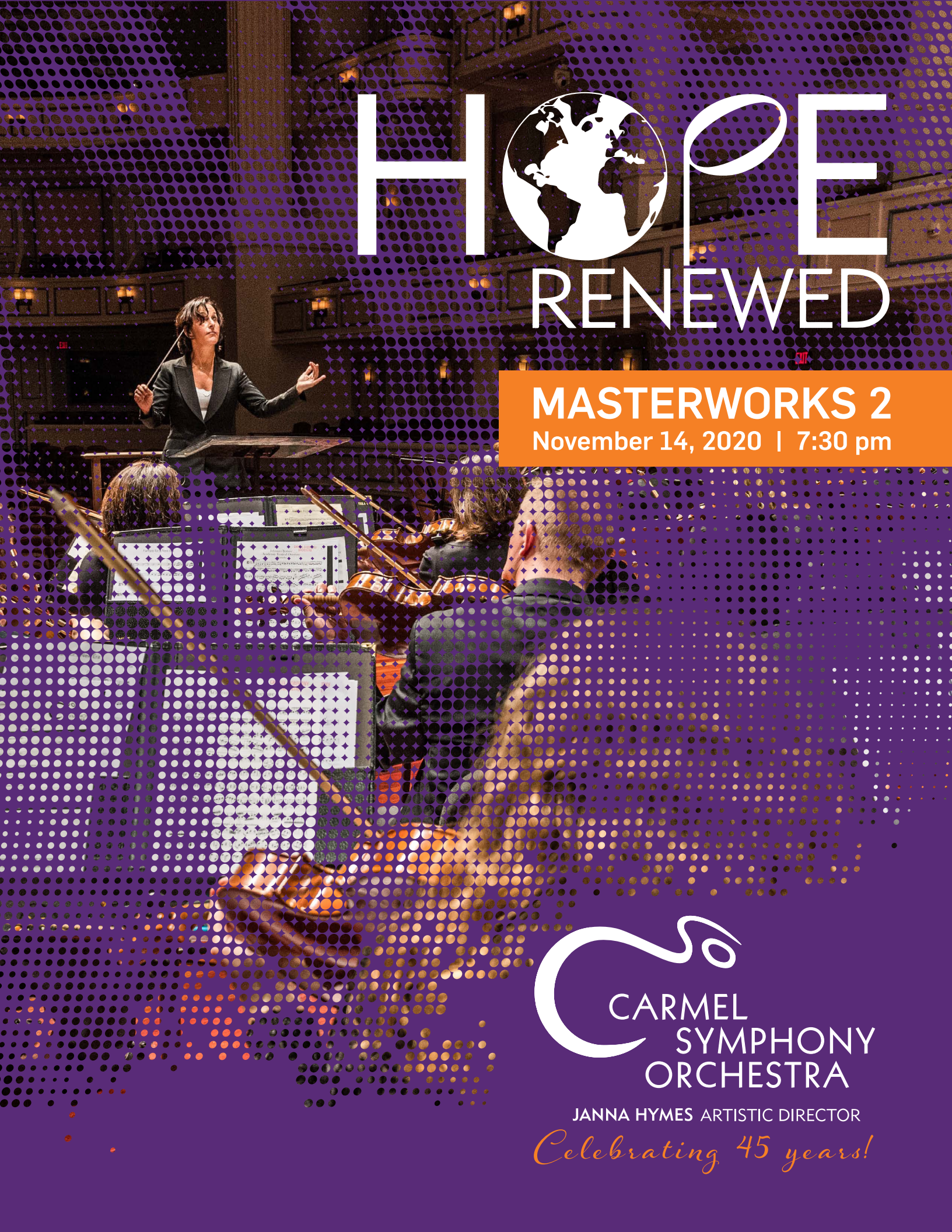

HOPE RENEWED

MASTERWORKS 2

November 14, 2020 | 7:30 pm

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JANNA HYMES ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

Celebrating 45 years!

