



CalASTA Sacramento Section Summer/Fall 2022 Newsletter

Congratulations to all the participants who competed at the annual CalASTA Sacramento Section solo competition held on Sunday, June 5, 2022, at the UC Davis Music Department. Awards went to the following students:

Violin

Jenna Son – junior division, student of Christine Choi

Cello

William Masters – junior division, student of Susan Lamb Cook

Noah Wong – novice division, student of Jia-mo Chen

All winners received cash prizes. Winner certificates will be given out at the annual Showcase Fall recital on November 13, 2022. Bios can be viewed below.

Two additional participants were recommended for advancement to the CalASTA State Solo Competition, which will be held at CSUS in Sacramento on Sunday, October 23, 2022. Those students were Jennifer Lee and Aaron Niu, both from the junior cello division.

Our judges were Leo Gravin and Melinda Ellis. Their photos and bios can be found on the Sacramento Section page at www.calasta.org

Solo Competition Winner's Bios

Jenna Son

Violinist Jenna Son, age 13, is a freshman at Oliver Wendell Holmes Junior High School in Davis, CA., and a pre-college student at the San Francisco Conservatory of Music in the studio of Mr. Elbert Tsai. She began violin lessons with Ms. Heather Powell at the age of 6 and continued with Dr. Christine Choi until the summer of 2022. Jenna has been a concertmaster and first violinist at the Sacramento Youth Symphony since 2016, and she is currently a member of the San Francisco Symphony Youth Orchestra. Jenna was the concertmaster of Holmes Junior High Intermediate Orchestra (2020-2021), Davis All-City Elementary Orchestra (2019-2020), Sacramento Youth Symphony Academic Strings Orchestra (2019-2020), and Sacramento Youth Symphony Vivace Strings Orchestra (2016-2017).

Jenna was a first-place winner in the CalASTA Sacramento Solo Competition Junior Division (2022), California Association of Professional Music Teachers (CAPMT) Go for the Gold Music Competition (2022), Great Composers Competition Series Best Bach Performance (2022), CalASTA Sacramento Solo Competition Novice division (2020), and Crescendo International Music Competition (2018). She was selected as an outstanding performer at the Junior Bach Festival (2021, 2022) for both violin and piano. Jenna participated in the Korean American Music Supporters' Association (KAMSA) Youth Orchestra in 2021 and played first violin for the CASMEC All-State Honors Junior High String Orchestra in 2022.

As a chamber musician, Jenna has participated in the Summer and Winter Chamber Music Programs coached by Ms. Susan Lamb Cook since 2018. Her string quartet performed in the "Rising Stars of Chamber Music" concert at the Harris Center in Folsom, CA in 2020. In March of 2022, her string quartet played at the Mondavi Center for the Performing Arts as part of the "A Celebration of Music" concert. Jenna regularly plays solo violin, solo piano, and chamber music for local seniors and patients through Lifting Spirits with Music, an organization that allows young musicians to perform for senior homes and hospitals. Jenna is an active member of the Back to Bach Project Davis region to inspire young children with classical music.

Besides violin, Jenna began piano lessons with Ms. I-Hui Chen at the age of 4 and currently studies with Ms. Akiko Gaffney. She won top prizes in various piano competitions including CAPMT Honor (2021), CAPMT Go for the Gold (2017, 2019), Classical Masters (2016, 2017, 2018), and JPTAG Piano Competition (2017, 2018, 2019).

In the summer of 2022, Jenna studied with Ms. Jennifer Liu and Ms. Chloé Kiffer at the Heifetz International Music Institute Junior Division and played in the masterclass for violinists Shannon Lee and Luosha Fang.

William Masters

William Masters, age 17, has been playing the cello since the age of 10 and has participated in numerous events with different orchestras and venues in the Sacramento area. The Sacramento Youth Symphony (SYS) has been one of William's mainstays for musical education where he served as principal cellist for their Classic and Academic orchestra ensembles and was winner of the 2018 Sacramento Youth Symphony Academic Concerto Competition. He has also participated in the SYS Summer Chamber Music Workshop since 2017. William has performed with the University of the Pacific orchestra in their *Mahler at the Pacific* event in 2020 and as principal of the CMEA's Cap Section Honor

Orchestra in the same year. He currently studies with Susan Lamb Cook. William plans to pursue a degree in cello performance at Sac State under Andrew Luchansky. Recently, William had the honor of being a Scholarship Winner of the MTAC Sacramento County Branch Memorial Scholarship Recital (March 2022), Second Place Winner in CAPMT's Go for the Gold Competition (2022), and winner in the Junior Cello Division of Cal ASTA's Sacramento Section 2022 String Soloist Competition. William is an avid composer and has been writing sketches of chamber and orchestral works since 2017. He had one of his works performed after winning 1st place in the Webster University Young Composers Competition in St. Louis 2022. Outside of music, William loves dogs (especially his own Labrador Sam) and his hobbies include reading (fantasy and mystery novels in particular), writing, and dabbling interests in baking and surfing.

