

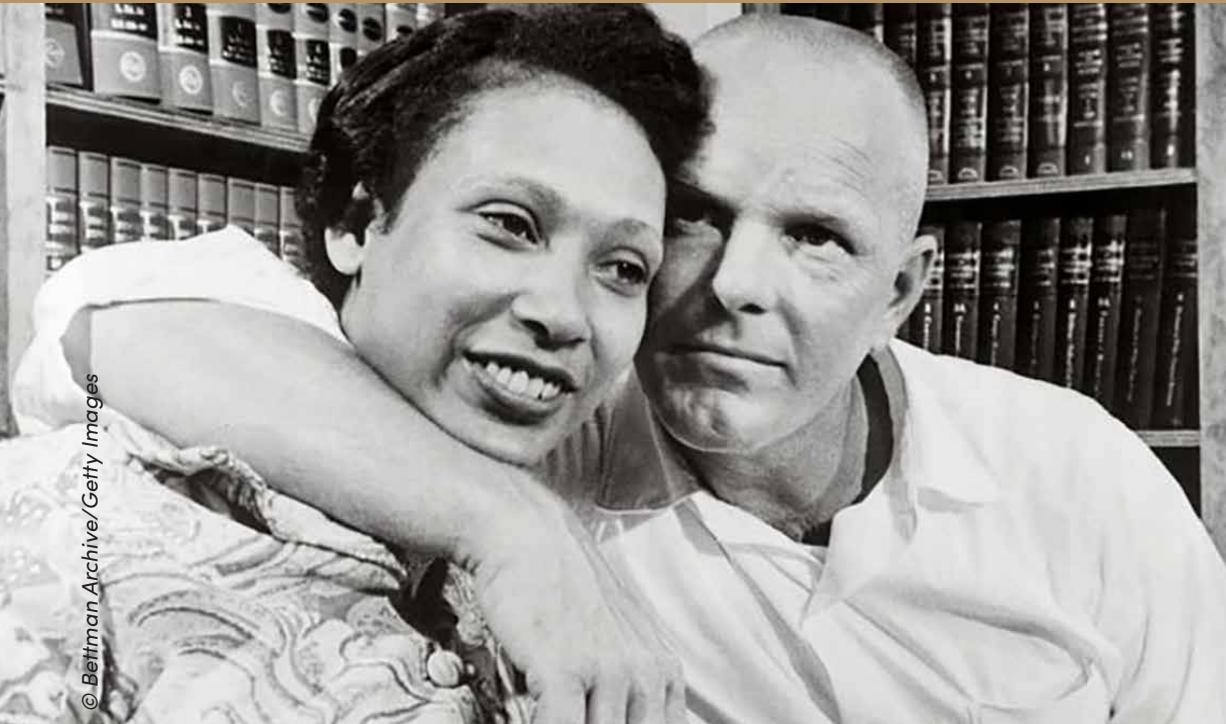
RICHMOND SYMPHONY

VALENTINA PELEGGI, MUSIC DIRECTOR

A September to Remember



A September to Remember



LOVING v. VIRGINIA WORKSHOP

The Virginia Opera and Richmond Symphony continued its partnership into the second year of the co-commissioning of *Loving v. Virginia*. The Building a Loving Community: Act One Piano/Vocal workshop at the Institute for Contemporary Art gave Richmond a chance to be the first to hear composer Damien Geter's score, alongside the powerful words of librettist, Jessica Murphy Moo. This workshop was a culmination of a week's worth of work, all led by creative director and conductor Adam Turner, and highlighted by a community feedback session following the 90-minute run-through that featured soprano Flora Hawk and baritone Jarrett Porter as Mildred Jeter Loving and Richard Loving.

Loving v. Virginia



Virginia
Opera

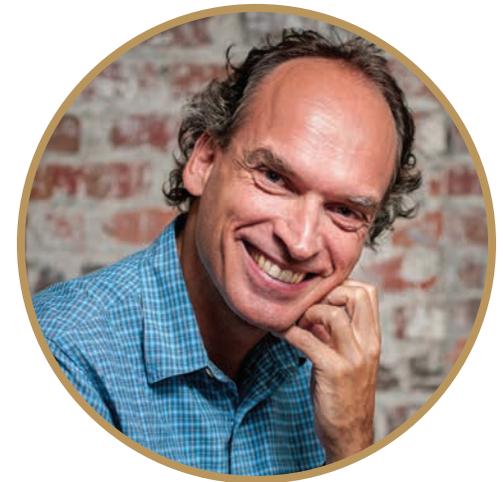
RICHMOND
SYMPHONY

Be sure to stay tuned at www.lovingvvirginiaopera.com for more updates as the creative process continues and remember to mark your calendars for its premiere in 2025!

