

The Washington Metropolitan Gamer Symphony Orchestra

SYMPHONIES OF LIGHT

A Video Game Music Concert Series



November 4, 2017 – 7 p.m.
Rockville High School
2100 Baltimore Road
Rockville, MD

November 19, 2017 – 4 p.m.
Marshall High School
7731 Leesburg Pike
Falls Church, VA

\$9 online – wmgso.org/events



MetroGSO



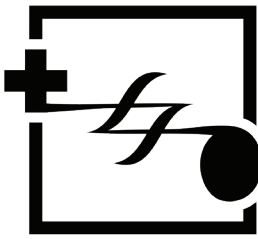
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WASHINGTON METROPOLITAN

Gamer Symphony Orchestra

The WMGSO is a community orchestra and choir whose mission is to share and celebrate video game music with as wide an audience as possible, primarily by putting on affordable, accessible concerts in the D.C. area.

Game music weaves a complex melodic thread through the traditions, shared memories, values, and myths of an entire international and intergenerational culture. WMGSO showcases this music because it largely escapes recognition in professional circles.

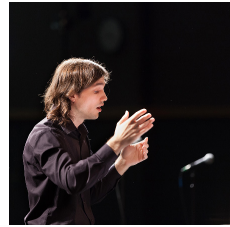
The result: classical music with a 21st-century twist, drawing non-gamers to the artistic merits of video game soundtracks, and attracting new audiences to orchestral concert halls.

About our Music Director



Nigel Horne is an experienced conductor, clinician and composer, with a degree in band studies from the University of Sheffield, England, and a Master of Philosophy in Free Composition from the University of Leeds. Nigel has also directed the Rockville Brass Band since 2009.

About our Chorus Master



Jacob Coppage-Gross started his musical studies at age 9. He served as the conductor for the Gamer Symphony Orchestra at UMD for two years and has performed in collaborations with the National Symphony at the Kennedy Center, as well as at local churches and with other small groups in the area.

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Diamond

Those who give at the Diamond level (\$150 or more) earn an exclusive season poster, VIP Seating for two to our seasonal concerts for the next year, a special treble clef supporter pin, and will have their names listed in our concert programs and on our website for one year.

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The WMGSO Game Gallery is Back!

After a successful debut at our April 2017 concert, the WMGSO Development Team is excited to bring back the WMGSO Game Gallery. Be sure to spend a few minutes before the performance exploring this interactive experience designed to educate our audiences about the games featured in our concert program.

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It's Dangerous to Play Alone — Take This!



Join the first community orchestra and chorus to draw its repertoire exclusively from the soundtracks of video games. The WMGSO has immediate openings for all string players, choristers, and other instrumentalists.

Email metro@wmgso.org to schedule a tryout!

Need More WMGSO?

MAGFest 2018

Saturday, January 6
Gaylord Convention Center
201 Waterfront Street
Oxon Hill, MD

Spring 2018 Performance

Our five-year anniversary performance will take place in May 2018! Keep your eye on wmgso.org for the date and location!



Classical Music. **Play On!**

Roster

Piccolo, Alto Flute

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Jess Bateman
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Joe Wang

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Julius Verzosa

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Meredith Chen
Zeynep Dilli*
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Vivian Cheng
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Hannah Holzacker
Diana Henry

Double Bass

Stephen Miskimins

** CONCERTMASTER

* SECTION LEADERS

+ CHORUSMASTER

START!

Hello, World!

Secret of Evermore (1996)

Jeremy Soule

Arr. Chris Apple

Almost every programmer's first program is "Hello World." It's a simple teaching tool that displays "Hello World" on the screen, but at the same time it is the programmer's debut into the world of coding. Likewise, appropriately, this piece is the composer's debut into game music. Jeremy Soule, composer for Guild Wars and the Elder Scrolls series, got his start with the Secret of Evermore soundtrack. And a wonderful beginning it is, with a whole new world for Soule to fill with whimsy and color. Evermore is a land created out of the dreams and imaginations of four ordinary people. It is filled with scary dinosaurs, knights on horseback, gladiator coliseums, and futuristic spacecraft. When Evermore is accidentally discovered by the unnamed protagonist, he finds a fantastic new world to explore, where dreams literally have come true! It's a land full of adventure, and the boy and his loyal pooch have to tread carefully to stay out of trouble.

