

17th Annual Virginia International PANFest

Join us May 10th-11th at the Seaside Palladium at
24th Street Virginia Beach Oceanfront!

Enjoy performances from over 25 steel bands from
throughout the US and abroad as well as two head-
lining performances from Shawn Thwaites Rebel
Quartet feat. Sherwin and Sheldon Thwaites!



The Rhythm Project

The Rhythm Project is a world percussion ensemble dedicated to the nurturing of self-esteem through individual and cooperative achievement. Founded in 1996, the program was started in Portsmouth, VA by the Virginia Arts Festival. There are four elementary and three middle school Rhythm Project programs that feed the program's premiere performing ensemble, the All-Stars. The All-Stars is a year-round program for high school students that focuses on instilling discipline and dedication in students through performance and touring opportunities. Additionally, two high school programs complete the family of eleven Rhythm Project ensembles that serve the cities of Norfolk, Virginia Beach and Portsmouth.

The All-Stars, 2009 and 2010 Virginia International PANFest Grand Champions, have earned international acclaim and collaborated with many prominent artists. They have opened for Gladys Knight, shared the stage with pan artist Victor Provost and the Metropolitan Jazz Orchestra, and performed at the Royal Nova Scotia and Virginia International Tattoos. In May 2014, the group was featured on NPR's "From the Top" program showcasing outstanding talent in high school students.

www.RhythmProject.org



Sponsors

The Rhythm Project is supported in part by American Borate Company, Bank of America, Capital Group Companies, Clark Nexsen, D. Baker Ames Charitable Foundation, Enterprise Holdings Foundation, Hampton Roads Community Foundation, Nordstrom, Old Dominion University Community Development Corporation, PRA Group, Queen of Virginia Skill & Entertainment, Ruth Brown Memorial Fund, SunTrust, USAA, Wells Fargo, and the following municipalities and/or their Arts and Humanities Commissions: Norfolk, Portsmouth, and Virginia Beach. Commissions: Norfolk, Portsmouth, and Virginia Beach.



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Rhythm Project**
online!



Virginia Arts Festival Rhythm Report

Volume 52
Spring 2019

Greetings Rhythm Project Supporters—

"In like a lion, out like a lamb" speaks true of the times as spring approaches, yet the same might not be said for the Rhythm Project as we reach our busiest time of year. After an exciting winter filled with holiday performances, parties, hard working rehearsals, and another fantastic Rhythm Live! produced alongside The Governor's School for the Arts, we are now beginning to show off and polish our tunes at performances in preparation for the 17th annual Virginia International PANFest! It has been a rewarding year for all of our ensembles including our **two brand new** ensembles at Ingleside Elementary and Brickell Academy at Old Donation School. We are excited to provide steel band experiences to more students every year throughout Hampton Roads, which as of this March now includes a new ensemble at Old Dominion University! All of our new endeavors are sure to keep us busy and music in the air throughout spring and the beginning of summer!

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Dave Longfellow

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Paul Munzenrider

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Austin Ferguson
Austin Ferguson

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Robert W. Cross
Robert W. Cross

VAF Executive Director

Scott Jackson
Scott Jackson

VAF General Manager



Activity Calendar

- Sunday, April 28, 2019

Norfolk Rising-Stars
VIT Hullabaloo
Norfolk Scope Plaza
12:00 PM

- Friday – Saturday
May 10-11, 2019

Virginia International
PANFest
Feat. Shawn Thwaites Rebel
Quartet with Sherwin and
Sheldon Thwaites

- Thursday, May 16, 2019

RP All-Stars at
Elizabeth City, NC
Arts of the Albemarle
5:30 PM

- Wednesday, May 29, 2019

RP All-Stars at Kennedy
Center Millennium Stage
6:00 PM

- Saturday June 1, 2019

RP All-Stars, Norfolk Rising-
Stars, Portsmouth Rising-
Stars at Portsmouth Art &
Cultural Center Courtyard
1:00—3:00 PM

Full Schedule at
www.RhythmProject.org



Rhythm Live!



