

# Notes

the newsletter of

## The National Orchestral Association

### THE UNIVERSAL LANGUAGE

As we look toward the new year, it is important that we seek out ways to find common ground. Studies have shown that music is indeed a universal language, with an ability to convey emotions that transcend language and culture. Now more than ever, it is important to focus on the aspects of life that bring us together, that remind us of those common aspects of our experience that make us human.

The enjoyment of music, particularly with others, is a means of encouraging the impulse to share as human beings. As politicians and the media focus on our differences, and in a world where one can so easily become overwhelmed by current events and pressures, music provides a ballast to an overwrought society.

Sharing the experience of a concert, and the universal emotions it evokes, provides a good start for bringing people together. The National Orchestral Association is pleased to support organizations that bring people together to experience the joy of music. Let us hope that the coming year will be one of fellowship, in which music does its part to sooth our spirits and inspire us to appreciate our common humanity.

*Matthew J. Trachtenberg, President*

### NEW CLIP FROM NOA DOCUMENTARY AVAILABLE ONLINE

A new video clip from the documentary, *Leon Barzin and the National Orchestral Association*, describing the NOA's school visitation program begun in the 1940s, has just been added to the Association's website and YouTube channel. Below are excerpts from the clip:

Maestro Barzin was one of the earliest proponents of outreach programs to develop future audiences for classical music. Drawing upon this initial pilot program for area schools, Barzin created a new National Orchestral Association initiative that was soon expanded into an annual series of tours to Delaware schools for students in the fifth to seventh grades. The small ensemble that Barzin brought to the schools demonstrated the flute, oboe, clarinet, French horn, and bassoon. One school would host the sessions, of which there were typically four or five on each day of the tour, bringing in children from other schools so as to minimize travel time for the ensemble, and maximize the number of children exposed to each session. This format was later replicated in visits to Connecticut and Long Island schools.

Maestro Jacques Voois: "...throughout his career, Barzin was a restless innovator. He had to find things that could, that were new, that were not in existence or extant at a given moment, and consequently, he would create things such as the tv program, such as going into schools and taking six, eight, ten players with him. And he was phenomenal with the children in these school situations...And you know, today we have Young Artists. It's a program where professional musicians go into the schools – and sort of was the precursor of that program, or at least the beginning of thinking about such things."

Maestro Barzin believed that developing an audience was as important as training an orchestra. In an April 1950 article in the *New York Times*, he expressed these views: "I believe the time has come when we must look to the future to develop our audiences. What better place than in the classrooms of our institutions of learning? Many of these thousands of youngsters have a natural curiosity about music, and no way in which to satisfy this curiosity. I have done some experimental work in this respect...realizing that sound alone means little to a child between the ages of six and 11, I have made music visible and encourage all sorts of questions and actual participation by the child in what is going on."

In these sessions, Barzin invited children up to the stage so they would have intimate contact with the musicians, and encouraged them to touch the instruments.

Violinist Monica Bauchwitz: "Mr. Barzin had a very extraordinary idea relating to education. He felt that kids and people should come very close to the instruments. Not only that they should see them from faraway and hear you talk about them, and questions and answers, but he felt that they should come close and actually touch the instrument. And a lot of musicians, I guess myself included, who have these very expensive instruments, are a little bit fearful, or a little leery of having someone come up, some seven-year old and just sort of touch a violin, but he said, you know, don't be afraid, because they'll realize that it's something very valuable, and they'll touch it with care. And he was right. That the kids realize that it's something when they come up – they don't just touch it like a baseball or a football, the come up and they realize it is something to be cherished and they were very gracious, and I was very surprised by that."



**Maestro Leon Barzin and students, 1947**

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To view this clip, as well as others from the documentary, please visit the NOA's website at [www.nationalorchestral.org](http://www.nationalorchestral.org)

## CONCERTS IN THE HEIGHTS

Concerts in the Heights announced that it has entered into a partnership with the Lehman College Art Gallery. This new collaboration “brings classical and contemporary chamber music to the art gallery in intimate concerts that will seek to complement the current exhibits and additional further beauty and interest to this cultural community.” For more information, please visit [concertsintheheights.org](http://concertsintheheights.org)

## MUSIC CONSERVATORY OF WESTCHESTER

Founded in 1929, the Music Conservatory of Westchester “provides quality music education for students of all ages, abilities and backgrounds.” Legendary cellist Pablo Casals, as well as jazz legend Cab Calloway were strong proponents of the Conservatory’s mission. Each year the organization provides instruction to more than 2,900 students, with an active scholarship program for low income students. The Conservatory is proud to “help unite our counties’ communities through the universal language of music, creating a common bond among diverse individuals and groups.” For more information, please visit [musicconservatory.org](http://musicconservatory.org)

