

# McLean High Musician & Composer Named Young Artist 2021

By Penny Dimler

The City of Fairfax Band Association (CFBA) has selected composer and trumpeter Finn Marks, a McLean High School senior, as the association's 2021 Young Artist. Marks receives a \$2000 award and, when live indoor concerts resume, one of his compositions will be played at a City of Fairfax Band concert. In the Award's 26-year history, he is the first to win for composition.

"Wow!" He couldn't say "Wow" enough after learning he will receive the Young Artist Award. "I really didn't expect this. Wow! Nothing like this has happened to me before!"

Drum Major of the McLean High School Highlander Marching Band, Marks also plays in the Symphonic Band, Jazz Ensemble, and various small ensembles. He started trumpet in fifth grade and progressed through Longfellow Middle School and McLean. He has studied privately with Air Force musicians Jim Bittner and Matt Misener.

IN NINTH GRADE, Marks composed a piece for a wind ensemble (a smaller concert band). He has written a few more pieces for wind ensemble and many compositions for piano as well as chamber ensembles.

His composition mentors are Chris Weise, McLean Highlanders band director, and Brett Dodson, Northern Virginia Youth Winds (NVYW) director. "Mr. Weise has helped me refine all my compositions and provided insight on topics such as orchestration and phrasing, as well as instrumental considerations," he said. Dodson has offered further assistance with composition.

Among Marks' early steps into music was curiosity about his uncle's abandoned trumpet, "just laying around the house." It led him to choose to play the instrument when he was 10-years-old. That musical interest has been passed to his two younger siblings, who play French horn and saxophone.

In addition to music at McLean High School, Marks has played in his local district bands. He also is in the Northern Virginia Youth Winds (an ensemble of the CFBA); the Northern Virginia All Stars Jazz Band; and a contemporary ensemble at his church.

Marks enjoys helping younger music students. He has exercised this interest as a volunteer playing assistant at his local area band (grades five and six) and as a volunteer assistant at the Vienna Band Camp



PHOTOS CONTRIBUTED

Composer and trumpeter Finn Marks, a McLean High School senior, has been named 2021 Young Artist.



Finn Marks

(grades four to nine).

Although the 2020 COVID pandemic cancelled most of his music activities, Marks was able to carry on online with NVYW. Music Director Dodson provided online sessions using "innovative approaches that offered challenges covering a variety of skill levels." Marks said, "The NVYW program kept me engaged and helped me to hold on to a sense of normalcy."

More engagement during COVID has come through McLean High School band, which rehearsed virtually until March. During its period of virtual activity, the program produced two videos featuring McLean ensembles. Since in-person rehearsals started, band ensembles meet every-other day under strict COVID protocols. For Marks and his fellow trumpet players that means wearing a special face mask and using a cover over his trumpet's bell.

**OUTSIDE OF MUSIC,** Finn runs with a running club and, along with his family, delivers meals to senior citizens in the District of Columbia. He also brings music to retirement homes.

Where will this interest in writing and playing music, being in band, and helping others, especially younger musicians, lead? Marks plans to enter James Madison University next fall as a Music Education major. His goal is to become a band director.

When the City of Fairfax Band Association resumes indoor concerts, the City of Fairfax Band will perform one of Finn's compositions.

Follow the City of Fairfax Band Association at: [www.fairfaxband.org](http://www.fairfaxband.org).

# Vienna Teen Wins Bassists Competition

Joshua Thrush, 14, from Vienna, recently won first place in the Age 14 and Under division of the 2021 International Society of Bassists Solo Competition. The biennial convention of the International Society of Bassists is the premier double bass gathering, with its performance competitions drawing competitors from countries all over the world. The competitors must play a required piece and then have the remainder of 15 minutes to perform a diverse program. In addition to the required piece, Joshua played Capriccio from David Anderson's Four Short Pieces, the Allemande from Bach's First Cello Suite, and the first movement of the Dittersdorf Bass Concerto.

Joshua has been playing the bass for nearly five years, beginning private lessons with Ira Gold of the National Symphony Orchestra in the fall of 2016 after having previously played clarinet, saxophone, and even, briefly, the cello. Joshua is currently a Youth Fellow with the National Symphony Orchestra and a member of the American Youth Symphonic Orchestra (AYSO), a division of the American Youth Philharmonic Orchestras program (AYPO) for which he's played for the past four years. In 2021, Joshua won the AYSO Solo Competition, the Rockville Music Competition Intermediate Strings division, and was chosen as a Bass Alternate for the National Youth Orchestra 2 (NYO2). In 2020, Joshua was given the title of Principal Bass of northern Virginia's Junior District X Honors Orchestra and was accepted into the Fairfax Symphony's All-Stars Youth Orchestra program. As part of winning the Aspiring



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Joshua Thrush

category and the Misbin Family New Talent Award in the 2019 Joseph and Goldie Feder Memorial String Competition, Joshua performed the first movement of the Dragonetti Concerto in a recital at the National Gallery of Art in Washington, DC. In that same year, he received the distinction of highest score in the Junior Division of the George Mason Academy Honors Recital.

Joshua has performed in master classes for Paul Ellison and Francois Rabbath and has attended various workshops including ISB Young Bassists 2019, KC Bass, and Bass Works. This summer, after attending the virtual ISB Young Bassists 2021, he plans on playing with the Birch Creek Symphony in Egg Harbor, Wis. and in the National Philharmonic Summer Strings program. Outside of playing the bass, Joshua enjoys boating, fishing, and discussing the stock market. Joshua looks forward to starting James Madison High School in the fall and to having more opportunities to grow and develop his skill on the double bass.

## Week in Vienna

# Vienna Town Council Re-approves Outdoor Dining, Business Operations

Vienna Town Council re-adopted three emergency ordinances last week which allow Town businesses to continue to operate under the temporary waiver of zoning regulations. The ordinances would allow outdoor business operations such as outdoor dining and other commercial activities in commercially and industrially zoned properties for public, semi-public, and private institutions to continue.

"The businesses in the Town of Vienna have been hit hard by the Covid-19 pandemic," said Linda Colbert, Town of Vienna Mayor. "To allow the emergency ordinances to stay in effect until December will provide them an opportunity to continue to recover financial losses."

The original ordinances were adopted last June to help businesses adversely affected by the pandemic and were re-adopted in March 2021 with an expiration date of Sept. 1, 2021. The new re-adopted emergency ordinances will now be extended until Dec. 7, 2021.

# Vienna Police Investigating a Suspicious Shooting

On June 10, 2021, in the early morning hours, Vienna Police Officers were dispatched to an unknown situation in the 100 block of Patrick St. SE. Upon arrival, officers discovered that a male victim inside an apartment was suffering from a gunshot wound to the head. The victim was transported to the hospital in a life-threatening condition. There were several witnesses on the scene and are being interviewed by Vienna Police Detectives. Fairfax County Police Crime Scene Section is assisting with processing the scene and providing any additional resources.

There is no further threat to public safety at this time, and this information is preliminary and subject to change as the investigation continues.

If anyone has information that might assist detectives in the investigation, they are asked to contact the Vienna Police Department at 703-255-6366.