The Rhythm Project All-Stars once again presented Rhythm Live! this past February to enthusiastic audiences at Harrison Opera House. For those unfamiliar, Rhythm Live! is an educational concert experience where the story of the steel pan is told through narration, music, and dance. From the roots of West-African drumming and dance, to the electrified rhythms of calypso, soca, and popular music today, The history and story of Trinidad & Tobago's prized creation proves to inspire and ignite audiences young and old every year!

We once again had the opportunity to co-present the production with the Governor's School for the Arts Dance and Instrumental Music Departments. The dance students bring an energy to the show that is unparalleled while the instrumental students filled the hall with authentic sounds of African drumming and our "ping pong" style old time pans. The Rhythm Project is happy to work with the education outreach of Virginia Arts Festival every year to welcome over 2,000 elementary students from throughout Norfolk and Hampton Roads for our matinee performances. Being able to perform in front of a packed house full of excited students filled the All-Stars and other performers with plenty of adrenaline to push through any nerves they might have had on stage, it was a blast for everyone involved!

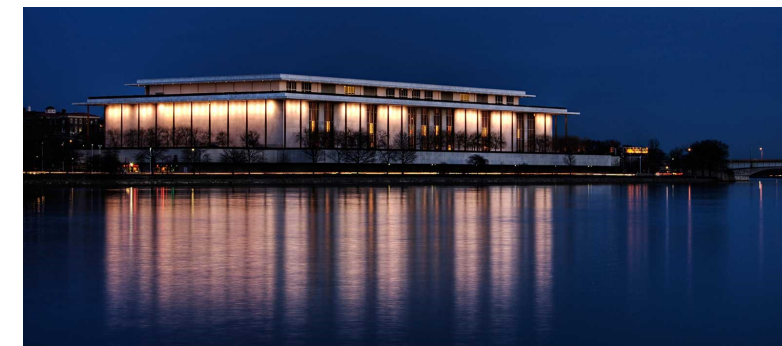
Plentiful Performances

Fall and Winter has been a marathon of performances for the Rhythm Project as we performed for audiences all throughout the area. The All-Stars are a popular name in town and have played for a variety of crowds including opening for Symphonicity at the Sandler Center (pictured right), a private performance at The Main in Downtown Norfolk, and Holiday performances at The Downtown Norfolk Grand Illumination Parade and at Nordstrom inside MacArthur Center among others. Our Rising-Stars and Junior-Stars ensembles also started their performance season with a number of in school concerts and outside gigs at locations including Barnes & Noble, Virginia Beach MOCA, Virginia Beach All City Festival, and Woodrow Wilson High School in Portsmouth. These ensembles are working hard towards their final performances of the season and all are looking forward to showcasing their efforts at PANFest on May 11!



Monarch Steel

The Rhythm Project has successfully reached hundreds of students annually from elementary age through 12th Grade from all throughout Hampton Roads. As we continue our mission to grow we have found that our All-Star alumni that pursue secondary education locally have limited opportunities to perform in a steel band setting. That thirst for lifelong learning pushed a group of All-Star alumni to approach the Rhythm Project about creating a steel band at Old Dominion University. This ensemble of RP alumni and other interested students is a student club that meets once a week. This group of hard working students recently performed their first concert at the Old Dominion University Percussion Ensemble concert on Wednesday April 24th at the Diehn Center for the Performing Arts. We look forward to watching them grow and perform more in the coming school year!



THE
KENNEDY
CENTER

Millennium Stage

Kennedy Center Bound

Being in close proximity to our nation's capitol has been a great benefit to the Rhythm Project over the years. Between being featured on NPR's From The Top and performing alongside the George Mason University Jazz Ensemble, the Rhythm Project knows their way around the greater DMV Metropolitan area. This next trip to DC however will be an experience these students will remember for years. In conjunction with the Virginia Arts Festival and Dance Theater of Harlem's residency at the Kennedy Center, the Rhythm Project All-Stars will be opening for the award winning dance ensemble on Wednesday May 29th at 6:00 PM on the Millennium Stage. The Millennium Stage is set in an intimate corner of the main entrance atrium of the Kennedy Center. This stage allows audiences to warm up and get excited for the main performance in the Opera Hall. This is a great opportunity to not only showcase the top talent of Hampton Roads, but to accompany the Virginia Arts Festival in enlightening a national audience in why our region excels in collaborating and advocating for the arts. This will be an evening of music, dance, and art that you can not miss!