## STRING ORCHESTRA OF NEW YORK CITY (SONYC)

Since 1999, this group of extraordinary string players has become a critically acclaimed ensemble. Performing without a conductor, SONYC’s members rehearse in a collaborative effort, proving the artistic flexibility of a string quartet and the power of an orchestra. Pulitzer Prize-winning composer Paul Moravec says, “SONYC is a composer’s dream.” Pulitzer Prize-winning composer Aaron Jay Kernis stated that this organization is “opening up the world again for the audience to become more emotionally and experientially involved.” The 2019 season begins with performances at Lehman College on January 17 and January 22, 2019. For more information, please visit [stringorchestraofnyc.org](http://stringorchestraofnyc.org)

## COLLEGE OF MUSIC – FLORIDA STATE UNIVERSITY

For more than 80 years, the Florida State University College of Music has offered an extraordinary level of professional education in music. Their programs are designed to “create composers, performers, scholars, and teachers.” The organization offers some 350 concerts annually, and regularly hosts workshops, conventions and festivals such as the biennial Festival of New Music. Please visit [music.fsu.edu](http://music.fsu.edu)

## SETTLEMENT MUSIC SCHOOL

The Settlement Music School is one of the largest community schools of the arts in the United States, and one of the tri-state area’s largest employers of musicians. Settlement has six locations in the South, West and Northeast Philadelphia, Germantown, Willow Grove and Camden, New Jersey. Please visit [www.smsmusic.org](http://www.smsmusic.org)

## THE SPHINX ORGANIZATION

Detroit’s Sphinx Organization has been providing opportunities “to help overcome the cultural stereotype of classical music, and to encourage the participation of Blacks and Latinos in the field.” Its vision and mission is to “transform lives through the power of diversity in the arts.” Please visit the Sphinx Organization’s website at [www.sphinxmusic.org](http://www.sphinxmusic.org)

## ARAPAHO PHILHARMONIC

We are delighted to help support the work of this extraordinary orchestra located in Littleton, Colorado. Its mission is to “engage, enrich, and inspire our community through musical performance, education, and outreach.”

Like the National Orchestral Association’s training orchestra, this organization provides opportunities for accomplished amateur musicians and students to interact and perform with professional section principals, providing leadership and a high level of training for each orchestral section.

In addition, Arapahoe is committed to building future generations who appreciate music, holding annual children’s concerts, and outreach to elementary and middle schools. Our founding conductor, Maestro Leon Barzin, was a great proponent of creating programs that engage audiences in the performing arts, and was among the first to bring classical music to public schools. For more information about Arapahoe, please visit [arapahoe-phil.org](http://arapahoe-phil.org)

## INTERLOCHEN CENTER FOR THE ARTS

Located near Traverse City, Michigan, Interlochen provides outstanding training in music, theatre, visual arts, film, creative writing and dance. Since 1928, Interlochen attracts thousands of young artists and arts patrons from around the world. Some of the world’s greatest performing artists have appeared at Interlochen, often performing with students. For more information, please visit [www.interlochen.org](http://www.interlochen.org)

## THE STECHER AND HOROWITZ FOUNDATION

Celebrating its 57<sup>th</sup> year, the Stecher and Horowitz Foundation’s mission is to serve “as mentors, supporting and inspiring young musicians through The New York International Piano Competition” as well as the Young Artists Series. The Foundation has been responsible for identifying many incredible young pianists, who come from all over the country and the world, and provides opportunities for them in training and performance. To find out more about the Foundation and upcoming performances, please visit [stecherandhorowitz.org](http://stecherandhorowitz.org)

## REMEMBERING RALPH GATES

Ralph Pillsbury Gates Jr., a longtime volunteer and Board member of the National Orchestral Association, passed away in 2018 at the age of 93.

During World War II, Ralph participated in the top-secret Manhattan Project which built the atomic bomb that finally ended the war in the Pacific. In later life, he was particularly proud of his work in preserving the legacy of World War II veterans, videotaping their stories for posterity, and was invited to speak at numerous veterans’ events. He was active socially in Utah, and was an honorary member of the Captain's Club in Salt Lake City.

The Board of Directors of the National Orchestral Association wishes to express its appreciation to Ralph for his incredible service as a member of the Board, and for his inspiring efforts to preserve the legacy of World War II veterans.