

Season of Change

In normal times, orchestras begin announcing their coming seasons early in the new year. Then, in the fall, the seasons begin. This is not a normal year.

We are six months into a pandemic that has upended economies and caused tragic loss of life. To keep the inspiration of live classical music going at a difficult time when everything is in constant flux, orchestras are adapting as seldom before. “Reimagined” orchestra seasons are the new normal. Orchestras that had announced their full seasons before the pandemic alerted subscribers that they would be revising their seasons—and then revised the revised seasons three and four times, as health guidance changed. A city or state that had managed to contain the virus may experience a new outbreak, while an area that was a virus hot-spot could improve enough to present small, socially distanced concerts—requiring extraordinarily rapid event-planning decisions by orchestras.

With music-lovers eager to hear live music and musicians anxious to perform for audiences, orchestras are coming up with concert solutions—quickly, and with health and safety considerations paramount. Many recent presentations have featured smaller ensembles performing outdoors during the warmer weather: everywhere from parks to sports stadiums, front porches, backyards, sidewalks, parking lots, trucks, and airports. A lesser number of performances is happening indoors, performed for very reduced audiences. Meanwhile, streamed performances have become the most common way to experience a live performance, and there are podcasts, TV shows, and other virtual offerings galore. The following pages give an overview of how orchestras are adapting to the unprecedented.

Honk to Applaud: Drive-In Concerts

Inside your own car is one of the safer places to be during a pandemic, and drive-in concerts suddenly make sense. In Colorado, the **Fort Collins Symphony** and Music Director Wes Kenney performed several concerts this summer at the Holiday Twin Drive-In; the concerts were followed by screenings of films such as *Ghostbusters*, *Goldf-*



Courtesy Mainly Mozart

On July 11, California's Mainly Mozart festival launched its drive-in concert series at the Del Mar Fairgrounds, with the audience listening from cars.

nger, and *Harry Potter & the Goblet of Fire*. In San Diego, the **Mainly Mozart Festival's** well-attended drive-in chamber concerts, which began in July, feature small ensembles of musicians from the Los Angeles Philharmonic and the San Diego Symphony led by those ensembles' concertmasters, Martin Chalifour and Jeff Thayer. In August and

MUSICAL CHAIRS

MARIN ALSOP has been named inaugural music director of Maryland's National Orchestral Institute and Festival.

Ohio's Firelands Symphony Orchestra has named **TRICIA APPEGATE** executive director.

ANKUSH KUMAR BAHL has been selected as music director of the Omaha Symphony.



Bahl

The Vermont Symphony Orchestra has named **ELISE BRUNELLE** executive director.

The Illinois Symphony Youth Orchestras (formerly the Sangamon Valley Youth Symphony) has appointed **LOGAN CAMPBELL** conductor; Campbell has also been named assistant conductor of the Illinois Symphony Orchestra.

The Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra has hired director/designer **JAMES DARRAH** as creative director of digital content. **DERRICK SPIVA JR.**, the orchestra's artist-educator/composer, has been promoted to artistic advisor.

New Music USA has named composer **REENA ESMAIL** and business executive **JOE WALKER** as co-chairs of its board of directors.

Crossover musician and vocalist **RHIANNON GIDDENS** has been appointed artistic director of Silkroad, the performance, education, and social-justice organization founded by Yo-Yo Ma.

STEPHANIE GRIFFIN, principal viola of New Jersey's Princeton Symphony Orchestra, has been named executive director of Associated Chamber Music Players.

California's Ojai Music Festival has named **ARA GUZELIMIAN** as artistic and executive director, adding the executive director responsibilities to his previously announced appointment as artistic director. In addition, **GINA GUTIERREZ** will become the festival's managing director.

SCOTT HARRISON has been selected as the Louisiana Philharmonic Orchestra's interim executive director and senior strategic facilitator.

JEFFREY P. HAYDON has been named president and CEO of the Ravinia Festival in Highland Park, Illinois.

PETER HUSSELL has been selected as chief development officer at the Cleveland Institute of Music.

The Kansas City Symphony in Missouri has appointed **JOSH JONES** as principal percussion.



Jones

EMMA KAIL has been named executive director of the Grand Teton Music Festival in Wyoming.

