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Photos by Paul Van Hemel, April 9, 2019

Dr. Michael Summers, Mason Professor of Planetary Science and Astronomy, Discusses the Search for Life Beyond Earth, Tallwood, April 9

## April 19, 2019

Editor of the Week: Dave Gundry

### Table of Contents

- [Alerts & Notices](#)
- [Appreciating Stephen Sondheim](#)
- [Fairfax City Spotlight on the Arts](#)
- [Contemporary American Theater Festival Class](#)
- [Photo of the Month](#)
- [Poet's Corner](#)
- [Arts & Music at George Mason](#)
- [Meetings & Clubs](#)
- [About OLLI E-News](#)

### Alerts & Notices

- The OLLI Personal Computer User Group meets Saturday, April 20 (tomorrow!), at 1:00 in TA-1.
- The Loudoun Program Planning Group will meet Tuesday, April 30, 11:05–11:50 in Room 2018.
- The annual business meeting and picnic will take place at Tallwood Friday, May 3. The business meeting begins at 10:00 followed by the picnic. If you register for the picnic (special event 1105), please bring a dish to share based on your last name: salad (A-G), side dish (H-O), or dessert (P-Z).

- The next issue of OLLI E-News will be published April 26; regular deadline for submission of items is Tuesday, April 23, at 6:00.

[Back to Top of Page](#)

## Appreciating Stephen Sondheim



By John Nash, OLLI E-News Editor and Writer

"Stephen Sondheim is arguably one of this country's most prolific creators of popular musicals but one who probably is least understood," said Norma Reck, OLLI member. With the goal of acquainting more OLLI members with the music of Stephen Sondheim, Norma met this past year with Professor Joe Walsh, musical director at Mason School of Music, to design a program that would explain the works of Sondheim and then bring to life some of his music. That collaboration resulted in the excellent three-session presentation just completed.

The first two sessions were chronological reviews of Sondheim's development into a top lyricist and composer, presented by Mason student Caleb Cassell, whose admiration and extensive knowledge of the musical author belied his freshman status. Caleb highlighted the musicals in which Sondheim collaborated by writing the lyrics (*West Side Story* and *Gypsy*, among others) and those musical plays where he matured into writing both the lyrics and the music (*Into the Woods*, *Sweeney Todd*, *Assassins*, and many more). With the studied insight that can only reflect his passion for the musical author, Caleb explained the complexity of many of the plays, laced with short background stories.

For the third session, Professor Walsh brought several students to sing selections from Sondheim's plays, including "Anyone Can Whistle" from *Anyone Can Whistle*; "Maria" from *West Side Story*; "Some People" from *Gypsy*; and "Bring in the Clowns" from *A Little Night Music*. The ten talented students simply overwhelmed the OLLI members who gave them a standing ovation.

"This program was beyond my expectations," Norma said. "It all rested on the appealing presentations of Caleb and then the fantastic music from the talented singers." Norma also pointed out that the School of Music, under the musical direction of Professor Walsh, is presenting Sondheim's *Merrily We Roll Along* on Friday, May 3, with performances at 3:00 and 8:00. OLLI members interested in attending the 3:00 presentation as a group, followed by a "no-host" dinner at Oh, George, please email Norma Reck as soon as possible at [njreck@cs.com](mailto:njreck@cs.com).





(Top photo: Norma Reck and Caleb Cassell; bottom photo: Professor Walsh and singers answer questions after a standing ovation. Photos by John Nash)

[Back to Top of Page](#)

## Fairfax City Spotlight on the Arts



By Jim Dunphy, OLLI Instructor

April 26 marks the opening of the 34th annual Fairfax Spotlight on the Arts festival. This year, in honor of the 50th anniversary of the Woodstock Concert, the theme will be An Aquarian Exposition.

Again this year, OLLI will participate in the Spotlight. Your correspondent will be teaching a class at the Old Town Hall on Wednesday, May 8, at 7:00, entitled Woodstock and the Protest Music of the 1960s. This is only one of many events, encompassing theater, history, dance, music, and many other genres. The Spotlight will also use many venues, in addition to the Old Town Hall, the Mason Center for the Arts and other Mason locations, Historic Blenheim, the Sherwood Center, the Auld Shebeen, and other locations in and near Fairfax City.

Brochures for the Spotlight are available in the Social Room at Tallwood (look for a Woodstock logo!). Additionally, information may be found on the Web at [fairfaxspotlight.org](http://fairfaxspotlight.org). Hope to see many of you there!