<https://www.lovingvvirginiaopera.com/>

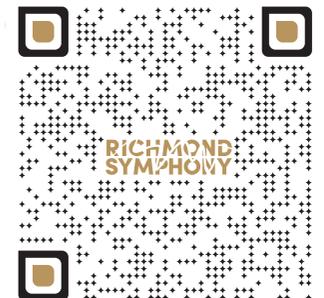
POCAHONTAS STATE PARK

The Richmond Symphony continued its long-standing partnership with Chesterfield County and the Friends of Pocahontas State Park with its most recent performance in the Pocahontas Premieres series on September 16. More than 1,300 audience members took to Heritage Amphitheater for an evening of tried and true compositions, such as Rossini's *William Tell: Overture Finale* and delightful pieces they may have heard for the first time, including Joan Tower's *Fanfares for the Uncommon Woman*.



Daniel Myssyk

Be on the lookout for more free community performances this season by visiting www.richmondsymphony.com/community/concerts/ or scan the code below.



Assistant Conductor Daniel Myssyk at Pocahontas State Park (photo credit: James Loving)

VALENTINA PELEGGI'S CONTRACT RENEWED THROUGH 2027-2028

The Richmond Symphony and Valentina Peleggi are very pleased to announce her four-year contract extension as the Symphony's music director and conductor. Peleggi has been with the orchestra since the 2020-2021 season and this renewal continues through the 2027-2028 season.



“In her first four seasons with the Richmond Symphony, Valentina has transformed the orchestra's artistic profile, has re-energized our concert-going experience, and has attracted scores of new audiences with her creative and provocative programming,” said Lacey Huszcza, executive director of the Richmond Symphony.

“Valentina is especially passionate about drawing the emerging generation of music lovers into the symphony hall, and has worked to build community partnerships, take concert programming to unexpected locations, and built out impactful conducting seminars and training programs,” said Elisabeth Muhlenfeld Wollan, board chair of the Richmond Symphony. “We are absolutely delighted that Valentina's remarkable talents as a musician and her powerful presence on the podium will continue to captivate audiences in Richmond and beyond well into our future.”

While focusing on developing the unique sound of the Richmond Symphony, Peleggi has made significant contributions to the region's classical music landscape by launching new concert formats, building on music as a living art form by spearheading commissioning projects, inaugurating a composer-in-residence program with Damien Geter, and championing Virginia stories and Virginia voices. In addition, she sat on the jury of the Menuhin Competition Richmond 2021, an international competition to recognize the world's most exceptional young violinists, and continues to bring young, exceptional talent to the stage in Richmond. She regularly champions the work of the Education team at the Symphony, speaking with honors students, engaging Youth Orchestra members in open rehearsals and more.

“I am incredibly excited to continue our journey with my beloved Richmond Symphony and Richmond Symphony Chorus,” said Peleggi. “It is impressive and empowering to see how much we have been able to build in such a short period of time, more than half of which was during COVID. This is thanks to a wonderful sense of team within the artistic groups, the management, the board and the city overall that really makes Richmond a very, very special place. I value and treasure it immensely. The artistic level of the orchestra, their passion, their commitment,

and their will to grow is a joy to witness and a huge responsibility that I accept with even more enthusiasm. I am deeply glad to keep working side by side with such a bright and visionary executive director like Lacey Huszcza, and I can't wait to keep expanding our musical, educational, and community programs in the Richmond area and beyond.”

A renowned conductor worldwide, Valentina Peleggi has recently guest conducted the Chicago, Dallas, Baltimore and Kansas City symphonies and many orchestras across Europe, Canada and South America including the Royal Philharmonic, Brussels Philharmonic, Polish Radio, BBC Wales, Nurnberger Symphoniker. In May 2024 she makes her debut at Seattle Opera conducting Rossini's “The Barber of Seville,” and has previously conducted at English National Opera, Teatro Verdi Trieste and Opera de Lyon among others.