The Louisville Orchestra in Kentucky has appointed **LEE KIRKWOOD** chair of its board of directors.

Eric Thomas



The Montreal Symphony Orchestra performs in a parking lot at Montreal-Pierre Elliott Trudeau International Airport, guest conducted by Jacques Lacombe, on August 5, 2020.

arm's length of their vehicles. In September, the **Seattle Symphony's** drive-in concert at Marymoor Park featured a previously filmed concert at Benaroya Hall. Canada's **Montreal Symphony** performed at the Montreal-Pierre Elliott Trudeau International Airport for an audience of 520 cars—and their occupants—in August.

Moveable Stages

If audiences can't come to concerts, here's one solution: bring the concerts to audiences. For eight weeks beginning in late August, the **New York Philharmonic** took a bright red Ford F-250 pickup truck, dubbed it NY Phil Bandwagon, and made the rounds of New York City's boroughs, performing short chamber concerts, accompanied by

countertenor and host Anthony

Roth Costanzo, who came up with the idea for the performances. Colorado's **Bravo! Vail** festival—which in typical years hosts a summer season that features the New York Philharmonic, Dallas Symphony Orchestra, and Philadelphia Orchestra, and more—created the Music Box, a small stage set in a custom-built trailer. The Music Box

brought dozens of concerts to neighborhoods, senior centers, day camps, and even to people's homes. In Michigan, the **Grand Rapids Symphony** sold tickets to 30-minute private concerts called "Sidewalk Serenades," performed in the driveways of homes. The **St. Louis Symphony Orchestra** offered "On the Go" outdoor chamber music performances

for groups of 50 or less at parks, senior centers, and libraries, plus performances for individuals or families outside their homes. In September, cellists and brass musicians from the **Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra** made their debut on the Pittsburgh Ballet Theatre's new, mobile outdoor stage in the ballet's parking lot for an audience of about 50 people. PSO musicians also performed at City Theatre's outdoor space at Hazelwood Green. All concerts require masks, social distancing, and related health protocols.

RICHARD LONSDORF has been named interim executive director of New Century Chamber Orchestra in San Francisco.

Pennsylvania's Lancaster Symphony Orchestra has appointed **GUY McINTOSH** executive director.

The Symphony of Northwest Arkansas has named **D. RILEY NICHOLSON** executive director.

KRISTINE PACHECO-BERNT has been named director of music education at California's Santa Barbara Symphony.

The Elgin Symphony Orchestra in Illinois has named **MATTHEW SHEPPARD** as education conductor. Sheppard will retain his post as artistic director of the Elgin Youth Symphony Orchestra.

CECE SMITH has been elected chairman of the Dallas Symphony Association.

The Indianapolis Chamber Orchestra has named **DANA STONE** as executive director.

KAREN STURGES has selected as the Los Angeles Philharmonic's chief financial officer.

The Midland-Odesa Symphony and Choral in Texas has appointed **ETHAN WILLS** interim executive director.

EDWARD YIM has stepped down as president and CEO of the American Composers Orchestra to become chief content officer of WQXR, New York Public Radio's classical music station.



Stone

Erin Baiano



Left to right: At Bargemusic in Brooklyn, New York Philharmonic musicians Kim Laskowski (bassoon), Pedro Giraudo (bass), and Robert Botti (oboe) join countertenor/host Anthony Roth Costanzo during the Philharmonic's NY Phil Bandwagon concerts throughout New York City's five boroughs.



Four cellists from the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra prepare to perform on a mobile stage in the parking lot of Pittsburgh Ballet Theatre headquarters, for an audience limited to about 50 people.

Courtesy PSO

Park It

Many orchestra concerts took place in parks this summer. In late September, string musicians from the **Waterbury Symphony Orchestra** performed a sold-out concert at Hollow Park in Woodbury, Connecticut, representing the ensemble's first live concert since the pandemic began in March. The performance, featuring Vivaldi's *Four Seasons*, led by Ryan Tani and including violin soloist Sirena Huang, was later streamed for free for those who could not attend the in-person event. In September, ensembles from



Waterbury Symphony Orchestra string musicians perform at Hollow Park in Woodbury, Connecticut, September 2020.

