

Monta Vista High School

Music Booster Newsletter

January 31, 2025



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Music Director Updates

Chamber Orchestra's Debut Performance at CASMEC 2025

In the heart of Sacramento, from January 15-19, 2024, the California All-State Music Education Conference (CASMEC) brought together the finest high school musicians and educators for celebration of talent, hard work, and the transformative power of music. This annual event is known for its rigorous selection process and high-caliber performances.

Nine Monta Vista student musicians, including 5 string players, 1 wind player, and 3 percussionists, earned their spots in the prestigious all-state ensembles and navigated through three days of intensive rehearsals. Their efforts culminated in stunning performances alongside talented peers, showcasing challenging pieces that truly highlighted the capabilities of high school musicians across California.

Under the dedicated mentorship of music director John Gilchrist, the Monta Vista Chamber Orchestra debuted at CASMEC as the only string orchestra from California invited to perform.

Their hour-long concert was a testament to the excellence in music education at Monta Vista, leaving a lasting impression on the audience and inspiring other music educators who attended CASMEC. Check out the youtube video for this spectacular performance [here](#).



The eclectic program curated for this special performance was diverse in styles and technical difficulty. The opening piece featured Igor Stravinsky's Concerto in D (Basle), which immediately captivated the audience with its charm and wit through liberal use of dissonance among other modern compositional techniques unique to 20th century composers. This technically challenging music was followed by Yukiko Nishimura's Lavande that was lush and full of color, Ian Lee Silva's Tour of California, a lovely homage to the wondrous and varied landscape of California, and Kevin Day's Solace in the Wind, which offered a profound, personal touch to the concert.

A particularly memorable moment was the performance of Yvette Young's Three Pieces for Strings and Guitar. Yvette Young, a celebrated electric guitarist from San Jose and front-woman of the math rock band Covet, joined Monta Vista's Chamber Orchestra's performance as a soloist. Math rock is an alternative and indie rock subgenre characterized by complex, atypical

rhythmic and instrumental patterns. The Three Pieces uniquely fuses the Math Rock guitar style with the rich sounds of a string orchestra. Yvette's innovative compositions blend classical and contemporary styles, incorporating elements of rock and jazz to create a fresh and dynamic experience for both performers and audience members. Each movement explores a different texture through the interplay between the electric guitar and strings, as the compositions exude distinctive energy and vitality, harmoniously balancing delicate, ethereal moments with intense, driving passages.

Performing alongside Yvette Young was a tremendous inspiration to the students of the Chamber Orchestra, not only because of Yvette's artistic excellence, but also because of her local roots and relatable music journey. Yvette grew up in the San Jose area and played violin in the Saratoga High School Orchestra. Her experience growing up in the South Bay as a student musician parallels some of the challenges our Monta Vista students also face. John hoped his students would take inspiration from Yvette's journey and connect to the titles of each movement: "Loving and hold nothing back", "Run steadfast into the unknown," and "Embrace your power". See Yvette's [recent interview with Yamaha](#) where she told her story of how guitar saved her life.

The Chamber Orchestra's performance ended with the grand finale of Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky Souvenir De Florence, leaving everyone exhilarated. The finale is a brilliant, energetic conclusion to the work, filled with joyful, sweeping melodies, and a perfect Coda to the Chamber Orchestra debut performance at CASMEC.

Overall, Monta Vista High School's participation in CASMEC 2025 was not just a showcase of exceptional musical talent of our student and music director, but also an inspiring testament to the power of music education. Through their performances, these young musicians demonstrated the transformative power of dedication, hard work, and artistic expression.

Orchestra & Bands (John Gilchrist)

Exciting developments are on the horizon for our orchestra and bands. Planning is underway for an exhilarating European Tour in 2026, which will include stops in Hungary, France, and the Czech Republic. This tour is in collaboration with Livermore High School, and we are approaching the registration deadline on January 20th.

Our highly anticipated Music Building Expansion is moving forward, with the architecture plans nearly finalized. This expansion will provide our students with state-of-the-art facilities enhance their musical education.

Auditions for our symphonic bands and orchestras are underway. We look forward to new talents joining our premiere ensembles next year.

Choir (Lofn Young)

February is shaping up to be a month full of musical festivities for our choir students. We have the much-anticipated Mean Girls Concert scheduled for February 6 and 7. This vibrant performance promises to captivate audiences with our talented students' take on the popular musical.

Shortly after, we will be spreading love with our annual Singing Valentine Sale. Our students are diligently preparing 400 valentines, which will be delivered on Monday, February 10th. This event is a collaborative effort with on-campus literary organizations, featuring chamber music performances, candy, and a personalized song to delight recipients.

In addition, we're keeping the excitement going with a notable Group Broadway Show Payment due on Wednesday. Students will need to provide \$550, which covers the invoice and secures their spot to see "The Outsiders," the Broadway show that won Best Musical last year.

Towards the end of the month, we will host the Kennedy Exchange Concert on Thursday, February 27th. This event will be a magnificent opportunity for our students as we welcome t Kennedy Choirs to perform alongside us.

Finally, our dedicated students and staff are making substantial progress with the Music Library Project 2025. This is the third iteration of our ongoing effort to organize and utilize our music library more effectively.

Kennedy Exchange Concerts

There is a series of three exchange concerts scheduled between Kennedy Middle School and Monta Vista High School in February. The exchange concerts are a great way for the Kennedy musicians to perform with the Monta Vista High Schools musicians. The Exchange introduces the students of Kennedy to the rich music experience offered by the Monta Vista High School Music Department.

Concert Schedules:

Wednesday, February 26, 2025: Orchestra Exchange

Thursday, February 27, 2025: Choir Exchange

Friday, February 28, 2025: Band Exchange

The performances will be held in the Monta Vista Auditorium with a Reception immediately following in the Student Union. The reception is a great way for the parents and students of both schools to mingle and socialize together. We are all looking for a great opportunity to share the Monta Vista music traditions and cultural experience with these Exchange concerts.

