

CAMPUS LIFE / HIGHLIGHTED / TRANSFORM THE STUDENT EXPERIENCE / WINTER 2018 / JANUARY 8, 2018

## A Harmonious Chord



## Graduate Students Live in Retirement Community as Artists-in-Residence

BY SALA LEVIN '10 | PHOTO BY JOHN T. CONSOLI

When school of music graduate students Samantha Flores and Matthew Rynes moved into their new community this fall, they could have introduced themselves to their new neighbors with a loaf of banana bread. Instead, they brought their cello and clarinet. And the neighbors weren't other graduate students—they were all over age 55.

Flores and Rynes are the first artists-in-residence at Collington, a retirement community in Bowie, Md., receiving free room and board for the year in exchange for organizing programming for the residents.

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### A Walk to R

JAN 26, 2018

### Sports Brief

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### No One Left

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### City of Hope

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### Finding His

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### Let's Go Fly

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### Decoding a

JANUARY 2,

The project, suggested by a Collington resident who'd read about a similar program in Baltimore, "seemed in keeping with the kind of engagement that we wanted to be involved in, reaching out to various parts of the surrounding community and giving our students an opportunity to interact with members of these communities" while teaching students about audience-specific programming, says Jason Geary, director of the School of Music.

Graduate students were invited to apply for the positions and a faculty committee selected four finalists, who went to Collington for a final interview with residents.

"We were looking for students who we thought had the ability to engage with residents, students with fairly outgoing personalities who had creative ideas about what to do with an opportunity like this," says Geary.

Rynes and Flores are teaching music-reading classes to Collington's large choir, as well as performing in twice-monthly recitals, bringing in other School of Music students for a chamber music series, playing on Friday afternoons and in "pop-up" events, and taking residents to campus for other concerts.

"What drew me to the project was the idea of concert programming, the idea of running a chamber music association in miniature, almost," says clarinetist Rynes, adding that graduate students in music often "have the opportunity to start chamber music programs after they leave school, but most don't have the experience or logistical understanding to do that."

Living among retirees is less of a culture shock than Rynes expected—his neighbors may decorate their homes with pictures of their grandchildren, "but it just feels like I'm living in an apartment complex," he says.

Flores has also acclimated to the age difference. "I like the fact that all these people are very interesting and have had interesting lives," she says. "They're just curious to know what we do and why."

Resident Carol Kempske sees the project from an almost anthropological lens. "It helps us relate to young people, and I think it gives young people a better understanding of those who are their grandparents' age or older."

There's just one intergenerational quirk that baffles Rynes: "The building is dead quiet around 8 at night."



## The Things I

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## How Dance

APR 29, 201

## Sex and Bal

JUL 21, 201

## The End of F

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