

Notes

the newsletter of

The National Orchestral Association

MUSIC AS SANCTUARY

In 1697, the British poet William Congreve wrote that “music hath charms to soothe a savage breast.” As we embark on another national election year, there will be no shortage of partisanship, hyperbole and inflated rhetoric. It is important in these times to find ways to put our differences aside and bring people of diverse perspectives together through music. Performances can serve as a sanctuary where divisive partisan rhetoric is replaced by music, the universal language.

The National Orchestral Association is committed to helping musical organizations across the country bring our diverse citizenry together. Live musical performances can unite us in our common appreciation of some of humankind’s greatest musical and artistic achievements. Technology has allowed us to listen to virtually any performance at home, but the experience of attending a live musical event is something that a recording cannot provide. There is no substitute for being able to share an exciting performance with one’s fellow human beings, and helps us all to be reminded of our common humanity and aspirations for a more peaceful world. There is no better way to soothe the savage breast.



Maestro Barzin and conducting student, 1976

The National Orchestral Association was one of the first musical organizations to embrace diversity. Our first training orchestra in the 1930s included women and minorities, who were chosen for their ability alone. Musicians auditioned behind a screen to ensure equal opportunities, and Maestro Barzin made a particular effort over the years to nurture conducting students of diverse race, gender and ethnic backgrounds.

ORCHESTRAL MUSIC IN COLORADO

The National Orchestral Association is a proud supporter of The Arapaho Philharmonic, located in Littleton, Colorado. This fine organization has a mission to “engage, enrich, and inspire our community through musical performance, education, and outreach.” Much like the NOA’s original training orchestra, Arapaho employs professional section principals who play alongside accomplished amateur musicians and students, providing leadership and a high level of training for each orchestral section. The organization is helping to bridge the gap to the next generation with an extensive program of children’s concerts and outreach to elementary and middle schools. For more information about Arapahoe, please visit arapahoe-phil.org.

TRAINING IN MICHIGAN

The NOA is proud to support two great Michigan musical institutions. The Sphinx Organization, located in Detroit, continues to provide outstanding musical training to students from underserved communities. Please visit the Sphinx Organization’s website at sphinxmusic.org. The Interlochen Center for the Arts, located near Traverse City, provides a world-renowned summer arts camp (formerly the National Music Camp), as well as the Interlochen Arts Academy boarding high school, Interlochen Public Radio, and the Interlochen Presents performing arts series. For more information, please visit interlochen.org.

PERFORMING ARTS IN UTAH

The performing arts scene in Utah is both vibrant and evolving. Performing arts venues such as the Egyptian Theatre Company (egyptiantheatrecompany.org) and the Park City Institute at the Eccles Center (parkcityinstitute.org) bring a diverse range of performances to local audiences at reasonable prices. NOA Director Judy Jackson notes that these two organizations are among the cornerstones of artistic life in the Park City area, and attract audiences from around the State of Utah. The National Orchestral Association is pleased to be a contributor to these fine institutions.

MUSIC TRAINING IN PENNSYLVANIA

The Settlement Music School has six locations in the South, West and Northeast Philadelphia, Germantown, Willow Grove and Camden, New Jersey, making it 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. Please visit settlementmusic.org.

CONSERVATORY IN WESTCHESTER, NEW YORK

The Music Conservatory of Westchester “provides quality music education for students of all ages, abilities and backgrounds.” Founded in 1929, the Conservatory serves students from pre-school children to seniors, and provides yearly instruction to more than 2,900 students, with an active scholarship program for low income students. Please visit musicconservatory.org.

FLORIDA STATE UNIVERSITY

Florida State University College of Music has offered an extraordinary level of professional education in music for more than 80 years, with programs designed to “create composers, performers, scholars, and teachers.” Some 350 concerts are offered annually, in addition to hosting workshops, conventions and festivals such as the biennial Festival of New Music. For more information, please visit music.fsu.edu

BALLET SCHOOL IN CONNECTICUT

The Ballet School of Stamford provides professional dance training for children and adults. In its new home within Chelsea Piers Connecticut, the School offers over 40 classes per week in ballet, modern, jazz, hip-hop, ballroom, musical theater and ballroom. To learn more about this exciting training ground, please visit balletschoolofstamford.org.

NEW YORK ENSEMBLES FOR UNDERSERVED COMMUNITIES

Concerts in the Heights (“CITH”) 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 add further beauty and interest to this cultural community.” For more information about CITH, please visit concertsintheheights.org.

Since 1999, the String Orchestra of New York City (“SONYC”) has become a critically acclaimed ensemble. Performing without a conductor, SONYC’s members rehearse in a collaborative effort, so that “the flexibility and intimacy of a string quartet are thus fused with the power and scope of an orchestra.” SONYC has “given over 250 performances and close to 100 master classes for children of all ages and backgrounds, nationally as well as in NYC public schools.” For more information, please visit stringorchestraofnyc.org.

INTERNATIONAL PIANO COMPETITION

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 learn more, please visit stecherandhorowitz.org.

CHAMBER MUSIC IN INTIMATE SETTING

Since 1998, the Lyric Chamber Music Society of New York presents “cutting edge-repertoire in an intimate salon setting” to promote a strong personal interaction between audience and performers. Lyric is actively involved as well in bringing music to underserved schools and other education and community engagement programs in the New York area. This organization has featured many rising stars, and has brought together many of the nation’s leading instrumentalists and composers. For more information, please visit www.lyricny.org.

NOA ARCHIVES PROVIDE VALUABLE ASSISTANCE TO SCHOLARS AROUND THE WORLD

Each year the National Orchestral Association receives requests from musicians and educators from around the world for information about NOA performances and recordings. National Orchestral Association Executive Director Eric Kuttner noted that most recently, the NOA received an inquiry from a musicologist representing the Bohuslav Martinu Institute of the Czech Republic who was seeking recordings of NOA performances of Martinu’s Rhapsody Concerto performed by the NOA in 1962, and Martinu’s String Quartet with Orchestra performed in 1943.

The National Orchestral Association is pleased to be able to provide information and recordings from the NOA’s historical performances. The Association’s recorded legacy, the entire catalogue of performances of the National Orchestral Association, was provided to the Rodgers and Hammerstein Archives of Recorded Sound at Lincoln Center some years ago. Scholars and students can hear these recordings at Lincoln Center, or may obtain copies of the recordings from Lincoln Center with the prior written consent of the National Orchestral Association. The NOA is most grateful to the library at Lincoln Center for its invaluable assistance in safeguarding these historic performances, which underscore the diversity of programming and achievements of NOA performers over the years.

PERIOD INSTRUMENT CONCERTS

Ars Antiqua in Chappaqua, New York continues to provide unique concerts of seventeenth and eighteenth-century music played on period instruments. Ars Antiqua is “known for their unique integration of exciting musical performances with musicological research.” For more information, please visit ars-antiqua.org.

SCHIMMEL CONCERT GRAND PIANO DONATED TO LEHMAN COLLEGE CENTER

NOA Director Joanne Hassler has donated a unique piano to the Lehman Center for the Performing Arts. The concert grand piano, manufactured by famed German piano-maker Wilhelm Schimmel, was created as both a work of art and a fine instrument. The piano is one of four, featuring a distinctive contemporary design by noted German artist Otma Alt. The new Lehman Center was created to serve local communities in the Bronx, and is a part of the City University of New York.