Student Musician of the Month

In each Newsletter, we highlight the musical journeys of one or more Monta Vista student musicians. This month, please meet Edward Yao, a senior student in MV's wind ensemble who just completed his last All State performance in the premier All State Band (All State Wind Symphony).

Edward Yao



Edward Yao began his percussion journey at Kennedy Middle School, building on his prior musical experience with piano. In high school, he has been an active member of Monta Vista High School's band program for four years, participating in marching band and winter percussion for three years, as well as performing with the Golden State Youth Orchestra (GSYO) for four years. Additionally, he has been selected for several honor ensembles.

Edward has served as principal percussionist for multiple concert sets in Monta Vista's Concert Band and Wind Ensemble and was drum captain for the Fall 2024 Monta Vista Marching Band season. He is currently co-principal percussionist in GSYO's Senior Symphony. His honor ensemble experience includes performing with the Santa Clara County Honor Band in 2023 and 2024, serving as principal percussionist in 2024. He was also selected for the California All-State Concert Band in 2023 and 2024,

as well as the California All-State Wind Symphony in 2025.

Fundraising Updates

Food Fundraiser

Local Kitchens:

The Winter Percussion and Winter Guard teams are having a food fundraiser at Local Kitchens on February 13. Monta Vista Winter Guard and Winter Percussion will receive 20% of fundraiser sales during this fundraiser. Participate on Feb 13, 2025 by ordering online www.localkitchens.com/order or on the Local Kitchens mobile app using the code MUSIC2025, or by visiting this Local Kitchens location and inputting the code on the kiosk at checkout. The Music Boosters greatly appreciate your contributions to these Fundraisers with both your financial and volunteer support

Vertical Raise:

The Vertical Raise fundraiser is one of the most important fundraisers of the year. The Vertical Raise Kickoff is tentatively scheduled for February 14, 2025. The duration of the fundraiser is two weeks and is expected to run from February 14-28. The fundraising goal is \$25,000 for this year. The proceeds from the Vertical Raise fundraiser will be applied to support the Choir, Band, and Curricular Music Programs for professional coaches, sheet music, new instruments, and instrument repair.

Singing Valentine Sale: Choir

Our students are diligently preparing 400 valentines, which will be delivered on Monday,

February 10th. This event is a collaborative effort with on-campus literary organizations, featuring chamber music performances, candy, and a personalized song to delight recipients.

Proposition 28

Proposition 28: Arts and Music in Schools (AMS) is a California State Proposition that was overwhelmingly passed by voters in November, 2022. The 2024-2025 school year is the first year of implementation at the Fremont Union High School District (FUHSD). Monta Vista High School has been allocated \$238k for Arts, Music, and Theater for this school year. Of the \$238k,

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the usable portion of the Prop 28 funding towards the MVHS Music Programs is only about \$38K: (\$30k for staff stipends and \$8K for Supplies & Equipment).

The Monta Vista Music Boosters are actively working with the Music Directors, Principal, and District to improve the Supplemental (usable) portion of Prop 28 funding for the 2025-2026 school year. The Monta Vista HS Prop 28 AMS plan for the 2025-2026 school year is due to the FUHSD by March 2025. The Monta Vista Music Prop 28 plan will be delivered to Ben Clausnitzer in February. Ben has agreed to present the Monta Vista Prop 28 AMS plan for 2025-2026 to the Music Boosters and any interested Music Families in February. The date of the meeting with Ben will be announced in early February.

Communication Updates

Introducing the new mvmb.org domain

Boosters Co-president Ben Cooper has set up a new domain for our Boosters organization: www.mvmb.org. Ben obtained a full site license on the "Google Workspace for Nonprofits" platform. This Google Workspace includes popular Google applications such as Gmail and Gemini AI. Booster parents and guardians will be happy to know that the service is free because we are a Nonprofit. Booster parents and guardians will also be happy to know the service includes 100 Terabytes of storage so we can now offer space to share your music photos and videos (see below). In addition to sharing media, mvmb.org will be the Boosters hub for Volunteer sign-ups, Membership registration, Donations, and much, much more ...

New Monta Vista Music Media Shared Drive

MVMB board member Yuan Lin has set up a common shared drive for hosting the large amounts of media that are captured at the various Monta Vista music events. Yuan has volunteered to be the Monta Vista Media system administrator for the Media Shared drive. The shared drive is designed to allow for all students, parents, and family members to contribute their photos and videos. Additionally we have a team of parent volunteers who capture photos and videos for all of the Music Program events such as Fall Marching Band and Color Guard, Winter Guard, and Winter Percussion. Yuan has designed a folder structure that is organized by year, date, and event. Navigating the folders is very intuitive and obvious for contributors to deposit their media. Yuan is working on developing a software solution for transferring all of the media currently stored on the Monta Vista Google Photo shared drive to the new Monta Vista Music - Media Shared drive. Thanks very much to Yuan for developing this new Media sharing capability. Yuan can be reached at media_admin@mymb.org.

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Upcoming Events

Music Booster Meeting Schedule: Choir Room

Monday, February 10, 2025, 6:00-7:00 pm

Monday, March 10, 2025, 6:00-7:00 pm

Winter Percussion:

Saturday, February 8, 2025 NCPA Fremont High School

Friday February 14, 2025 Rally Performance

Proposition 28: Monta Vista 2025-2026 AMS Review with Ben Clausnitzer:

February date and location is TBD

We hope you found our updates informative and helpful. Stay tuned for more details in our upcoming newsletters. Thank you for your continued support! Please provide your feedback to the [editor](#).

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