This piece is the main theme for Secret of Evermore. Infamously, Soule ran out of time creating the soundtrack, and this piece does not actually appear in the game. However, its influence is felt in other songs in the game (as any good main theme should be) through reprises. This arranger is very proud to present music from Secret of Evermore, which is a major musical inspiration in his life. Additionally, to this arranger's knowledge, this music has never been performed for a live audience by any orchestra, professional or amateur; we hope you enjoy what is a debut for WMGSO and possibly, for the world. Hello, world!

Laharl-sama No Sanbika ("Ode to Sir Laharl")

Disgaea: Hour of Darkness (2003)

Tenpei Sato, Lyrics Sohei Niikawa

Arr. Michelle Eng

Laharl, the heir to the overlord of the netherworld, awakens to find his father dead and his vassals gone, trying to take over the throne. He sets out to take back what is rightfully his by proving that he is the strongest demon of the netherworld, but not without learning the true meaning of love! We welcome the lady who will be taking us on a journey through Laharl's antics in this mischievously evil, mocking piece, an ode to the demon. Laharl has also demanded that he become the main character of this concert. But that was foiled by the actual main characters.

Nostalgia Red & Blue

Pokemon Red & Pokemon Blue (1996)

Junichi Masuda

Arr. Jacob Copping-Gross

Since its inception in the mid 90's, the Pokémon franchise has entertained millions of fans across the globe. The iconic role-playing series began with the original Red and Blue versions, perhaps two of the most recognizable games ever made. On top of their genre-defining gameplay and engaging story, the games offered a delightful suite of musical themes to accompany the adventurer on his/her quest. The arrangement presented today takes many of those classic themes

and expands them into a full-fledged orchestral medley, with unique musical settings of favorites such as the Pokémon Center Theme and the Bicycle Theme. Mysterious, whimsical, playful or, indeed, nostalgic in turn, both in its instrumentation and form, this arrangement is a splendid trip down memory lane for long time fans of the series – or into a brand-new world for those hearing it for the first time.

The Kindled of Lordran

Dark Souls (2011)

Motoi Sakuraba

Arr. Douglas Eber

Lordran: A kingdom of gods, men, and chaos. Gwyn, the Lord of Sunlight, prolonged his beloved Age of Fire and sent the world into discord. Even now, men and demons fight over what few embers remain. And more and more common are the accursed Undead, carriers of the Darksign and destined to go Hollow.

By the Darksign are you cursed and blessed. You cannot die, but instead are reborn through bonfires, losing your Humanity a little more every time. Most would give up, needing to fight through Gwyn's most trusted allies and bring down the very gods themselves. Do you have the determination to bring about the Age of Dark, or will you, like so many before, lose yourself in the journey? Sometimes tense, sometimes cold and distant, sometimes with flickers of something livelier and fuller sparking up, this arrangement is a fit accompaniment to that road.



Enjoy the *Sounds of the Season* with the



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December 9, 2017
Living Faith Lutheran Church
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2:00pm

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Kensington, MD
7:00pm and 8:30pm

For more information, visit:
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Witchyworld and Mr. Patch

Banjo-Tooie (2000)

Grant Kirkhope

Arr. Alex Song

Banjo-Tooie is the second game in the Banjo-Kazooie series, featuring two protagonists: Banjo, a yellow shorts, black belt, and blue backpack-wearing brown bear, and Kazooie, a red-crested breegull and Banjo's sidekick, who mostly resides in Banjo's backpack. Witchyworld is the third level in Banjo-Tooie and is a run-down, dilapidated theme park featuring dangerous rides and attractions. The arrangement thus opens with a carousel waltz – but it is obvious, from the slightly sinister tone and instrumentation both, that this isn't a place to relax!

The boss of this level, Mr. Patch, is a large inflatable T-Rex that is riddled with holes that have been covered up and reinforced by colorful yet mismatched patches. His theme, four brief fragments put together and reminiscent of Witchyworld's own theme, may evoke this patched-up nature. To Mr. Patch's dismay, Banjo and Kazooie discover that these patches are his weakness, and after some impressive shots fired by the duo, Mr. Patch deflates and flies out of sight.

Wood Carving Partita

Castlevania: Symphony of the Night (1997)

Michiru Yamane

Arr. Michelle Eng

The story begins in the year 1797, starting with Richter Belmont's defeat of Count Dracula and subsequent disappearance without a trace. Five years later, Alucard, son of Dracula, rises from his slumber and decides to investigate what transpired to cause this disappearance. On his journey through Castlevania, we can see the backdrop mimicking Gothic Renaissance styles of architecture and sculpture. When Alucard enters the Long Library in search for the Master Librarian to assist him (but only at a price!) we are reminded of a time long ago, reflected in this baroque-inspired piece that heavily features the harpsichord and strings.

