

# ZUILL BAILEY

## CELLO

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### THE VIRGINIAN-PILOT

#### **Cellist, Virginia Symphony Orchestra tap depths of Dvorak**

By Lee Teply, Correspondent  
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The Virginia Symphony Orchestra had a winning combination of pieces in its program Friday evening at the Ferguson Center for the Arts in Newport News. Taken from a brief time span around the start of the 20th century, arguably conductor JoAnn Falletta's strongest repertoire, the three pieces were filled with passionate melodies and rich orchestration.

**Right from the start of the orchestral introduction to Antonin Dvorak's "Cello Concerto," the players' energy seemed at the boiling point. At a slower tempo, the calmer second theme was a soothing contrast. With the whole concerto solidly structured on traditional principles, this performance brought out the emotional variety within the structure.**

**Cellist Zuill Bailey attacked his first notes, building on the orchestra's strength. He, too, relaxed for the second theme, giving it a songlike quality that seemed to blend the art song and folk melody qualities of music from this time.**

**The give-and-take between guest soloist and orchestra was particularly effective in the first movement's development section, where changes of color and tempo gave the piece a sense of evolving toward the greater security of the recapitulation.**

**In the sentimental theme of the second movement, the sobbing effect of broken phrases was also sensed in Bailey's tearful expression. His interaction with the orchestra had the natural flow of conversation. The overlapping phrases of a near-canonic section led to the satisfying conclusion of this beautiful dialogue.**

**Bailey played his most touching lines at the very end, Dvorak's sad musical farewell to a dying friend. The audience, obviously moved by the piece, gave the performance a well-deserved standing ovation.**

In the concert's second half, Falletta put together two pieces composed about the same time, one virtually unknown, the other a perennial favorite. Franz Schreker's "Prelude to a Drama," the 1913 mixture of materials that grew into the opera "Die Gezeichneten," was a fascinating addition to the orchestra's repertoire.

The opera's plot explained the sequence of Romantic melodies and special effects heard in this piece. Falletta tied these bits together and made the most of Schreker's creative orchestration. The familiar melodies and dance music in Richard Strauss' suite, derived from "Der Rosenkavalier" (1910), make one think of the many great singers and orchestras heard performing them in the past. Falletta went beyond a reworking of known material by making changes in dynamics and timing more extreme.

The waltz segment never settled into the characteristic Viennese rhythm of this dance, but everything else was nicely timed, especially the famous trio music from the end of the opera.

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