

# ZUILL BAILEY

CELLIST

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## CLASSICAL MUSIC

**The Washington Post**

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**-- Andrew Lindemann Malone**

Fairfax Symphony Orchestra

Pablo Casals once said of the instrument he played so brilliantly, "The cello is like a beautiful woman who has not grown older, but younger with time, more slender, more supple, more graceful." Youthfulness, suppleness and grace were the hallmarks of Fairfax native Zuill Bailey's playing of his 1693 Matteo Goffriller cello with the Fairfax Symphony Orchestra at George Mason University's Center for the Arts on Saturday night.

Saint-Saens's Cello Concerto No. 1 sounded warm, sweet and rich, and Bailey's arrangement of the "Meditation" from Massenet's "Thais" was deeply heartfelt, duskier and less plaintive than it sounds on the violin. William Hudson led the orchestra -- with the cellist's sister, Allison Bailey, as concertmaster -- with subtlety and careful balance.

The all-French program was ambitious, including two harps, celesta, seven percussionists and a brief appearance by the 100-plus members of the Fairfax Choral Society. Debussy's "La Mer" was strong on detail -- the muted trumpets and harps were especially good -- but a little lacking in overall sweep.

Of two excerpts from Berlioz's "La Damnation de Faust," the "Dance of the Sylphs" was brisk and bright, but lacked crispness. The famous "Hungarian March" fared better, with the always-strong brass a big plus and the woodwinds also very fine.

In the Suite No. 2 from Ravel's "Daphnis et Chloe," the chorus sang expressively, Lawrence Ink's solo flute was excellent, and the huge orchestra made rhythmic changes with aplomb, proving that French music -- so colorful, so passionate -- can be thrilling as well.

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