[Back to Top of Page](#)

## Contemporary American Theater Festival Class



By Norma Jean Reck, Theater Lovers' Group Coordinator

Register now for Event 1014, A "Must" Summer Experience – Contemporary American Theater Festival.

The Contemporary American Theater Festival's (CATF) very own Peggy McKowen (pictured here), a theater designer and administrator, and Jeanne Muir, CATF staff, will be on hand on Wednesday, May 8, from 2:15 to 3:40 at Lord of Life in Fairfax to



bring the theater festival to life for OLLI members. We will go behind the scenes of the three theater venues at Shepherd College, located in charming Shepherdstown, West Virginia, just a couple of hours and a pleasant drive from Fairfax.



We will learn the history of the festival and become acquainted with the six original shows playing in repertory this summer. They are:

- *Oh Lord, What a Night;*
- *Support Group for Men;*
- *Chester Bailey;*
- *Wrecked;*
- *A Welcome Guest, A Psychotic Fairy Tale;* and
- *Antonio's Song/I Was Dreaming of a Son.*

To round out the festival experience, we will be treated to videos of past shows and learn about the many related theater activities available (e.g., lunch with a playwright or CATF staff, backstage tours, workshops, and discussions with cast about the plays). We'll be introduced to the town's outstanding restaurants, as well as the area's other cultural and recreational activities.

This theatrical gem, which is practically in our own backyard, is a 'must do' experience.

Note: The Theater Lovers' Group is planning a one-day trip to the CATF this July to see two plays, one of which will be *Oh Lord, What a Night*, a play based on actual events about the lifelong friendship between Marian Anderson and Albert Einstein, which will feature songs by Marian Anderson. We will also include other theater-related activities.

[Back to Top of Page](#)

## Photo of the Month



The April 2019 Photo of the Month theme was Self-Portrait. We selected Angela Talaber's (my!) photo "Through the Years," which may also be viewed at [this page](#). To view other photos by members of the Photography Club, visit the club's photo [website](#).

-- By Angela Talaber, Photography Club Coordinator

[Back to Top of Page](#)

## Poet's Corner

*Courtesy of the Poetry Workshop*

### Shalimar

The name alone exotic  
 evoking mysteries of India  
 fragrant temples of love  
 embroidered silk in bright fuchsia  
 marigold yellow against smooth  
 warm skin oiled black hair  
 smelling of bergamot

cloves cardamom cinnamon  
 scenting chickpea curries  
 on jasmine rice.

I become all these  
 when I touch the golden elixir  
 between my breasts  
 behind my knees  
 and leave my lair  
 hunting.

*Carolyn F. Wyatt*

[Back to Top of Page](#)

## Arts & Music at George Mason

Performances, April 19 through April 29



*By Shelly Gersten, OLLI E-News Staff Writer*

For tickets for either Center for the Arts Concert Hall (CFA) or Hylton Center, call 1-888-945-2468, buy tickets online through the event calendar (see links below), or visit the venue's box office. For more information, see the CFA [ticket page](#) or the Hylton Center [ticket purchase page](#).

### At the Fairfax Campus Venues

#### Parsons Dance

Sat, Apr 20, 8:00

A pre-performance discussion with a member of the company begins 45 minutes prior to the performance.

Concert Hall

Admission: \$48, \$41, \$29.

#### Fairfax Symphony Orchestra: Holst's *The Planets*

Sat, Apr 27, 8:00

A pre-performance discussion begins at 7:00 with conductor Christopher Zimmerman and special guests.

Concert Hall

Admission: \$65, \$53, \$50, \$39, \$25.

#### Keyboard Conversations with Jeffrey Siegel: *Chopin in Paris*

Sun, Apr 28, 7:00

The Young Artists Musicales, featuring school-aged piano students, begins at 6:00 in the main lobby.

Concert Hall

Admission: \$44, \$37, \$26.

[Back to Top of Page](#)

### Mason Student & Faculty Performances

(see [music.gmu.edu](http://music.gmu.edu) for additional student recitals)

**Various Chamber Ensemble Concert I**

Fri, Apr 19, 7:00  
deLaski A323  
Admission: Free.

**Various Chamber Ensemble Concert II**

Sat, Apr 20, 6:00  
deLaski A323  
Admission: Free.

**Lysistrata**

Wed, Apr 24 and Fri, Apr 26, 8:00  
Sat, Apr 27, 2:00  
deLaski Performing Arts Building, A105, TheaterSpace  
Admission: \$20 Adults; \$10 seniors.

**Mason Wind Symphony and Symphonic Band**

Thu, Apr 25, 8:00  
Center for the Arts  
Admission: \$12 Adults; \$8 seniors.

