

# The National Orchestral Association

## RISING TO THE CHALLENGE

2020 will certainly go down as a year most of us would like to forget. The global pandemic has curtailed most classical music performances worldwide, and has created significant challenges for arts organizations and venues. However, history has taught us that challenges can often be a stimulus for growth and innovation.

One of the greatest challenges for music organizations during the pandemic is finding ways to keep in touch with their audiences until such time that it's safe to return to the concert hall. Many organizations have met the challenges of the current environment by performing in outdoor settings and/or using technology to offer concerts online.

The National Orchestral Association has a proud history of responding to exogenous challenges, including the Great Depression and World War II. The NOA was founded during the Great Depression, and responded by finding donors to underwrite low-cost concert tickets for the general public. During the Depression, NOA concerts were a highlight for many music-lovers, offering inexpensive access to a great training orchestra and some of the finest soloists of the day. During World War II, NOA concert broadcasts on WNYC permitted listeners to experience the thrill of live music-making.

The National Orchestral Association is heartened to see organizations that we support rising to the challenge and coming up with innovative ideas to keep their audiences engaged.

Stay safe and well!

*Matthew J. Trachtenberg*



Barzin and NOA WNYC Concert

## INNOVATIVE ORGANIZATIONS DURING THE PANDEMIC

As performing arts organizations throughout the country feel the impact of the pandemic, some are finding innovative ways of performing in accordance with health and safety protocols. One such organization is the **Arapahoe Philharmonic** in Littleton, Colorado. For their music fans who want to enjoy the experience of live music during the pandemic, the Arapahoe Philharmonic has created an outdoor performance series called Park(ing Lot) Concerts. Performances were held in church parking lots in Englewood, Denver, Littleton, and other locations in Colorado. Offerings featured performances by Arapahoe Philharmonic artists, including Arapahoe's woodwind quartet and the Arapahoe Phil Brass Quintet, performing traditional Americana, light classical and jazzy favorites.

Concertgoers were given a choice between listening from the comfort of their cars, or sitting on socially-distanced lawn chairs. All concertgoers were asked to wear masks outside their cars, with each car being parked more than six feet apart, allowing ample room for government-recommended social distancing. Arapahoe also established its MusicConnects series of live and recorded performances by Arapahoe musicians and special guests. One of the challenges facing performing arts organizations is keeping in touch with their audiences. This innovative approach of bringing live music to the parking lots of closed houses of worship and businesses demonstrates how important flexibility is in providing continuing engagement with the public. We commend the Arapahoe Philharmonic for working hard to stay in touch with its audiences around Colorado during this difficult time. The National Orchestral Association is proud to support this fine organization, whose mission is "to engage, enrich, and inspire our community through musical performance, education, and outreach." For more information about Arapahoe and its response to the pandemic, please visit the Arapahoe website at [arapahoe-phil.org](http://arapahoe-phil.org).

The National Orchestral Association also proudly supports Detroit's **Sphinx Organization**, and applauds its innovative initiatives. Sphinx has scheduled an inaugural live virtual gala called *Lift Ev'ry Voice* for October 15, 2020, featuring Sphinx alumni artists, and its Sphinx Performance Academy, Sphinx LEAD (Leaders in Excellence, Arts & Diversity), and the National Alliance for Audition Support summer intensive all went completely virtual in 2020. In addition, SphinxConnect, its annual epicenter for artists and leaders in diversity, will go virtual for its 2021 convention. Also, Sphinx has established the Sphinx Match Project, Sphinx's earliest response to the global health pandemic, which gave matching grants to seven artists in support of their online concert initiatives. Another Sphinx initiative is its partnering with YouthQuest to share Sphinx Faculty instructional videos on YouthQuest's Afterschool at Home YouTube page, and has launched #TuneInTuesday featuring new and archival footage of performances by Sphinx alumni weekly on all social media platforms. Sphinx Virtuosi as well will be offering virtual performances for the upcoming season. For more information about the Sphinx Organization and the various ways in which it is responding to the pandemic, please visit [www.sphinxmusic.org](http://www.sphinxmusic.org).

## CONCERTS IN THE HEIGHTS

Concerts in the Heights is responding to the pandemic by broadcasting via YouTube. Founded by violinist Monica Bauchwitz, CITH is a chamber music organization which performs monthly concerts at Lehman College Art Gallery at Lehman College. Its goal is to share high-quality music with the community in an intimate setting, and to develop new audiences by exposing residents to chamber music who might not otherwise have access to it. Concerts feature discussions and opportunities for questions before the concerts, followed by informal post-concert receptions open to all attendees. This year because of the pandemic, all live concerts at Lehman College had to be cancelled, but a series of "Living Room Concerts" has been created on YouTube featuring Monica Bauchwitz and Karl and Maya Kramer. For more information about Concerts in the Heights, please visit [www.concertsintheheights.org](http://www.concertsintheheights.org).



