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Simon Woods
Good afternoon, everybody. I'm Simon Woods. I'm president and CEO of the League of American Orchestras in my third week here. I am very happy to welcome you all today for our webinar, "The New Ecosystem for Community-Centered Commitments". It's very meaningful to me on a personal basis that introducing this—this particular topic of community-centered action—is, as it happens, my first public event just a few weeks into my leadership role here at the League. Throughout all my time working for and running orchestras over the last twenty–twenty-five years, the work around communities has been not only a central concern, but also a true passion; I couldn't believe in it more strongly.

I've always felt that the role of orchestras in creating healthy communities is one of the most powerful things we do in our work. I suppose what's become particularly interesting to me is the way that our practice has evolved over the last twenty years, we've really grown out of the use of that word "outreach" that I think we all were very familiar with twenty-five years ago when I first joined the field here in the US. We put that behind us, and we live and breathe what it means to engage and what it means to activate—and how we can create work with and by communities, not just *for* them.

Right now, in this extraordinary year, we have many of our activities on hiatus; it's also a year when we're not only dealing with huge external challenges, but we're also thinking with new energy and intensity around issues of equity, anti-racism—and we're dealing with tremendous suffering across our field and across the country. It seems to all of us at the League that this is a this is a great time to ask ourselves the big questions. There's a moment to pause, to reflect and think about how we come back with renewed vigor to communities that are going to need the inspiration and the grounding of music-making more desperately than ever before.

We hope that today's conversation will just be the beginning of a renewed exploration of this topic, and will prompt—for every single person on this webinar today—will prompt you to think about what meaningful and important action you can take, both locally in your own community, but also collectively together. I think this is all also a moment for us as a community to join hands and think about how we can make the communities around us the most healthy.

I want to say a few thank-yous: This webinar is made possible by generous grants from American Express, the Howard Gilman Foundation, the National Endowment for the Arts, and the Wallace Foundation; and is supported in part by public funds from the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs, in partnership with the City Council.

A few technical notes. If you have questions, please ask them in the Q&A box. The chat function will not be open for this webinar, but the Q&A box *will* be, and our moderators will be keeping an eye on that; we'll try to pull your questions forward. Also, just want to let you know that everybody who's registered is going to receive an email with the recording and transcripts of the webinar shortly after it's concluded.

Finally, please complete the evaluation. It really matters to us what you thought of this so that we can go on providing better and better content for you, especially at a time when we know everybody in the field is looking for things that really make a difference to their working lives. We need to hear from you so we can we can do our best for you.

Time to introduce our guides for the seminar: Nobody better than Eric Booth and Lecolion Washington.

Eric, who by the way, I've worked with on and off for more than twenty years now (going back to work in the late 1990s in in Philadelphia) Eric's an Arts Learning Consultant and founder of the International Teaching Artist Conferences and Collaborative. He's had a career as a Broadway actor, a businessman, he's the author of seven books, the most recent being *Playing for Their Lives* and *Tending the Perennials*. He's been a faculty member of Juilliard, Tanglewood, the Kennedy Center, and Lincoln Center Education—where he co-founded their Teaching Artists Development Labs.

Lecolion Washington is executive director of the Community Music Center of Boston; he's also had a deep musical career as a bassoonist, music professor, and arts administrator. Lecolion was co-founder and Executive Director of the PRIZM Ensemble in Memphis from 2009 to 2017, and he was the founder of the PRIZM International Chamber Music Festival. As an orchestral musician, he has performed as guest principal and co-principal bassoon, with orchestras such as Orpheus Chamber Orchestra and the Sphinx Symphony Orchestra.

We are tremendously grateful to have the two of you to guide us through this absolutely vital and inspirational topic. We're gonna let you introduce our fantastic panel, so Eric and Lecolion, over to you. Thanks a lot, everybody. Enjoy the webinar.