She gained a master's in Conducting in Rome and pursued post-graduate conducting at the Royal Academy of Music in London. She held a Taki Alsop Conducting Fellowship 2015-2017 and went on to be resident conductor of the Sao Paulo Symphony and music director of their professional chorus, with whom she has released a CD for Naxos.

“The orchestra, the chorus, the board of directors, and the staff at the Richmond Symphony think so highly of Valentina,” Huszcza concluded. “It's an honor and pleasure to collaborate with her, and we all look forward to the bold and broad range of programming that she has envisioned for our Symphony and our audiences from now through 2028.”

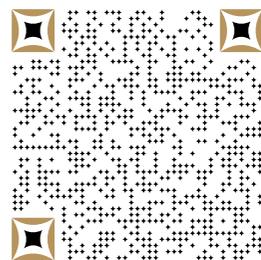




YOUTH ORCHESTRA PROGRAM KICKS OFF SEASON

The Richmond Symphony School of Music's (RSSoM) Youth Orchestra Program (YOP) is in full swing once again for the 2023/24 season and academic year. Approximately 200 students returned to rehearsals on Mondays and Tuesdays, ready to reconnect with YOP friends, begin to hone their individual and ensemble sound, refresh performance skills and challenge themselves to start learning new ones, and – above all – to enjoy music! Your support makes the continued success of YOP available to students all across the Richmond region.

You can witness the incredible musicianship and joy of these students by attending an upcoming YOP concert! YOP performances are free and open to the public. We hope to see you at one this season. Scan the code to view the concert schedule.



YOUTH COMMUNITY STRINGS PILOT YEAR

The 2023/24 season marks the first year of RSSoM's Youth Community Strings program. Based on the *El Sistema* model and years in the making, Youth Community Strings (YCS) is an after-school program hosted four days a week at St. Paul's Baptist Church. In partnership with local school districts and teachers, Lead Instructor Caitlin Barry recruited sixteen second graders for the first cohort of YCS. Promoting civic engagement and social change through music making, YCS is providing participants a robust music education, instrument instruction, and a chance to find a sense of belonging through playing music. Through intensive music education, students will develop life skills that will help them grow academically, socially, and emotionally. YCS is completely free to students and their families – transportation, instruments, and other supplies all included.

Photos courtesy James Loving



YCS Lead Instructor Caitlin Barry assists a student with their bow hold.



YCS Lead Instructor Caitlin Barry demonstrating posture and how to hold a violin.



YCS student asks a question during instruction.

A September to Remember

10TH SEASON FOR DAISUKE YAMAMOTO

Concertmaster Daisuke Yamamoto celebrates his 10th season with the Richmond Symphony this year! Since he's joined the RS, Daisuke has been a featured soloist on a variety of concerts, lending his immense virtuosity and musicianship to everything from "Autumn" from *The Four Seasons* to the Theme from *Schindler's List* on the statewide broadcasting of the Holocaust Remembrance Concert. In celebration of Daisuke's 10th anniversary season, he shared the world premiere of Andrea Portera's Violin Concerto for the Symphony Series opening concerts on September 30th and October 1st.

Q&A With Daisuke Yamamoto

What is your favorite memory of your time with the Richmond Symphony, so far?

There have been many great firsts in my time here so far. However, I'll never forget my first week in Richmond. We played Scheherazade. It was such a fun, exciting, and nerve-wracking way to introduce myself to the city and to the orchestra.



What inspires you each day?

For me, it's about self-discovery and seeing how far I can push myself and my craft. That is what helps me get up and get my violin out of my case. It's like going to the gym; getting there is the hardest part. But each day I wonder – What can I do today to take my playing even just a half step further than it was the day before?

Who is your favorite composer?

Sometimes musicians say "it's whatever piece I'm playing this week" and sometimes I think that as well. But I always come back to Beethoven. I've always admired him and every time I come back to his works, I discover something new.

What are you most looking forward to in the 2023/24 season?

First and foremost, I'm excited to continue to make music onstage with my colleagues and friends. It's so fun to be onstage with them and feel that energy ("the buzz"). But I'm also looking forward to the Busoni concerto in January 2024 because I've never heard it live and it will definitely be a brand new experience for Richmond.

How would you describe Andrea Portera's Violin Concerto?