Kentucky's **Owensboro Symphony Orchestra** performed free in Smothers Park along Owensboro's riverfront, for an evening of "Symphony Stroll" chamber music. This season, the **El Paso Symphony Orchestra's** regular venue, the Plaza Theatre, is closed, and the orchestra is performing at various locations throughout the city, including the Teachers Federal Credit Union grounds, Madeline Park, and Eastwood "Album" Park. The **Dayton Philharmonic** joined the Dayton Opera and Dayton Ballet for a streamed event on September 12 entitled "A Celebration from Carillon Historical Park," a 65-acre open-air museum that



Musicians from Kentucky's Owensboro Symphony Orchestra perform in Smothers Park, along Owensboro's riverfront.

chronicles Dayton's history. Musicians performed Dvořák, Gabrieli, Barber, and more in the James F. Dicke Family Transportation Center and the Eichelberger Pavilion overlooking park grounds. In August and September, Ohio's **ProMusica Chamber Orchestra** performed seven concerts at outdoor sites including Headley Park in Gahanna and Coffman Park in Dublin, Ohio. Virginia's **Richmond Symphony** opened its season in September with two open-air concerts, one at Richmond's one-day Maymont Big Tent Festival, the other at Pocahontas State Park in Chesterfield. In September, the **Rockford Symphony** returned to live performance with a concert at Sinnissippi Park in Rockford, Illinois. In Montana, **Missoula Symphony Orchestra** musicians headed to a ranch to perform and record chamber music concerts that will be streamed during the 2020-21 season. Composer and sound designer Ellen Reid wrote *SOUNDWALK*, a GPS-enabled work of public art, which launched in September in New York City's Central Park and Saratoga Performing Arts Center in upstate New York. Visitors can listen to Reid's music via an app anywhere in the parks, performed

by musicians of the New York Philharmonic and the Young People's Chorus of New York City, plus the jazz ensemble Poole and the Gang and Reid's *SOUNDWALK* Ensemble.

Make Our Garden Grow

With most orchestral touring on hiatus due to Covid-19, tour organizer **Classical Movements** looked closer to home for a suitable performance venue, and found one in its backyard: the garden outside its offices in Alexandria, Virginia. In July, Classical Movements President Neeta Helms launched "Sounds of Hope and Harmony," a series of one-hour outdoor chamber concerts featuring musicians from the Alexandria Symphony Orchestra and National Symphony Orchestra, among others, in a wide range of music. In August the series included "Sweet Songs of Sorrow and Joy," which commemorated the 1963 March on Washington with freedom songs, spirituals, gospel, and music by Black composers, in collaboration with Eric Conway, choir conductor at Morgan State University, and the Coalition for African Americans in the Performing Arts. Other concerts featured vocalists as well as string, brass, and percussion musicians.

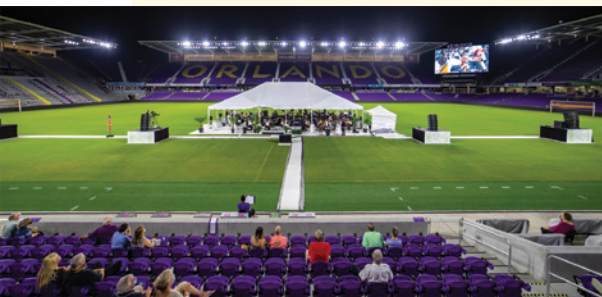
A quintet from the Alexandria Symphony Orchestra performs in Classical Movements' June 20 "Sounds of Hope and Harmony" concert, which also featured musicians from the National Symphony Orchestra, New Orchestra of Washington, and Fairfax Symphony Orchestra.



Classical Movements

Stadiums and Jumbotrons

Because sports stadiums have so much space and so many seats—and many of them are unused due to the pandemic—they have become attractive options for socially distanced orchestra performances. In early September, Oklahoma's **Tulsa Symphony Orchestra** performed an all-Beethoven concert at the 7,833-seat ONEOK



Field—home of the Tulsa Drillers baseball team—before an audience of 1,641 people, all wearing masks and socially distanced. The orchestra normally performs at Tulsa Performing Arts Center, in which the largest space, Chapman Hall, has 2,365 seats. Florida's **Orlando Philharmonic** performed its Sep-

The Orlando Philharmonic, Music Director Eric Jacobsen, and violinist Simone Porter perform at Exploria Stadium on September 26, 2020.