HOPE RENEWED

Masterworks 2

November 14, 2020 | 7:30 pm

Janna Hymes, Artistic Director

Cooper Olsen, Violin

Beethoven	**Symphony No. 1 in C Major, Op. 21**
	I. Adagio molto - Allegro con brio
	II. Andante cantabile con moto
	III. Menuetto: Allegro molto e vivace
	IV. Finale: Adagio - Allegro molto e vivace
Mozart	**Violin Concerto No. 3 in G Major, K. 216**
	I. Allegro
	II. Adagio
	III. Rondeau
Rossini	**Barber of Seville Overture**

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PROGRAM NOTES:

Ludwig van Beethoven (1770-1827)
Symphony No. 1 in C major, op. 21 (1800)

By the end of his life, Beethoven had firmly established himself as a revolutionary genius, a visionary rule-breaker who completely redefined the Symphony in a way that influenced composers for the next hundred years. But a revolutionary has to start somewhere, and in the last year of the eighteenth century, the twenty-nine year old Beethoven made his entrée into the Symphonic realm with a work which looked backward to earlier works. He paid homage to Haydn in particular, who did more than almost anybody to define the symphony in the first place. Overall, it is a relatively conservative beginning from a still-young composer.

Except that it isn't, not really. Looking back on it from the perspective of a new millennium, it may seem that way. But then why did so many critics of the time react with such horror or disgust? Why would one describe the symphony as "the confused explosions of the outrageous effrontery of a young man?" Why did another call it "a danger to the musical art," adding "It is believed that a prodigal use of the most barbarous dissonances and a noisy use of all the instruments will make an effect. Alas, the ear is only stabbed; there is no appeal to the heart."

It's easy to wave off such comments as naïve or uninformed, but keep in mind that these were professional musicians, very much in tune with the currents of their times. They knew how to look beneath the surface to see clearly that while Beethoven was content to stay within the walls of tradition for the moment, he was already looking for weak spots. The establishment saw a revolutionary approaching. They had no idea what they were in for.

We hear an example of Beethoven's wall-kicking at the very beginning. While the symphony is billed as being "in C major," he spends the first several measures carefully avoiding it. The first thing we hear is a dissonant chord, a dominant seventh on C which resolves correctly—to F major! The very next measure leads us to expect C, but instead we are slipped into A minor. The home key is not firmly established until the eighth measure. Nothing unusual about that today, but in 1800 it was disorienting, to say the least.

After the tonal vicissitudes of the introduction, the symphony gets down to business with a sonata-form movement that sticks to the standard formula, mostly. The first violins quietly introduce the first theme of the movement, a lively little figure which is taken up and transformed by the full orchestra. The second theme appears in the expected G major, with a graceful little fragment passed from oboe to flute to violins. The development section is fairly brief, with fragments of both themes tossed around. When the recapitulation comes, the themes are repeated as we (or at least Beethoven's critics) might expect, but with unexpected further developments and variations. Finally, in the coda (the concluding section), we hear even more developments of the first theme.

PROGRAM NOTES:

Ludwig van Beethoven (1770-1827)
Symphony No. 1 in C major, op. 21 (1800)

The second movement is slow, light, and lyrical, which was expected. An unusual feature is that it is also in sonata form, with a brief development based on fragments of its themes. This wasn't particularly revolutionary in itself, but serves to anticipate just how important the idea of development would come to dominate Beethoven's thinking in his mature style.

Traditionally, the third movement of a symphony in 1800 was supposed to be a Minuet, a stately dance which was a holdover from the symphony's origins as a dance suite. But even though Beethoven gave the third movement the title of Minuet, in reality it is anything but. It is extremely fast and humorous in character, which were characteristic of the Scherzo (literally "joke" in Italian). Haydn had included Scherzi in several of his string quartets, but Beethoven was the first to use it in a symphony, whether titled as such or not. He began using the title Scherzo in his Second Symphony, and in all of his symphonies thereafter. Other composers quickly followed suit, and the Minuet disappeared.

The final movement begins with another Haydnesque joke. First violins tentatively play a scale, beginning with the first three notes, then beginning again and again adding another note each time, until the complete scale is finally heard as the upbeat to a lively and skipping tune, the main theme of the movement. This turns out to be yet another sonata-form movement, with the development section serving as a vehicle for humor rather than drama. There is almost nothing of Beethoven, the revolutionary, to be heard here. Instead, he seems perfectly content to imitate the model of Haydn, especially his willingness to laugh out loud.

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756-1791)
Violin Concerto no. 3 in G major ("Strasbourg"), K. 291 (1775)

During his early years in Salzburg, Mozart was known as an uncommonly gifted performer on both piano and violin. When he left his native Salzburg to seek better opportunities in Vienna, he placed the emphasis on piano as his instrument, taking out the violin mainly for the occasional chamber music session. This change in his priorities was reflected in his compositional output. Mozart composed piano concertos throughout his all-too-brief life, but his contribution to the violin concerto repertoire is confined to the year 1775 (though it is thought possible that his first concerto may have been written in 1773).