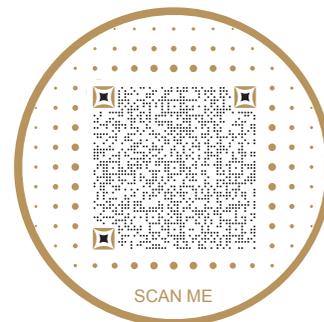
This was my first time playing a commissioned piece and performing a world premiere and this work is a really fun one. Portera's piece is definitely a lyrical piece with melodies throughout. But it is also colorful, full of extreme dynamics, and has different textures. Portera uses extended techniques (to great effect) in the score that require you to play the instrument in such a way to create different sounds that you would never hear in pieces by say, Bach or Brahms.



RICHMOND SYMPHONY LEAGUE 2023 DESIGNER HOUSE

The highly-anticipated Richmond Symphony League's Designer House event returned September 8, 2023, with a sold-out opening night event.

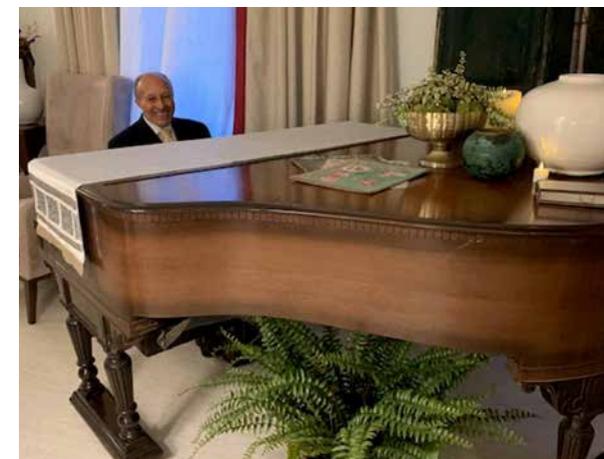
La Bella Notte kicked off the month-long series of fundraising events at The Taylor Estate in grand fashion thanks to Co-Chairs Myra Bennett, Wendy Sydnor, and their full committee. The Designer House has welcomed thousands of folks for house tours, Thirsty Thursday events, and more. Be sure to stop by and spend a while with the League members and fellow supporters before October 9th to tour the 108-year old estate, shop, and relax with a bite and a beverage! Proceeds raised through Richmond Symphony League events directly benefit the Richmond Symphony and its initiatives.



To learn more about the Richmond Symphony League and the Designer House, and to purchase tickets before it's over scan the code or visit www.richmondsymphonyleague.org!



Susan Fourness-Ewell, Dan Stott, RS Executive Director Lacey Huszcza, and Composer-in-Residence Damien Geter with fellow event attendee at La Bella Notte. (Photo courtesy of Richmond Symphony League)



Principal Piano & Celeste Russell Wilson plays the Taylor Estate Piano at La Bella Notte. (Photo courtesy of Richmond Symphony League)

A September to Remember

KNIGHT OF SOUL

The Richmond Symphony hosted its second annual Season Opening Gala: *Knight of Soul* on September 9, which featured the Empress of Soul, Gladys Knight, in the Pops series opening concert to kick-start the event.

Following a phenomenal show by the GRAMMY®-winner and Motown legend, guests enjoyed a festive night of cocktails, auctions, and dinner emceed by Richmond's very own, Kelli Lemon. Throughout the evening's program, gala attendees were treated to music from the Laura Ann Singh Piano Quartet, a unique Steinway Spirio, and Youth Orchestra Program student Hayley Dunn.

Thanks to your generosity through ticket purchases, table and musician sponsorships, and live and silent auction bids the Richmond Symphony raised almost **\$250,000** that will support artistic initiatives and education and community engagement programs this season!



Photos courtesy James Loving.

A September to Remember

CARMINA BURANA

This powerful co-presentation from the Richmond Symphony and Richmond Ballet – delayed from 2020 due to the pandemic – finally showcased the two organizations bringing Carl Orff’s exhilarating score and John Butler’s choreography to life – twice!

On August 30th, *Carmina Burana* took to Wolf Trap’s Filene Center stage and was met with a standing ovation. Performed alongside this classic piece was *Thrive* – crafted by Associate Artistic Director Ma Cong. The *Washington Classical Review* remarked *Thrive* as the perfect balance for Orff’s work. Prior to the performance, audiences witnessed Carmen de Lavallade (one of the principal dancers from the original 1959 cast of *Carmina Burana*) being presented with the Ballet’s Lifetime Achievement Award, presented by Governor Glenn Youngkin.