Orchestra performed Beethoven's "Ode to Joy" all around Greater Cleveland this summer, including at Progressive Field, home of the Cleveland Indians of Major League Baseball.



Cleveland Orchestra horn players perform Beethoven at Progressive Field, July 30, 2020.

Make a Public Service Video

In August, musicians from the **Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra** performed "Praeludium" from Grieg's *Holberg Suite* for a 30-second #MaskUp video encouraging people to wear masks. The Pittsburgh Symphony produced the public service announcement, which included the Carnegie Museum of Art, City Theatre, Pittsburgh Ballet Theatre, Pittsburgh Opera, STAYCEE PEARL dance project, and the Andy Warhol Museum. The music was recorded at a recent Pittsburgh Symphony concert at Hartwood Acres, a park about ten miles from downtown Pittsburgh. In the video, members of Pittsburgh's arts and culture community wear masks while playing music, dancing, creating visual art, singing, and exploring museums. The video also features unusual masked contributors, such as paintings at the Frick Pittsburgh and Dippy the Dinosaur at Carnegie Museum of Natural History. Pittsburgh Symphony President and CEO Melia Tourangeau said, "We hope that this video message will provide some inspiration to the community to keep facing this pandemic together."



Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra musicians perform in a new #MaskUp video made as a public service announcement.

If Music Be the Food of Love...

In August, as part of the **Eugene Symphony's** new SymphonyGO! initiative, musicians Lisa McWhorter (assistant concertmaster), Stephen Chong (first violin), Lauren Elledge (viola), and Dale Bradley (cello) performed for diners at outdoor restaurants from 6 to 8 p.m. Dubbed "Strings at the Streatory," the free series at Broadway Streatory was sponsored by the city of Eugene and presented in partnership with the Eugene Symphony and the Downtown Eugene Merchants association. Social distancing protocols were in place, including limiting groups to ten people or fewer, maintaining a minimum of six feet between groups, and wearing masks when not eating or drinking and when six feet of distance is not possible. The Eugene Symphony's SymphonyGO! program provides virtual and in-person education and community engagement offerings to students and area residents, with all in-person activities following health and safety protocols.

Eugene Symphony Assistant Concertmaster Lisa McWhorter performs for outdoor diners in downtown Eugene, Oregon, August 22, 2020.

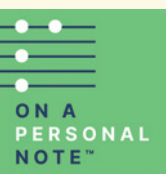


Welcome Oiseaux Exotiques

The **Nashville Symphony's** Schermerhorn Symphony Center may be closed to performances until July 2021, but the thousands of migrating birds that flocked to the neighborhood this summer didn't know that. The purple martins—rarely seen in North American cities—chose to roost in trees near the concert hall's plaza before heading south for the winter, and attracted birders from far and wide. Unfortunately, because there were so many birds—about 150,000 of them—there was concern they could damage the limestone exterior of the concert hall and the plaza. The orchestra hired a company to move the birds, but it discovered via the Tennessee Ornithological Society that the purple martin is protected by the Migratory Bird Treaty Act. The organizations ended up working together to let the birds remain a bit longer, and set up a fund-raising campaign to help the orchestra with cleanup costs—raising a total of \$26,197, with \$21,197 from the public and an additional \$5,000 from the Tennessee Wildlife Federation and the Nature Conservancy in Tennessee. “We are profoundly thankful to Tennessee Wildlife Federation, as well as to The Nature Conservancy and other conservation groups, for stepping in and helping raise funds to help us take care of the Schermerhorn,” said Alan D. Valentine, president and CEO of the Nashville Symphony. “We are once again awed by the community's response in the face of so many challenges we are all facing at the moment.”

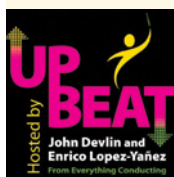


The plaza in front of Nashville Symphony's Schermerhorn Symphony Center became a temporary roosting site for 150,000 purple martins, which flocked there this summer before migrating south for the winter.