It has been supposed that Mozart wrote the concertos for his own use, as he did for his piano concertos. But, owing to a lack of records, this is far from certain. It is just as possible that they were intended for his father, Leopold Mozart, who was himself a renowned violin soloist and pedagogue. But whoever the first performer may have been,

PROGRAM NOTES:

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there is documentation of one occasion when Mozart did play the soloist in one of the concertos. In October 1777, Mozart travelled to Augsburg, writing back to his father, "During dinner we had some music…I played my Strasbourg concerto, which went like oil. Everyone praised my beautiful, pure tone."

The "Strasbourg Concerto" was Mozart's own nickname for the Third Concerto in G major, which the 19 year old composer completed on September 12, 1775. The nickname refers to a musical joke slipped into the last movement, one which would have been understood by early audiences and which Mozart therefore felt no need to explain. It baffled musicologists for years; there is no obvious connection to Strasbourg, a city which Mozart had not yet visited. It wasn't until much later that the truth was uncovered in a collection of popular dance tunes dating from 1813. The book includes a melody called "The Strasbourger," which Mozart inserted unexpectedly into the last movement.

The Strasbourg theme is not the only example of the composer reusing preexisting material. The first movement opens with a brilliant, cheerful theme which Mozart stole from himself. It had appeared in an aria from his opera Il Re Pastore, which had been premiered just over four months before the concerto. Other than that, the first movement adheres to the usual form of a Classical-period concerto. The orchestra begins alone, introducing the thematic material of the work, which the solo violin takes up and elaborates. As the central Development section begins, the mood darkens with a switch to minor mode, but as the mood begins to return to brighter realms, the orchestra suddenly stops, leaving the soloist to improvise a brief recitative (another operatic connection) ushering in the recapitulation.

The second movement is an early example of one of those sublime, singing Adagios which were to become so typical of Mozart's concertos and symphonies. Here the tone color of the orchestra changes markedly as violins and violas are muted and the oboes are replaced with flutes (in the Salzburg orchestra, it would have been expected for the same players to play both oboes and flutes).

The original instrumentation is restored in the boisterous, good-humored Finale. Mozart calls the movement a Rondeau, a form in which a single theme appears multiple times with various contrasted themes inserted between. This was a typical form for the endings of concertos in Mozart's day, and he follows the standards of the form until he suddenly doesn't. The music abruptly stops, then resumes in a much slower tempo with a delicate tip-toeing theme lasting only 13 measures. Another pause, and the tempo abruptly quickens as the violin incongruously plays the "Strasbourg" dance tune, for no reason other than to amuse Salzburg listeners. After Mozart has had his little joke, he returns to the Rondeau form and dutifully finishes it out, but not without getting one last smile out his audience as the piece ends.

PROGRAM NOTES:

Gioacchino Rossini (1792-1868)
Overture to Il barbiere di Siviglia (The Barber of Seville, 1813)

Rossini, like any Italian child in the late 18th century, grew up surrounded by music, especially because both his parents were musicians. He began music lessons at age 10, studying horn with his father. He would also study with a local priest, who exposed him to the works of Haydn and Mozart, who were then practically unknown in Italy. Rossini proved a quick study, and by 12 was composing, mainly short chamber works. Soon he was enrolled at the Bologna Conservatory, where he learned singing, piano, and cello, and entered the composition class in his second year. Already he was composing more substantial works, including cantatas and orchestra pieces. By 16, he had acquired a solid composition technique, and had decided to complete his education in the real world. It was a risky decision, but turned out to be the correct one.

By the time he was 24, and only six years after composing his first opera, Rossini had finished his first undisputed masterpiece, The Barber of Seville. Premiered on February 20, 1816 in Rome, it is now one of the top ten most frequently performed operas in the world. It is remarkable, then, to note that the opera was composed in only three weeks! This was not at all an unusual situation; Rossini's contemporaries often received commissions with such crushingly short deadlines. To relieve some of the pressure, many of them would resort to reusing material from earlier operas, and Rossini was no exception. "Una voce poco fa," the Barber's most famous aria, had originally appeared in his Elizabeth, Queen of England, produced just six months earlier in Naples.