Blue Team

Halo 5: Guardians (2015)

Kazuma Jinnouchi

Arr. Chris Apple

Halo is known for its spirited jigs and colossal sound, but true fans know that Halo games also feature powerful, moving laments. Halo 5 is no different. This arrangement is a lament for the beleaguered Blue Team, cut off from support and branded traitors by their own forces. Responding to a distress call from an old friend, Master Chief and Blue Team go off-mission, although in the back of their minds they suspect a trap. The piece begins mournfully and eventually builds to a triumphant finish, showing once again that Master Chief can endure and persevere. This arrangement particularly gives the strings a chance to play with more expressive timbres and dynamics.

Moonsong

Cave Story (2004)

Daisuke "Pixel" Amaya

Arr. Sheldon Zamora-Soon

Quote wakes up alone in a cave, with no memory of who he is or how he got there. He soon discovers that he was part of a robot army, sent to the floating island to wipe out the threat of the adorable bunny-like Mimiga. Quote finds himself as

the last hope of saving the Mimiga and stopping The Doctor's evil plot. Quote must venture to the outer edge of the island, and jump, jetpack, and fight his way up the sides of the island to The Doctor's base.

Cave Story is arguably one of the most successful games created by an independent developer. The game featured graphics, music, and gameplay reminiscent of Super Nintendo era platformer titles such as *Super Metroid*. "Moonsong" is featured near the end of the game, as the protagonist is traversing the outside of the island across a moonlit sky. The track has a much more open and airy feel compared to many of the other tracks, featuring synthesized woodwinds and a slower tempo. The memorable melodies, syncopated rhythms, and marching beat keep you engaged as you attempt this precarious level full of swarms of gravity-defying bugs and cat ghosts.

For the Motherland

Papers, Please (2013);

Lucas Pope; James Hannigan

Arr. Matt Eisenberg

Command & Conquer: Red Alert 3 (2008)

The socio-political impact of the Soviet Union has made its presence felt in several forms of art – movies, television, theater, and even video games. *Papers, Please* and *Red Alert 3* are two very different games that use the grim realities of the past as creative fuel.

Papers, Please is an independently produced video game by programmer Lucas Pope where you guide your character through a month of working at the one functioning border crossing between Arstotzka and its newly peaceful neighbor Kolechia. What you do in your isolated shack helps shape the near future of the country – do you help the mysterious, revolutionary Order of the EZIC Star? Or are you a loyal worker of the Arstotzkan state? Can you keep up with ever-changing rules and steadily improving forgeries? The opening narration of the game has been translated into Ukrainian.

Red Alert 3, on the other hand, is almost as different as you can get while still being a video game. There's a complicated plot involving Albert Einstein, time travel, and what becomes the Third World War, but suffice to say that everything is crazy and nothing is taken seriously. Far from the ethical dilemmas of *Papers, Please* are *Red Alert 3*'s troop delivery man-cannons and giant, mobile robotic samurai.

PAUSE

Are you enjoying the show so far?

- Yes.
- Of course!

Intermission is the perfect time to drop off your feedback form or make a donation at WMGSO's booth in the lobby!

Level 2 - START!

Times Far Away

Chrono Trigger (1995)

Yasunori Mitsuda, Nobuo Uematsu

Arr. Chris Apple, Lyrics Chris Apple & Zeynep Dilli

“To Far Away Times” is the closing theme to *Chrono Trigger*. It plays during the epilogue scene where we see some glimpses of the characters’ lives after they part after their big adventure. This arrangement plays with the notions of meeting and parting, and how time travel introduces many colorful nuances here. The main characters part when the game ends, and it is unclear whether the characters will see each other again. But in a sense they will, since they have already met in the future to defeat their enemy in the game.

Chrono Trigger has wonderful lyric melodies that lend themselves well to vocal lines. Experimenting with the song, the arranger felt it needed a different musical style, new to WMGSO: Modern, collegiate a cappella as opposed to a classical sound. With inspiration drawn from pop music, soloists may use a freer rhythm, grace notes, or slurs. Join us as we take this journey that is both well-known and also new to us.