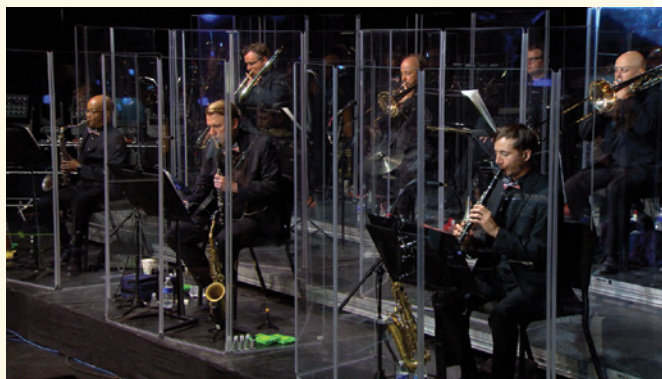
Make a Podcast

The pandemic is amplifying trends that were already underway before the pandemic began, and that's certainly true for podcasts: there is a whole slew of new ones out there. The **Cleveland Orchestra** launched its “On a Personal Note” podcast in the spring with an episode entitled “The Sound of Crisis,” in which Music Director Franz Welser-Möst spoke about his emotions conducting the orchestra one last time before the pandemic silenced Severance Hall. In other episodes, Welser-Möst talks about an automobile accident that sparked a lifelong affinity for Schubert; Principal Percussion Marc Damoulakis speaks about feeling rhythm from an early age and what it means to keep time for the orchestra; and violinist Katherine Bormann talks about her love for Strauss's *Rosenkavalier* Suite. **Dallas Symphony Orchestra** violinist Sarah Kienle started a podcast called “On the Record,” in which she speaks with DSO musicians about music. The **Handel and Haydn Society** has a podcast called “Tuning In,” which includes interviews with musicians and staff about the music they love. American conductors Ankush Kumar Bahl, John Devlin, Anna Edwards, and Enrico Lopez-Yañez have launched their “UpBeat” podcast; one of the initial episodes features Lopez-Yañez and Devlin's conversation with Michael Ellis Ingram, who speaks about race and his experiences as a Black conductor in Germany and the U.S. The **Vancouver Symphony Orchestra** in Washington State has been posting weekly podcasts featuring guest-artist interviews and excerpts of past performances. The **New York Philharmonic's** five-part “The 5th” podcast exploring Beethoven's Fifth Symphony was included as part of the “Switched On Pop” podcasts, in which musicologist Nate Sloan and music journalist Charlie Harding explore what makes pop songs catchy.



Put Up Plexiglass

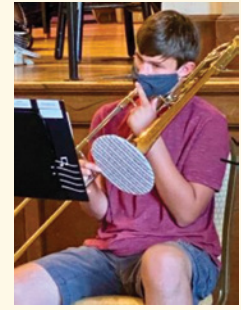
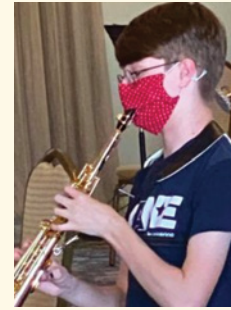
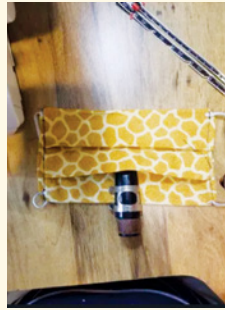
Apart from face masks, few things sum up “performing music during a pandemic” more than plexiglass barriers between musicians. The structures are being deployed by orchestras everywhere, and they are necessary for wind and brass musicians to perform, helping to prevent the air flow from their instruments from potentially spreading the virus to other musicians. For their Independence Day livestream, **Philly Pops** musicians played separated by plexiglass screens at The Met Philadelphia, a large space with room for socially distanced musicians. Music Director David Charles Abell led the concert, as the orchestra experiments with new musician configurations during the pandemic. For more on how pops orchestras are adapting during the pandemic, see article elsewhere in this issue.



Philly Pops wind and brass musicians, separated by plexiglass barriers, perform at the Met Philadelphia concert venue, July 3.