Following its overwhelming success at Wolf Trap, the program returned to Richmond, to the Dominion Energy Center from September 22-24 for a weekend that once again featured the Richmond Ballet, Richmond Symphony and Chorus, City Choir of Washington, and Wolf Trap Opera Artists under the baton of Erin Freeman.



Photo credit: Richmond Ballet



RICHMOND BALLET
STONER WINSLETT • ARTISTIC DIRECTOR
MA CONG • ASSOCIATE ARTISTIC DIRECTOR



RICHMOND SYMPHONY
VALENTINA PELEGGI, MUSIC DIRECTOR

VISION: Changing lives through the power of music.

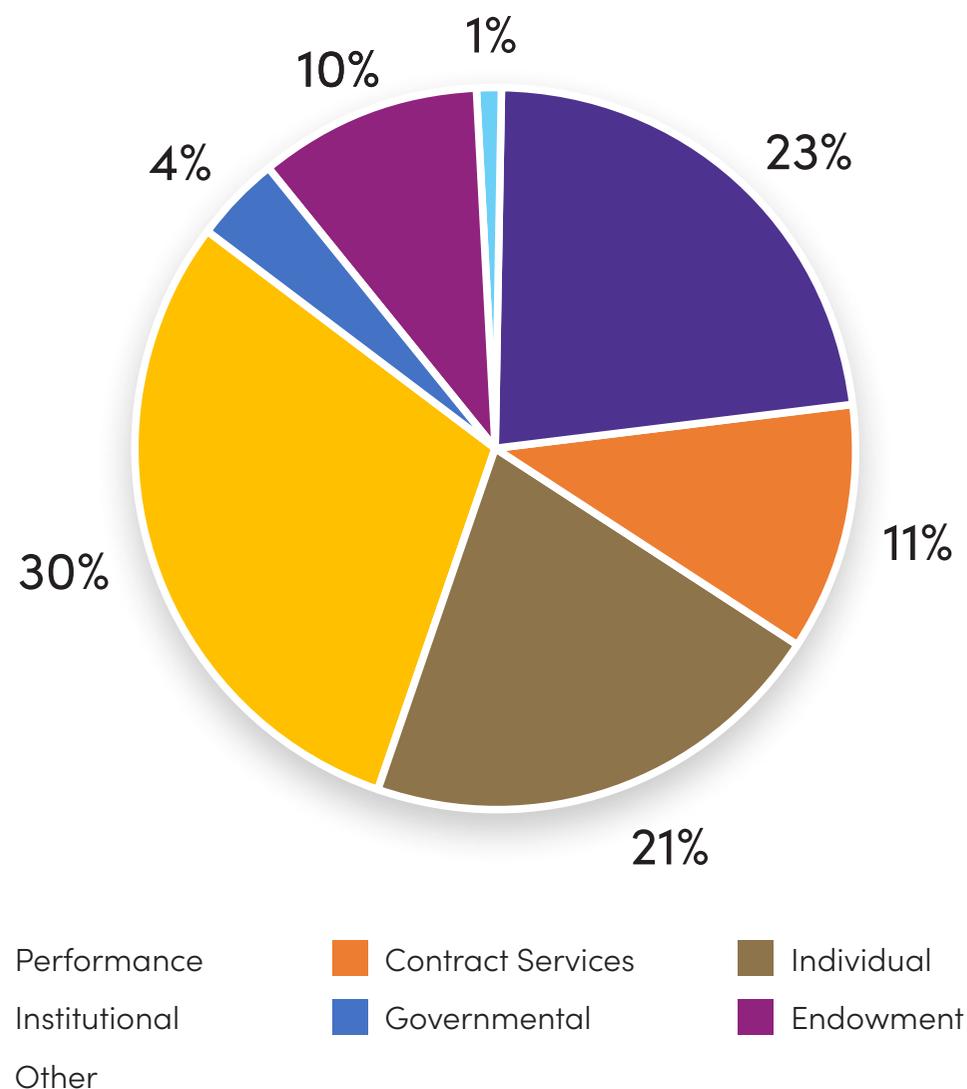
MISSION: The Richmond Symphony performs, teaches and champions music to inspire and unite our communities.