The overture is an even more notorious case of self-plagiarism. The first overture that Rossini had written for Barber somehow got lost, so Rossini was forced to reuse a piece that he had used in two previous operas, Elizabeth and Auriliano in Palmira, produced at La Scala in 1813. Both of these earlier operas are largely forgotten now, so the overture is permanently wedded to Barber. Still, since it was originally written for a serious opera about an ancient Roman general, and repurposed for an equally serious opera about England's most famous Queen, it seems pointless to relate any part of it to specific episodes in a comic opera about a clever Spanish Barber. Still, the overture's sparkling wit and infectious, memorable melodies seem tailor-made for comedy, and have also made it a hugely popular concert work.

Janna Hymes, Artistic Director

Versatility, passion and innovation are the hallmarks of American conductor Janna Hymes. Renowned for her inspiring performances, musical depth and energetic presence both on and off the podium, she has developed a reputation as an exciting, detailed communicator. Praised by the press as "an architect, a builder in sound, a conductor, with an overall view who never misses details", Ms. Hymes is Artistic Director of Indiana's Carmel Symphony Orchestra since fall 2017. She has served as Artistic Director of Indiana's Carmel Symphony Orchestra and was recently appointed Music Artistic Director of the Carmel Music and Film Festival which she helped to launch. She served as Music Director of the Williamsburg Symphony Orchestra (WSO) from 2004 to 2019, when she celebrated the WSO's 35th anniversary and her 15th and final season. A popular guest conductor, Ms. Hymes continues to expand her relationships with orchestras nationwide.

Among the orchestras that Ms. Hymes has guested with are the Houston, Indianapolis, Oregon, North Carolina, Savannah, New Hampshire, Roanoke (VA), Hartford (CT), Portland (ME), Madison (WI), Florida West Coast, Harrisburg (PA), Spokane (WA), Richmond (VA), Springfield (MA), Bozeman (MT), Chappaqua Chamber (NY), Bangor (ME) and Omaha symphony orchestras, as well as the San Francisco Women's Philharmonic, Cincinnati Chamber Orchestra and the Florida Orchestra. International guesting includes the Costa Rica National Symphony (where she has been a frequent guest), the Delta Ensemble of Holland, National Orchestre de Lyon, Besancon Chamber Orchestra and the Orquesta Sinfonica del Estado de Mexico.

Born in New York City, Janna Hymes is a Fulbright scholar, recipient of a 1999 Geraldine C. and Emory M. Ford Foundation Grant, and a prizewinner of the 1998 International Conducting Competition in Besancon, France.

Cooper Olsen, Violin

Cooper Olsen, age 15, resides in Bloomington, Indiana, where he is enrolled as a 9th grade student at Bloomington North High School. Cooper studies violin with Professor Mimi Zwieg at Indiana University Jacobs School of Music.

Cooper began violin studies at an early age with his mother, herself a former student of Professor Zweig. Although living in Pittsburgh at the time, Cooper visited Bloomington occasionally for special lessons with Professor Zweig. Cooper also participated in local opportunities for young violinists, including Carnegie Mellon's Young Artists Orchestra, for whom he served as the ensemble's first concertmaster.

In 2018, Cooper moved with his family to Indiana, where he is now fully immersed in the many musical offerings of the Indiana University String Academy. Prior to March of this year, in addition to his weekly lessons with Professor Zwieg, Cooper received weekly chamber music coachings from Susan Moses, participated in a chamber orchestra led by Dr. Brenda Brenner, and attended weekly theory training and masterclasses. Cooper has performed in additional master classes taught by Mauricio Fuks, Vadim Gluzman, Luke Hsu and Paul Kantor.

Shortly after participating in the Carmel Young Artist Competition, Cooper received second prize in the Southeast Missouri State "Rising Star" competition, first prize in the Junior Division of the Muncie Symphony Orchestra Competition, and first prize in the Bloomington Symphony Orchestra Youth Concerto Competition.

When not practicing violin, Cooper enjoys studying math, training his dog Chelsea (with mixed results), collecting miniature die-cast cars and stuffed animals, reading Garfield and Dilbert comics (and some real books as well!), providing technology advice, and occasionally repairing computers or playing car racing video games.

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Bob Bonner

TIMPANI
Jason Spangler, Principal

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Mark Stempel, Principal

VIOLIN I
Joana Genova, Guest Concertmaster
Jesse Hawkins, Associate Concertmaster
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Pam Close, Assistant Principal
Jonathan Johnson
Kris Zaloudek
Amanda Cornet
Kevin Shiue

VIOLA
Rachel Gries, Principal
Julie Scull, Assistant Principal
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