Make Masks for Musicians

In Texas, Jean Hall, the executive director of the **Wichita Falls Youth Symphony Orchestra**, was searching for a way for musicians in her organization's four ensembles to rehearse and perform safely this fall. For string and percussion musicians, it's not difficult to play while wearing a face mask, but things are more complicated for wind and brass players. Hall, who plays French horn and is an amateur seamstress, had already been making masks to donate to the community during the summer, and her sister is a professional seamstress who plays the clarinet. The two of them designed "Play It Safe" cotton masks with openings for mouthpieces for woodwind and brass musicians. The woodwind mask (above, shown with clarinet mouthpiece) features a horizontal opening; the brass version has a center opening. Wind and brass musicians also use bell covers sewn with double-layer cotton fabric and secured with adjustable drawstring. The youth orchestra's first concert of the season is planned for November.



A saxophonist and trombonist in the Wichita Falls Youth Symphony Orchestra with their new "Play It Safe" masks.

Spread Out

To stay healthy during the pandemic, musicians are rehearsing and performing far apart. And even "sold-out" performances can look sparse, as orchestras limit audience size to keep everyone safe. This summer, **Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts**



(right) commissioned Anthony Barfield to compose a work paying tribute to New York City and its people. The September 1 virtual premiere of Barfield's *Invictus* featured fifteen brass players from across Lincoln Center's campus—the MET Orchestra Musicians, New York Philharmonic, Juilliard School, Jazz at Lincoln Center, New York City Ballet Orchestra, and Mostly Mozart Festival Orchestra—and is said to be the first time musicians from all those organizations performed together. Barfield conducted the socially distanced performance, which includes elements of classical, gospel, jazz, and hip hop, and is available on demand at [LincolnCenter.org/Invictus](https://lincolncenter.org/Invictus). **Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra** (above right) musicians began testing a new "Covid-style" rehearsal set-up at Music Hall with Music Director Louis Langrée in August. The **Colorado Symphony** performed a sold-out concert at Red Rocks Amphitheatre in Morrison, Colorado, on July 28. Small ensembles of **Seattle Symphony** musicians performed in an empty Benaroya Hall in a concert for the orchestra's streaming Seattle Symphony Live site.

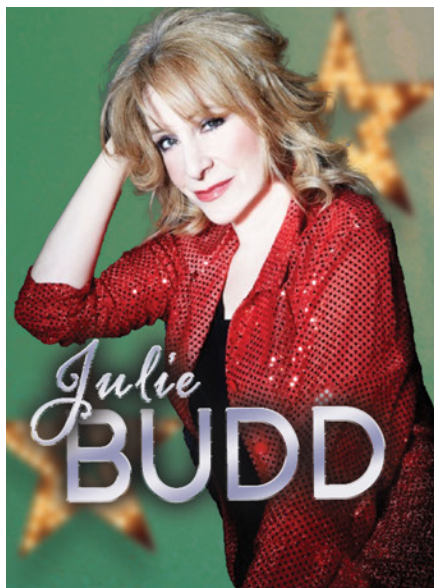


Convert the Stage into a TV Studio

In August, the **Los Angeles Philharmonic** headed to the Hollywood Bowl to film a new series of streamed concerts dubbed Sound/Stage. The Bowl's stage is large enough to accommodate the recording sessions, filmed outdoors while adhering to health guidelines. Episodes began streaming in late September, with many presentations featuring programs from the LA Phil's *Power to the People!* festival—curated by Herbie Hancock, the orchestra's creative chair for jazz—that had been cut short when the pandemic hit. The *Power to the People* programs amplify voices of current and historical Black composers, among them Jessie Montgomery, William Grant Still, and Florence Price. In early fall, the **Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra** announced that it will create a digital studio at Wilhard & Naud, a film studio and multidisciplinary arts campus in downtown Los Angeles; the orchestra has hired director/designer James Darrah as its new creative director of digital content to oversee media featuring the orchestra and Los Angeles-based artists and filmmakers.



Los Angeles Philharmonic musicians and Music Director Gustavo Dudamel rehearse at the Hollywood Bowl for Sound/Stage, the orchestra's new streamed series.