**The Wolves**

Thu, Apr 25, 8:00  
Sat, Apr 27, 8:00  
Sun, Apr 28, 2:00  
deLaski Performing Arts Building, A105, TheaterSpace  
Admission: \$20 Adults; \$10 seniors.

**Mason Opera: *The Medium and Suor Angelica***

Fri, Apr 26 and Sat, Apr 27 8:00  
Sun, Apr 28, 2:00  
Harris Theatre  
Admission: \$20 Adults; \$15 seniors.

**Mason Jazz Vocal Night - Spring**

Mon, Apr 29, 8:00  
Concert Hall  
Admission: \$12 Adults; \$8 seniors.

[Back to Top of Page](#)

**At the Hylton Center (Manassas Campus)**

**Gallery Exhibit: David Barr**

Apr 2 – May 18  
Buchanan Partners Art Gallery.  
The Buchanan Partners Art Gallery is open to the public Tue-Sat, 10:00-6:00.

**A Raisin in the Sun**

Sat, Apr 27, 2:00 and 7:00  
Sun, Apr 28, 3:00  
Sat, May 4, 2:00 and 7:00  
Gregory Family Theater  
Admission: \$20 in advance; \$25 at the door.

**Keyboard Conversations with Jeffrey Siegel: *Rags to Riches***

Sat, Apr 27, 8:00  
Merchant Hall  
Admission: \$44, \$37, \$26.

**VA National Ballet: *Carmen***

Sun, Apr 28, 3:00  
Merchant Hall  
Admission: \$40.

[Back to Top of Page](#)

For further details on any of the above events, see the [CFA event calendar](#), and the [Hylton Center event calendar](#).

[Back to Top of Page](#)

**Meetings & Clubs**

The following list covering the next two weeks is extracted for your convenience from the master online calendar maintained by the office, with direct web links added when available. The list is accurate as of mid-week but for the most up-to-date information, please view the latest forecast of coming events on our website ([News/OLLI Calendar](#)).  
*Note: All OLLI members are welcome at, and encouraged to attend, meetings of the Board of Directors, committees and resource groups, kick-off coffees, etc. (bolded below).*

Sat Apr 20	10:30am 1:00pm	Tai Chi Club–TA-3 Personal Computer User Group–TA-1
Tue Apr 23	2:15pm	Loudoun Non-Fiction Book Club –Room 209
Wed Apr 24	1:45pm 1:45pm	Bridge Club–TA-3 Spanish Club–TA-2
Fri Apr 26	9:15am 9:30am 10:00am 10:00am 11:00am 11:00am 12:00noon 12:30pm	Recorder Consort–TA-3 Crafts and Conversation–Annex <b>Board of Directors Meeting</b> –Loudoun Theater Lovers' Group–TA-1 Classic Literature Club–TA-2 Homer, etc.–Annex Photography Club–TA-3 <b>Super Salad Social–Room 113-115 Reston UCP</b>
Sat Apr 27	10:30am	Tai Chi Club–TA-3
Tue Apr 30	11:05am	<b>Loudoun Program Planning Group–Room 2018</b>
Wed May 1	1:30pm 1:45pm 2:15pm	Mah Jongg Club–TA-2 Bridge Club–TA-3 History Club–TA-1
Fri May 3	10:00am	<b>Annual Business Meeting–TA-1</b>
Sat May 4	10:30am	Tai Chi Club–TA-3

[Back to Top of Page](#)

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## About *OLLI E-News*

*OLLI E-News* was created by Rod Zumbro, who served as its editor from 2005 to 2013.

### Editorial Staff

Chief Editor: Paul Van Hemel

Associate Editor: David Gundry

Weekly Editor Team: David Gundry, John Nash, Sheri Siesseger, Leslie Vandivere,

Paul Van Hemel

Proofreaders: Rebecca Jann, Susan Van Hemel, Linda Randall, Tom Appich, Roz Stark,

Jane Hassell

Backup Chief Editor: Alice Slayton Clark

**Submissions:** Members are encouraged to submit letters to the editor, letters to Ms. Ollie Ettakit (on etiquette matters), OLLI-related news items, articles, and photos. Submit material to: [ollieeditor@gmail.com](mailto:ollieeditor@gmail.com).

**Deadline:** Tuesday, 6:00, for that week's issue (Monday, 6:00, for letters to the editor); early submissions are greatly appreciated. Please limit articles to about 250 words.

**Note:** You can view past issues of *OLLI E-News* on the DocStore. To search the content of issues, use Search Our Site or put your search term in Google followed by "site:ollie.gmu.edu/" without the quotes.

[Back to Top of Page](#)