The Richmond Symphony is dedicated to joy, connection, expression, and collaboration through music. Founded in 1957, the Symphony includes an orchestra of nearly 70 professional musicians and 150 members of the Richmond Symphony Chorus. The Richmond Symphony is overseen by a 30-member board of directors and managed by an administrative team of 35.

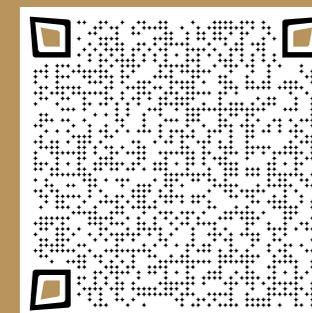
2022/23 SEASON HIGHLIGHTS

1. **FIRST-TIME DONORS** to the Annual Fund contributed 25% of the gifts to the Symphony.
2. **DISCOVERY CONCERTS** welcomed over 4,600 students in-person at the DEC for the first time since March 2020.
3. **RSYO** participated in a consortium that commissioned *Ficciones* by Roberto Sierra and performed the Virginia premiere alongside legendary electric violinist, Tracy Silverman.
4. **OUTDOOR CONCERTS** welcomed approximately 3,000 community concertgoers at Abner-Clay Park in Jackson Ward, Pocahontas State Park, and Bryan Park for Mile of Music.
5. **NEW COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS** were forged with the Black History Museum and Cultural Center of Virginia, as well as the Richmond SPCA.
6. **2022/23 MARKED THE FIRST YEAR** of Composer-in-Residence Damien Geter's three-year residency in which he curated a Hardywood series program and spent time speaking with YOP students.
7. **THE RICHMOND SYMPHONY DOUBLED** the number of Pops performances offered and welcomed a record-breaking 13,000 concertgoers to these programs!
8. **THE SYMPHONY PERFORMED THE WORLD PREMIERE** of Zachary Wadsworth's *Beyond the Years* for Orchestra and Chorus, as well as the Virginia premiere of Juan Pablo Contreras' *MeChicano* through New Music USA's Amplifying New Voices program.
9. **IN PARTNERSHIP** with the Taki Alsop Conducting Fellowship, Music Director Valentina Peleggi hosted a five-day conducting workshop with surprise special guest Marin Alsop.
10. **YO-YO MA** joined the Richmond Symphony for a once-in-a-lifetime, one-night-only performance in October 2023 and hosted a masterclass for cellist students, including Christopher Gilley who went on to win the 2023 RSYO Concerto Competition.
11. **THE RICHMOND SYMPHONY AND VIRGINIA OPERA** announced the co-commission of *Loving v. Virginia*, which will debut in 2025.
12. **SIX NEW HOUSEHOLDS** joined the Rennolds Society by committing to a gift in their wills during the 2022/23 season.

2022/23 SEASON REVENUE SUMMARY



Thank you to all of you – the donors and sponsors who helped make the 2022/23 season possible! View our most recent donor listing in our Digital Playbill!



2023/2024 SEASON HIGHLIGHTS

Valentina Peleggi, conductor

TCHAIKOVSKY'S PATHÉTIQUE

Saturday, Oct. 21, 2023 • 8:00pm

Sunday, Oct. 22, 2023 • 3:00pm

Dominion Energy Center

NEGRO FOLK SYMPHONY

Saturday, Nov. 11, 2023 • 8:00pm

Sunday, Nov. 12, 2023 • 3:00pm

Dominion Energy Center

BRAHMS THE ROMANTIC

Saturday, Jan. 20, 2024 • 8:00pm

Sunday, Jan. 21, 2024 • 3:00pm

Dominion Energy Center

VIVALDI/PIAZZOLLA

THE FOUR SEASONS

Perkinson Center for the Arts

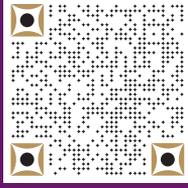
Friday, Jan. 26, 2024 • 7:30pm

St. Christopher School

Saturday, Jan. 27, 2024 • 7:30pm

Randolph-Macon College

Sunday, Jan. 28, 2024 • 3:00 pm



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RichmondSymphony.com

RICHMOND SYMPHONY

VALENTINA PELEGGI, MUSIC DIRECTOR

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Supported by the City of Richmond,
and the Counties of Hanover & Henrico