Noah Wong

Noah is nine years old and is going to be a fourth grader this coming fall at the Buckeye Union Mandarin Immersion Charter School. He has been playing cello for 3 years under the instruction of Jia-mo Chen. In addition to playing cello, Noah enjoys reading and downhill skiing.

Member "Spotlight"

Natalie Hagwood

Quincy native Natalie Hagwood may be the changing face of the modern-day cellist.

Unbridled by past conventions of what her instrument could and should do, the 28-year-old Sacramento transplant, who began formal cello training at age seven, continues to blossom, as do her fellow musical bandmates, heralded Sacramento trio Dear Darling. As her ascent with Dear Darling continues, her desire to explore new musical horizons and expand the changing role of cello in contemporary music continues with solo releases that have helped her find her “true voice” and quench her self-professed “hunger for creativity.”

As a child, Natalie grew up with the music of the church, sang harmonies with her singer/songwriter father, and was encouraged to further her musical education by her mother. She fell in love with youth symphony in her junior high years, and during her high school years took cello lessons from a University of Nevada Reno cello teacher who encouraged her to pursue a degree in Classical Cello Performance, a degree she would eventually receive from the University of Nevada in 2017.

A brief post-graduate stint at the University of Washington allowed her to study with UW Professor Sæunn Thorsteinsdóttir and Dr. Kevin Krentz while teaching privately with the Seattle Cello Academy. During her time in Seattle, she won the University of Washington Concerto Competition, soloing with the UW Symphony in 2018. She has performed with piano-cello Duo Libra and Los Angeles Philharmonic Concertmaster Martin Chalifour and held benefit concerts in Los Angeles to raise funds for the Paradise Campfire victims.

Finding herself locked into a narrow “classical vortex,” she left the university and began ravenously listening to non-classical music and exploring her folk and singer-songwriter roots. Collaborations with Celtic, Americana and jazz bands eventually brought her together with like-minded bandmates Dear Darling, recently selected to perform as one of three opening acts for the 14th annual Cayamo Sixth Man Soundcheck Festival, a 7-day Caribbean cruise featuring Americana artists Emmy Lou Harris, Punch Brothers, the Indigo Girls, and Grace Potter. Additionally, Ms. Hagwood performs as a member of Solabel, a Sacramento-based ensemble of established jazz, folk, and Broadway talents whose message of joy, hope and community crosses musical boundaries

Her first solo release, “Steady Love,” co-written with a college friend, is a luscious ballad built on intricate polyrhythms and beautifully layered harmonies.

Admittedly, one of her many coming-of-age tunes, the track chronicles a particularly rocky time during her marriage when she realized that the institution wasn't always going to be "shiny and new."

The heartfelt "Mama" speaks to the changing dynamics with her mother over time, while "Spider Song" addresses her frustration with fear cycles controlling her actions. The latter two tracks, performed pizzicato with solo cello and Hagwood's ethereal mezzo-soprano voice continue to expand the evolving role of the instrument in contemporary music, while helping shape her own unique musical voice.

"It's like quenching a thirst," Natalie says. "The more that I prioritize my new music, the better I can show up for my other ensembles, and I've got to keep chipping away at expressing myself."

Expressing herself also includes time mentoring others through her Concert-Ready Cellist Program. Natalie's unique curriculum confronts the isolation and stage fright inherent in traditional private lesson models, opting instead for a community-based model inspired by team sports that encourages the sharing of one's gifts. Students in The Concert-Ready Cellist Program perform together regularly, playing free concerts in the Sacramento area in senior homes and farmer's markets. Twice-a-week, virtual supervised practice lessons allow students to meet and share their experiences, while monthly masterclasses featuring guest cellists keep things fresh and exciting.

2022 Fall Showcase Recital

This year's recital will take place on Sunday, 1:00 pm, November 13th at the Harrison Oaks Studio located at 8524 Willings Way, Fair Oaks, CA, 95628. If necessary, we will divide the recital into two sections. The recital coordinator will contact you for the schedule after all the applications are received. Please observe that there is a postmark deadline on the application. Students of all ages and levels are welcome to participate. Please click on this link for the application form

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1zJEdWKa-VjiufRhwNpthU6nC_8Auqv8rJNQIIIRHhsc/prefill

It can also be found at www.calasta.org under the Sacramento Section page.

Our current board for the Sacramento section is as follows:

President – Kimberly Cole Feeney - kcolefeeney@gmail.com

Vice President - Gay Currier - gcurrier7@gmail.com

Secretary – Reylynn Imai – reylynny@gmail.com

Treasurer – Catherine Heusner – catsviolin@gmail.com

Recital Coordinator – Elena Bolha – elena24@vt.edu