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League Appoints Marlah Bonner-McDuffie as Vice President, Development

Marlah Bonner-McDuffie has been appointed vice president of development at the League of American Orchestras. Bonner-McDuffie will serve as the League's lead fundraiser, shape the strategies for individual giving, build relationships with major institutional funders, manage the fundraising staff, and partner with the Board of Directors' Development Committee chair to secure Board engagement. A fundraising professional with a demonstrated track record of securing principal and major gifts at a wide range of organizations, Bonner-McDuffie has extensive experience leading philanthropy, strategic planning, marketing, and business development in the corporate and nonprofit sectors. She most recently served as senior director of external affairs for the Philadelphia School Partnership, supporting its mission of improving outcomes and access for underserved K-12 students in Philadelphia. Prior to PSP, Bonner-McDuffie was associate dean of advancement for the College of Media for the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. Bonner-McDuffie also served in fundraising and leadership roles at the University of Illinois and the University of Delaware. She previously worked in the corporate sector in the consumer brands and pharmaceutical industries, and founded a consulting firm specializing in marketing, brand management, public relations, research, event management, and donor relations. Bonner-McDuffie received a B.S. in business administration from Pennsylvania State University's Mary Jean and Frank P. Smeal College of Business Administration and an M.B.A. from Temple University's Fox School of Business and Management.



Marlah Bonner-McDuffie

Musician and COVID-19 Researcher

It's not every day you hear about a professional orchestra musician who also is a medical doctor and post-doc researcher in immunology and virology. The San Francisco Symphony's newly hired Associate Principal Horn, Mark Almond, holds a PhD in immunology and virology from Imperial College, London. With performance schedules upended by the pandemic, Almond is taking the opportunity to research Covid-19 as a post-doctoral research scholar at the University of California San Francisco. In an interview with *San Francisco Classical Voice*, Almond said, "I'm really looking forward to working with the Symphony when the pandemic allows, but in the meantime it's great to be ... doing cutting-edge Covid research."



SymphonySpot: Online Hub

In the spring, the League of American Orchestras launched *Symphony Spot*, an online hub of livestreams, videos, and digital learning resources from members and friends of the League across the classical music field. *Symphony Spot* features content from hundreds of orchestras, venues, and soloists, with new additions daily. The site comprises a Performance Directory and Education Directory. If your orchestra has launched a virtual project you'd like to share at *SymphonySpot*, visit symphonyspot.org, where there's a simple form you can fill out to have your organization's online offerings included.

Studying COVID-19 Aerosol Rates of Transmission for Instruments

Initial findings from two studies of aerosol rates and accumulation of COVID-19 by wind instruments and vocalists have been released. In August, research being conducted at the University of Colorado and the University of Maryland, commissioned by a coalition of performing arts organizations including the League of American Orchestras, offered preliminary guidance on in-person rehearsals while mitigating risks associated with COVID-19. While the findings of this study have yet to be validated, results explore aerosol flow and emissions for clarinet, oboe, flute, trumpet, horn, low brass, and voice; measure different mitigation techniques; provide initial modeling of COVID-19 particle concentrations in indoor and outdoor settings; and offer general considerations for safer rehearsal practices. Final results of this study will be available in December. October saw the release of a study of exhaled aerosols conducted by Rice University, musicians from Rice's Shepherd School of Music, and the Houston Symphony. The study used a high-speed camera to track exhaled air released by singers and musicians who play wind instruments. The Houston researchers state that these results have not been peer-reviewed, but that findings indicate the importance of air movement, masks, and social distancing.

Sight Specific

Violinist and conductor Scott Yoo's PBS television series had begun airing before the pandemic started. But with everyone spending more time at home, there couldn't be a better escape than the second season of *Now Hear This*, Yoo's classical-music travelogue/documentary. In normal times, Yoo balances his duties as chief conductor of the Mexico City Philharmonic, music director of California's Festival Mozaic, and conductor at the Colorado College Summer Music Festival in Colorado Springs. Now he's busy hosting *Now Hear This*, which launched in 2019 on PBS's *Great Performances*. In each episode, Yoo travels to concert halls and architectural landmarks to explore music from places like Italy, France, Germany, Spain, and Morocco. In the second season's "Haydn: King of Strings" episode, set in Austria, Yoo investigates the composer's "Emperor" Quartet, and he and violinist and chamber-music expert Geoff Nuttall discuss how Haydn created the string quartet form. In "Becoming Mozart," partly filmed during the pandemic, Yoo and pianist Stewart Goodyear improvise a Mozart cadenza and delve into the art of performing while conducting. A third season focusing on American music is planned.



