

COAST & CULTURE

M A G A Z I N E

ISSUE 05



The Great Blue Heron

*A Closer Look at a
Coastal Icon*

GREAT BLUE HERON

*Photography, ecology and
design inspired by a coastal
icon*

SEA WITCH

*How a fall festival became
part of Rehoboth*

A SYMPHONY OF OUR OWN

*The Mid-Atlantic Symphony
and the cultural life of
Delmarva*

ECOLOGY / DESIGN / COMMUNITY

THE ART OF LOOKING CLOSELY

There are birds that announce themselves with song, movement and commotion. The Great Blue Heron does something else entirely.

It waits.

Along Delaware's marshes, ponds and tidal waterways, its silhouette can appear almost architectural: long legs planted in shallow water, an elegant neck folded into an S, and a dagger-like bill trained toward whatever might be moving beneath the surface.

Its stillness is not inactivity. It is strategy. Great Blue Herons hunt patiently in shallow water, taking fish and other available prey. The bird's presence therefore draws our attention beyond the animal itself and toward the habitat that supports it.

Delaware's wetlands are among the landscapes that make the coast function as well as feel like the coast. They provide wildlife habitat, help filter water and can reduce the effects of flooding and erosion.

To notice the heron is to notice the system around it: water, grasses, shoreline, prey, weather and season.



A marsh vocabulary: heron, water, grasses and shoreline.

G. MICHAEL BEIGAY

A coastal perspective shaped by attention

The photograph on this issue's cover comes from G. Michael Beigay, a freelance photographer now based in Rehoboth Beach.

Before relocating to Delaware in 2024, Beigay lived in Pittsburgh's Central Northside. His work has ranged from portraits, portfolios and events to scenic and nature photography. His About page describes photography as a passion rooted in the interaction between photographer and subject.

His work has appeared in projects for Pittsburgh Parks Conservancy and in publications including Pittsburgh Magazine, Qburgh Pittsburgh, Cue, Equal and Whirl. He has also photographed for CAMP Rehoboth and Letters magazine.

Photography intersects with another part of Beigay's professional life: special education. He has used photography to create educational tools for students with cognitive disabilities, bringing image-making into work centered on communication and connection.

That makes his Great Blue Heron portrait especially fitting here. Wildlife cannot be posed or directed. The photographer has to observe, anticipate and wait - much as the heron itself does.

*“The creative act begins
with paying attention.”*

Profile information: G. Michael Beigay Photography, About.



COMMUNITY

ARTS & CULTURE

A SYMPHONY OF OUR OWN

How the Mid-Atlantic Symphony Orchestra became an essential part of the cultural life of Delmarva

BY COREY ANDREW POWELL

There is something remarkable about hearing a professional orchestra perform close to home. For Coast & Culture, that relationship is personal: we have attended and supported MSO over the years, experiencing firsthand what professional symphonic music contributes to life along the Delaware coast.

Photography courtesy of the Mid-Atlantic Symphony Orchestra website.

AN ORCHESTRA TAKES ROOT



Mid-Atlantic Symphony Orchestra in performance. Photo: MSO website.

The Mid-Atlantic Symphony Orchestra (MSO) was incorporated in 1997 after Eastern Shore residents, led by Constance Meadows, approached conductor Donald C. Buxton with an ambitious idea: create a professional orchestra based on the Delmarva Peninsula. Its first concert was held that November at the Ocean City Convention Center. More than 500 people reportedly came despite heavy rain.

Today MSO performs orchestral and chamber music across the region, sustaining a professional musical institution in communities far from the major metropolitan concert halls.

AT THE PODIUM

MICHAEL REPPER

Music Director Michael Repper brings a national profile to the orchestra. In 2023, his recording with the New York Youth Symphony won the Grammy Award for Best Orchestral Performance—the first youth orchestra to win the category. His work reflects a belief that conducting is ultimately about connection: between musicians, audiences, repertoire and community.

A professional orchestra does more than perform. It helps a region hear itself differently.

THE SEASON AHEAD

An intimate October program brings chamber music to Rehoboth Beach.

October | Horn Trio & Piano Trio

Brahms & the Schumanns



CLARA SCHUMANN PIANO TRIO IN G MINOR,
OP. 17

ROBERT SCHUMANN: FANTASIESTÜCKE, OP. 73

JOHANNES BRAHMS: HORN TRIO IN E♭ MAJOR,
OP. 40

PERFORMED BY MEMBERS OF THE MID-ATLANTIC SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA, THIS PROGRAM CELEBRATES THREE EXTRAORDINARY COMPOSERS WHOSE LIVES AND MUSIC WERE FOREVER INTERTWINED.

Friday, October 9, 7 PM | Community Church,
Ocean Pines, MD

Saturday, October 10, 3 PM | Epworth United
Methodist Church, Rehoboth Beach, DE

October Ensemble Series artwork courtesy of the Mid-Atlantic Symphony Orchestra website.

OCTOBER 10 • 3 PM • REHOBOTH BEACH

BRAHMS & THE SCHUMANNS

Members of the Mid-Atlantic Symphony Orchestra explore Clara Schumann, Robert Schumann and Johannes Brahms through piano trio, horn and chamber repertoire—a program built around three extraordinary composers whose lives and music were forever intertwined.

EXPLORE THE FULL SEASON

Visit the Mid-Atlantic Symphony Orchestra website for the complete 2026–2027 season lineup, including Masterworks, Ensemble Series performances and special programs throughout Delmarva.

KEEPING THE MUSIC PLAYING



2026-2027 season artwork courtesy of the Mid-Atlantic Symphony Orchestra website.

A professional orchestra of this scale is sustained not by ticket sales alone, but by patrons, donors, volunteers, sponsors and advocates who believe that serious artistic life belongs on Delmarva. MSO's support helps fund performances, educational outreach and the long-term work of keeping professional orchestral music accessible throughout the region.

Its education and outreach work has reached thousands of students through instrument demonstrations, master classes, instruction, instrument loans and youth access to concerts. Support can take many forms: attending a performance, making a gift, becoming a sustaining donor, volunteering or participating in the orchestra's fundraising programs.

THE PEOPLE BEHIND THE MUSIC

A COMMUNITY EFFORT

Coast & Culture commends the entire MSO staff and board for the work behind every performance. We especially recognize Mary Lou Tietz, Fundraising Consultant, for her dedicated fundraising efforts, and Chairman Jeffrey L. Parker for his leadership. Parker also happens to be one of Coast & Culture's favorite interior designers—a fitting reminder that the arts on the coast often overlap, connect and strengthen one another.

Culture is not simply something a community has. It is something a community chooses to nurture.

For those of us who have sat in the audience and supported the orchestra, MSO's value is easy to understand. The Delaware coast is defined not only by beaches and landscape, but by the institutions that give the region an artistic life of its own.