

# 3 generations join as trio on trumpet for May Festival

Father, son and their teacher will perform with orchestra

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When the five-concert Cincinnati May Festival, one of the world's premier choral events, opens tonight with Verdi's Requiem in Music Hall, three "generations" of trumpet players will be performing with the orchestra.

Steve Pride, 54, a Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra trumpeter; his son Alex, 24; and Marie Speziale, 69, the teacher of both and a former Cincinnati Symphony member for 32 years, will be on-stage together.

"When we were talking about the possibility of playing Verdi – just sitting on that stage, and being able to look out into that house, it's a treasure," Speziale said. "When you're here all the time, you take it for granted. It will be 15 years in October that I retired. So any time that I can step on that stage and even play one note is like a phenomenal gift."

Having a three-generation span in the trumpet section is rare – something that has not occurred in at least four decades, Speziale said.

"There's been so much conversation about the health of the (music) industry. You have to look at young artists that are in the trenches, dedicating their lives to this art form. When I look at Alex and the other kids, it's very hopeful for me," she said.

Alex Pride, a Lakota West grad who grew up in West Chester Township, said he won't be nervous. He has played on Music Hall's stage before, sitting for such con-

certs as the CSO on New Year's Eve.

"I was nervous the first couple of times, because it's different from playing with a school orchestra, when everybody's making mistakes," said the younger Pride, who is pursuing a master's degree at the Shepherd School of Music at Rice University, Houston. "Here, everyone's getting paid and there's not that much time. I don't want to be the guy who makes us do it again and wastes time."

Speziale was the first woman trumpeter in a major symphony orchestra when she joined the CSO in 1964. She retired in 1996 and taught at the University of Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music – where she coached Steve Pride.

Since 2002, she has been professor of trumpet and chair of the brass department at the Shepherd School of Music. Alex is one of her students. For all of his concerts at Rice, she's "front and center in the balcony, right in the middle."

"When I was his age, (orchestras) wouldn't even let me audition because I was a woman," Speziale said. "They seriously said, 'Don't come. We won't listen to you, much less hire you.'"

She credits former CSO maestro Max Rudolf for being "open-minded" enough to hire her.

Steve Pride is gratified that his son will be playing what he considers the finest brass moment in Verdi's Requiem – the "Dies Irae" played by the off-stage brass band.

"That's it. Powerful," he said, shaking his head. "It



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**Marie Speziale** is trumpet teacher to Steve Pride and his son Alex. The trio, seen here in the Music Hall lobby, will play at May Festival. Steve Pride is a Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra trumpeter; Speziale was a CSO member for 32 years.

## An interview with Christine Brewer

The world-famous Grammy-winning soprano talks about performing at the May Festival. **Weekend, E5**

sounds like it's coming from the depths of hell, and it's really quite amazing."

Even though it's a high-risk job playing trumpet – the trumpets are often given the most exposed parts in a performance – these trumpeters

know that all three will handle it like pros.

"It's what we do," said Steve Pride, in his 30th season as the CSO's second trumpet. "It's like watching Brandon Phillips turn an amazing play. I mean, how in the world did

he do that? That's what he does. That's what we do, that's what we practice for."

*May Festival concerts are 8 p.m. today and Saturday in Music Hall and Sunday in Covington's Cathedral Basilica of the Assumption. The festival continues May 27-28 in Music Hall. Ticket information at 513-381-3300 or [www.mayfestival.org](http://www.mayfestival.org).*