**Karl Kramer and Monica Bauchwitz Living Room Concert**

## LYRIC CHAMBER MUSIC SOCIETY

The Lyric Chamber Music Society of New York presents chamber music and cutting-edge repertoire in an intimate setting at the Kosciuszko Foundation. Founded in 1998 by Joan Kretschmer, Lyric continually strives to explore new and innovative ways to bring classical music to diverse audiences, catering to "music lovers, students and connoisseurs from all over the world." This year, Lyric asked musicians who have performed for the organization to send in a short music video recorded from their homes, which are featured on the Lyric website. Lyric has also live-streamed a series of plays written and performed by Hershey Felder, who portrays various composers such as George Gershwin, Beethoven and Irving Berlin and performs their works. To contribute to the work of this fine organization, and for more information about the Lyric, please visit [www.lyricny.org](http://www.lyricny.org).

## BALLET SCHOOL OF STAMFORD

The Ballet School of Stamford serves Connecticut's Fairfield and Westchester counties, providing professional dance training in ballet, modern, jazz, hip-hop, musical theater and ballroom classes for children aged three and older, as well programs for adults and private training. The organization has partnered with Chelsea Piers Connecticut to create "the most comprehensive dance program in Fairfield County." For more information, please visit [www.balletschoolofstamford.org](http://www.balletschoolofstamford.org).

## INTERLOCHEN CENTER FOR THE ARTS

Michigan's Interlochen Center for the Arts has helped train young musicians and artists for decades with its summer camp and winter academy offerings. Originally known as the National Music Camp, the beautiful Interlochen campus is situated between two lakes, and has provided arts education and cultural programs in an idyllic setting, attracting talent from around the world. This year, the Interlochen Board of Trustees approved a plan to re-open the Interlochen Arts Academy, while "enforcing stringent health protocols, establishing a contained campus, and developing an adjusted and modular academic calendar." Because of the pandemic, performances and events during the academic year will be closed to the public. However, many student performances will be live-streamed and available on demand on the Interlochen website, including "Collage," which will "showcase student work from across the Academy's arts disciplines: creative writing, dance, film & new media, interdisciplinary arts, music, theatre, and visual arts." For more information about Interlochen, please visit [www.interlochen.org](http://www.interlochen.org).

## SETTLEMENT MUSIC SCHOOL

Founded in 1908, Settlement Music School is one of the largest community schools of the arts in the United States. With six locations in the South, West and Northeast Philadelphia, Germantown, Willow Grove and Camden, New Jersey, Settlement "provides more than 10,000 weekly services to the Greater Philadelphia region," offering "individual lessons, classes and activities in music, dance and visual arts to children and adults" regardless of age, race or financial circumstances. In response to the pandemic, Settlement instituted its Kids:Live series, which "offers free music and dance classes with Settlement faculty live on Settlement's Facebook page every Tuesday and Thursday at 10:30 a.m. The series was named by *Philadelphia Magazine* as "one of the Best Virtual Kids' Classes this year." Settlement also offers a four-week online individual instruction package and an online Children's Music Workshop class, as well as other online programs. The organization is currently waiving its \$55 registration fee for new students, and students can begin online lessons at any time. For more information about this important organization, please visit [www.smsmusic.org](http://www.smsmusic.org).

## THE STECHER AND HOROWITZ FOUNDATION

Celebrating its 60<sup>th</sup> year, the Stecher and Horowitz Foundation seeks to further the "education, recognition, and fostering of gifted young musicians, helping sustain and preserve the essence of our cultural life through audience development and community involvement." Its annual New York International Piano Competition as well as the Young Artists Series have given young artists invaluable experience in training and performance to help develop their talent. The Foundation has been responsible for identifying many incredible young pianists who come from all over the country and the world. Unfortunately, due to the pandemic this year the New York International Piano Competition, originally scheduled for June 21-26, 2020, had to be cancelled. To find out more about the Foundation and upcoming performances, please visit [www.thenyipc.org](http://www.thenyipc.org).

## STRING ORCHESTRA OF NEW YORK CITY (SONYC)

SONYC is a conductor-less chamber ensemble founded in 1999, comprised of a group of extraordinary string players. Rehearsals are a collaborative effort, which "allows each musician to have an impact on the artistic process. The flexibility and intimacy of a string quartet are thus fused with the power and scope of an orchestra." SONYC also has "given over 250 performances and close to 100 master classes for children of all ages and backgrounds," nationally as well as in New York City public schools. For more information about SONYC, please visit [www.stringorchestraofnyc.org](http://www.stringorchestraofnyc.org)