and business communities.

A career diplomat with academic credentials worthy of the title “Dr.,” Volker held several prestigious positions: German Ambassador to Uruguay and Panama, Deputy Ambassador to Senegal, Consul General to the United States in Miami, San Francisco, and Detroit, and was a member of the German Mission to NATO. He met his American wife, Erin, while working in Michigan. Erin has also been a dedicated volunteer for our events.

Dr. Anding also served in the Bundeswehr as a Lieutenant in the German Air Force Reserve. In 1997, he became a Member of the Royal College of Defense Studies in London. He earned a PhD in Law from the Universities of Marburg and Freiburg in Germany and worked in the Legal Department of the German Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Following his retirement, Volker remained deeply engaged in the Miami community. In addition to his involvement with the Alhambra Orchestra and the German-American Business Council, he served as a Trustee of the Greater Miami Chamber of Commerce, was on the Board of the Consular Corps of Miami, and contributed to the Dranoff Foundation. Volker was also closely involved with Florida International University and the University of Miami, where he frequently lectured. He worked with the American Jewish Committee of Miami, Baptist Health, and the World Affairs Council of Greater Miami.

Volker was truly a remarkable individual, and we miss him greatly.



ABOUT THE ALHAMBRA ORCHESTRA

Founded in 1990, the Alhambra Orchestra is dedicated to promoting live classical performances and music education in Miami-Dade County. Its corporate entity, Alhambra Music, Inc., is a tax-exempt nonprofit primarily operated and managed by volunteer musicians. As a result, the orchestra has minimal administrative expenses, with nearly all of its funding going directly into programming. The orchestra strives to provide free concerts whenever possible, ensuring that everyone in the community can experience its performances without barriers.

The Alhambra Orchestra is entirely independent and not affiliated with any educational or civic institutions, though it frequently partners with other community groups. Our highly trained musicians, most of whom volunteer their time and talents, are diverse members of the community who pursue various professions but share a deep belief in the importance and power of great music. Until this year, government support at all levels has been a mainstay, but state funding was withdrawn from all Florida arts groups this year, and other government sources are in doubt for the future. Therefore, funding from corporate sponsors, foundations, and generous audience members is vital for our ability to continue serving our community.

Tax-deductible donations are gratefully accepted through our website (alhambraorchestra.org)

Donate via Venmo: Open Venmo, search for: Alhambra Orchestra, and choose the amount to donate. It's fast, easy, and secure!

By mail: Checks can be sent to: 5794 SW 40th Street, PMB 189, Miami, FL 33155.

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KEEPING IN TOUCH WITH THE ORCHESTRA

For our schedule and general information about the orchestra, please visit our website, AlhambraOrchestra.org.

You can also contact us via email, music@alhambraorchestra.org, Facebook messages, and our voicemail, (305) 668-9260.

Please be sure to visit our social media channels and subscribe to them:



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DANIEL ANDAI, Conductor

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