In his PBS series *Now Hear This*, violinist Scott Yoo (second from left) explores classical music; in photo, he performs a Haydn string quartet in Austria.

Where's that Lost Elephant?



He's been laying low during the lockdown. Previously seen in Philadelphia, Atlanta, Singapore, Shanghai. Zookeeper Dan Kamin and narrator Susan Chapek are determined to track him down, even if it means visiting *every orchestra in the world!*

Catch the latest updates at
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Violin Vigils for Elijah McClain

This summer, musicians from Colorado to Virginia participated in vigils in memory of Elijah McClain, a Black massage therapist and violinist who was killed by police in Aurora, Colorado in 2019. Violinists, violists, cellists, and other string musicians performed at what were dubbed “violin vigils,” beginning in late June with an event in Aurora, Colorado. In Boston, approximately 30 string musicians gathered at First Baptist Church in Jamaica Plain to perform “Lift Every Voice and Sing,” “Amazing Grace,” and other music. In Cincinnati, professional and amateur musicians joined for a violin vigil for McClain in Washington Park; the Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra was among the event’s organizers. Philadelphia Orchestra cellist John Koen was joined by string musicians for candlelight vigils for McClain and Mouhamed Cisse, an eighteen-year-old Philadelphia cellist slain by an unknown assailant on June 1. And in Richmond, Virginia, musicians met at the Robert E. Lee monument to perform a violin vigil honoring McClain. Jennifer Arnold, director of artistic planning and operations at the Richmond Symphony Orchestra, helped organize the event with Sara Jobin, a conductor and RSO supporter. The performance included George Walker’s *Lyric for Strings*, conducted by Naima Burrs.



Jennifer Arnold, director of artistic planning and operations at the Richmond Symphony Orchestra, performs with local musicians during a violin vigil for Elijah McClain at Richmond’s Robert E. Lee statue.

In Memoriam: Conductor Randall Craig Fleischer, 61

On August 19, Randall Craig Fleischer, music director of the Anchorage Symphony Orchestra in Alaska, the Youngstown Symphony Orchestra in Ohio, and the Hudson Valley Philharmonic in Poughkeepsie, New York, died unexpectedly at his home in Los Angeles. The cause of death has not been reported. Fleischer was 61. In addition to his work as a conductor, Fleischer composed orchestral works and created *Rocktopia*, a Broadway show featuring classical and rock music performed by an



Randall Craig Fleischer

orchestra, vocalists, and rock band. He held music degrees from Oberlin Conservatory of Music and Indiana University School of Music; had studied with Leonard Bernstein as a conducting fellow at Tanglewood; and conducted widely. The Anchorage Symphony hosted a virtual memorial for Fleischer on September 29, and Youngstown Symphony musicians honored him with an impromptu outdoor concert in October. The Hudson Valley Philharmonic plans an online tribute in mid-October. Fleischer leaves behind his wife, Heidi Joyce, a daughter, and two brothers. A fund for underprivileged young musicians is being established in his honor at his three orchestras.



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Ruth Bader
Ginsburg,
March 15, 1933—
September 18,
2020

With the death of Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg in September, the classical-music world lost one of its most ardent fans. Ginsburg said her love of opera began at age eleven, when she saw Ponchielli's *La Gioconda*, and that she would have preferred to be a singer—if she had the musical talent. Ginsburg and fellow Supreme Court Justice and op-



Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg in the non-singing role of the Duchess of Krakenthorp in Donizetti's *The Daughter of the Regiment*, with tenor Lawrence Brownlee (as Tonio), at the Washington National Opera in 2016.

era-lover Antonin Scalia—whose judicial views frequently opposed Ginsburg's—formed an unlikely bond based on their mutual love for the art form. Composer Derrick Wang even wrote *Scalia/Ginsburg*, an opera based on that friendship, which premiered at the Castleton Festival in Virginia in 2015 and was later performed at the Glimmerglass Festival and several U.S. opera companies. Her love of music was passed on to her son, James, who in 1989 founded the classical music label Cedille Records. Her musical legacy lives on in the label's 2018 recording *Notorious RBG in Song*, an album of world premieres saluting Ruth Bader Ginsburg's life and work. In addition to her son, Ginsburg is survived by a daughter, Jane, and four grandchildren.



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