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World Premiere of "Haara" on May 18-19

New Music for Symphonic Band by Mary Coy Whitmore,
Composer and Lackey High School Graduate

Partnership of Charles County Arts Alliance / Charles County Public Schools

On May 18-19, 2015, a very special and rare event will occur in Charles County - the world premiere of a new musical work for symphonic band. The work is entitled, *Haara*, and was composed by Mary Coy Whitmore, a 2007 graduate of Henry E. Lackey High School.

"*Haara*" is the phonetic transcription of the Arabic word meaning "free," and this musical composition is being dedicated to the high school bands of Charles County, Maryland. The project was conceived and spearheaded by Alan D. Freeman, Director of Instrumental Music at Lackey High School, who was Ms. Whitmore's former band director. It was commissioned as the result of a special project grant awarded in 2013 by the Charles County Arts Alliance to the Charles County Public Schools. Work on this unique composition began during fall 2013, and was completed in May 2014.

Three world premiere concerts will take place at Charles County high schools over two evenings, with free admission at each:

- Lackey High School: May 18 at 6:30 pm
- La Plata High School: May 18 at 6:30 pm
- North Point High School: May 19 at 7:00 pm

The band students at each of these county high schools are currently working hard in rehearsals for *Haara* to ensure a great performance for the audiences. Ms. Whitmore will be in attendance at the Lackey High School and North Point High School world premieres. At Lackey, there will be a special reception honoring Ms. Whitmore immediately following the concert, and an opportunity for members of the audience to meet the composer in person.

Mary Coy Whitmore, Composer



Ms. Whitmore is a graduate of Henry E. Lackey High School (2007) and of St. Mary's College of Maryland (Bachelor of Arts in Music, 2011). She has performed both locally and internationally as a bassoonist and a singer. She began composing in 2009 during her undergraduate degree, and received several premieres, notably: *Muse: Two Contemplations for Horn and Piano* for the St. Mary's County Arts Council board of directors in 2010; and *Mirage for Orchestra*. The latter was performed at the 2011 season of the River Concert Series at St. Mary's College. Her former college composition mentors include David Froom, John Leupold and Robert Gibson. Her former music teachers in the Charles County Public Schools are James Kundreskas, Robert Rausch, Paul Donnelly and Alan Freeman. After the completion of her Master of Music

Composition degree this year at the University of Maryland, College Park, Ms. Whitmore will be continuing her studies there as a candidate for Doctorate of Musical Arts.

Alan D. Freeman, Lackey High School



Alan D. Freeman, Ed.D., is the Director of Instrumental Music at Henry E. Lackey High School. He offers a positive assessment of the composition and the composer:

"When Mary was a student at Lackey High School, she was already a terrific musician. She was a bassoonist but played multiple instruments. She was also an accomplished vocalist. She was in symphonic band, jazz band, marching band, choir and even sang lead in the school musical. Haara is her first composition for band. We are in rehearsals for the piece now. It's creative, original and dramatic. She already has an impressive command of the medium. I look forward to hearing the finished product and I hope this is only the first of many compositions to come."

For more information on the upcoming world premiere concerts of *Haara* on May 18-19, contact Dr. Freeman at Lackey High School at (301) 753-1753 (phone) or afreeman@ccboe.com (email).

The mission of the Charles County Arts Alliance is to stimulate, promote, encourage and provide recognition of the arts and the creative spirit in Charles County. For more info on the Arts Alliance and becoming a member, contact the Alliance at 301-392-5900, info@charlescountyarts.org, or www.charlescountyarts.org.

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