Skeletons in My Closet

The 7th Guest (1993)

George “The Fat Man” Sanger

Arr. Zeynep Dilli, Tracy Flanders, Iain Kierzewski, Adam Nash, Lee Stearns, Julius Versoza, Joe Wang

One of the first games to be released on CD-ROM, *The 7th Guest* is an interactive puzzle/adventure game. The music track provided on one of the CD-ROMs includes live recordings of two songs which expand on themes present in the in-game music of this horror story. “Skeletons in My Closet,” the ending credits song, is a jazzy tune with almost exaggerated horror movie–soundtrack elements: Woodblocks imitating bones clicking; an oooh-ing background vocal section, and sorrowful trombone tones. This arrangement takes all these elements and intensifies them by adding more percussion and an alto sax part.

The piece is performed by Zeynep Dilli on the lead vocals, Alex Booth, Tracy Flanders, Mark Shroul, and Holly Wu on the background vocals, Joe Wang on alto sax, Josh Haas on trumpet, Iain Kierzewski on trombone, Adam Nash on electric bass, Julius Versoza on keyboard, Lee Stearns on drums, and John Burke on woodblocks and extra percussion.

Ukulele de Chocobo

Final Fantasy IX (2000)

Nobuo Uematsu

Arr. Sheldon Zamora–Soon & Darrah Treleaven

The chocobo theme is a reoccurring melody in the *Final Fantasy* series that accompanies the main characters’ interactions with the iconic, bird-like creature: the chocobo! Throughout the series, the chocobo theme is typically bright and lively, and its many variations are often in the style of different types of dance (samba, mambo, jig, and blues, to name a few). “Ukulele de Chocobo” is one of two variations appearing in *Final Fantasy IX* that accompanies the player as they

explore the world map on their trusty chocobo steed. This piece features Sheldon Zamora–Soon on flute, Darrah Treleaven on ukulele, and John Burke on shaker.

Variations on the Main Theme of Final Fantasy

Nobuo Uematsu

Final Fantasy (1987–2016)

Arr. Jamin Morden, Lyrics Zeynep Dilli

Since its first appearance in 1987, what started as “the bridge theme” eventually became one of two musical selections present in nearly every installment of the *Final Fantasy* series (the other being “the Prelude”), and named as the “Main Theme” of the series. A “Theme and Variations” is a form of music which states a theme, and then begins to alter it, such as in accompaniment, in melody, in rhythm, or in a variety of ways at once. This set of Variations explores the main theme of *Final Fantasy* in several new ways, inspired by great pieces of classical music, as well as other tunes from the games.

The Theme: Set in the woodwinds alone to imitate the bright, reedy sound of the NES chip, our statement of the theme is directly transcribed from the original: only three voices, no percussion, and a much brisker tempo than is often used.

Variation 1: Inspired heavily by the “Final Fantasy Symphonic Suite,” performed in May of 1989. This first variation features the string section, with woodwind solos.

Variation 2: This is a fanfare inspired by the “Tycoon Castle” theme from *Final Fantasy 5*. Brass fanfares punctuate the melody in the winds, and an agile bassline drives the ending forward.

Variation 3: This variation explores a somber space inspired by Edvard Grieg’s “Funeral March for Rikard Nordraak,” first quietly with string and woodwind solos, and then very loudly, featuring the entire ensemble. The lyrics for the chorus likewise remember the losses the player experiences during the games.

Variation 4: This variation ups the tempo in order to create a fast, dance-like movement with a dark harmonic sound. It is loosely inspired by Hector Berlioz’ “Symphonie Fantastique,” in particular the fifth movement, “The Witches’ Sabbath.”

Variation 5: After the intensity of the previous two variations, this variation approaches the theme with tenderness and beauty. Fans of Rachmaninov may hear a nod to his excellent second piano concerto in the horn section.

Variation 6: While the original theme and each variation thus far have featured the melody as a continuous melodic phrase, this variation seeks to break it apart into smaller bits. The flutes carry the tune first, presented only a few notes at a time, before passing it to the strings and the brass.

Variation 7: This is a fugue. Inspired by the great J.S. Bach himself, this variation iterates the theme in several different voices overlapping each other.

Finale: The finale is the arranger’s attempt to present the theme in as grandiose and majestic a manner as possible and draws inspiration from Johan De Meij’s “Lord of the Rings” symphony and the ending of *Final Fantasy 9*. The theme is introduced again in a simple, straightforward manner, and then slowly decorated and expanded until every member of the ensemble is adding their voice.

GAME OVER?



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