Eric Booth
Thank you, Simon, for getting us started, and thank you, everybody, for joining us. We're going to have a fast-paced hour and a half. Special thanks to the League for offering this topic after your highly successful virtual conference where you've discovered how to amplify the participation in learning through the League, to offer this focus for your first ongoing series of conversations of delving into the crucial topics together. It's really quite a testament to the significance that the League places on this issue of orchestral communities, responding to the triple or quadruple crises that we all find ourselves in. I've been touched that, repeatedly, they refer to this crisis time as an "opportunity time", in which we may be able to accelerate the pace of change for the relationship between orchestras and community ecosystems.

We have seven panelists with us that have seven different perspectives on this topic, I think of them as experts in the etymological sense of the word—which is someone who is adept at experiencing. We

have seven different perceptive invitations to look at the experience of this time, and their visions for what it holds for the future.

To let you know a little bit about how this time will run, we're gonna start with a couple of quick polls to get a sense of who's with us; we're then going to have a speed round of introductions by our panelists; and then we're going to have a series of questions along the way. I apologize in advance that we are urging brevity for topics that deserve discussion at great length—because this is just a beginning conversation, a threshold conversation, any one of the facets of which could lead to an hour and a half of deeper investigation. Apologies in advance that we're moving quickly, and that we'll skim across topics that really want an in-depth exploration; but all of us understand this is a door-opening conversation. If you have questions, Lecolion and I will keep an eye on the Q&A box, which is down there at the bottom of your screen for those who aren't familiar with using it. And we will have some time at the end of our session to take those questions that have been upvoted, the ones that you've gone through and said, "oh, that's important to me, too." We'll take those first. So let me hand it over to Lecolion. To give us a little rounding out of our purpose here.

Lecolion Washington
Thank you, Eric. Welcome, everyone. And again, thanks again to the League for inviting us to be part of this conversation.

One of the things that I wanted to begin with was just to frame a little bit of the way that we're thinking about this particular conversation, and the one of the frameworks I want us to think about is something called the idea of competing truths. In the idea of competing truths, it might look something like for example, "we're all the same." We're all like a lot of people and different from a lot of people, we're all unique. In that framing, all of those things are true, but they all compete with each other. We're thinking about the conversation today as it relates to orchestras and community engagement and the work that's happening in communities, the relationship between orchestras and community, there are going to be some of these competing truths.

For example: I've spent my entire career as a classical bassoonist. I performed in the great concert halls of the world, I performed with some of the great musicians in the world. That's a truth. I also recognize that many of the concert halls that I performed in, they were segregated. My parents wouldn't have been able to see me perform in those concert halls when they were children. That was a competing truth in my relationship with this beautiful art form that I loved and that I committed my life to. I met my wife through that art form. And so that's just something as we're thinking about the idea of competing truths, let's try to acknowledge that as a thing. As we're thinking forward about the centerpieces of our conversation, we're thinking about this idea of orchestras and communities.

I say oftentimes, that "community" is a word that people tend to use to describe places they never visit. If I've never been there, that's what I call the community. And that's oftentimes how some people have related and—for some people's perspective on orchestras—the way that they have related with community.

We're thinking about this musical excellence that comes from the orchestral space, a space that I committed my life to as well; also thinking about during this time, where there's these challenges, there are three-hundred and thirty million people that are experiencing collective trauma. We have this period of racial unrest that we must all acknowledge and appreciate. How do we take this as an opportunity to rethink what that word "community" means? What does it mean to be a community partner? Okay, Eric?

Eric
Beautiful. Let's go to our polls. David, if you could bring up poll number one? And participants, if you can be ready to post your votes, we're all getting ready for some voting. Let's get warmed up.

"What is your job title? Who's in the room?" And for those who haven't done a poll before you just strike your cursor right next to the nearest answer that most closely describes your role. And we'll give you just another five seconds. David, what's the results? Who's in the room?

It's our education, community relations people, no surprise there. We've got Executive Directors, thank you for being here. God, love the teaching artists. We've got other administrators. We have a lonely volunteer. We love you. Super.

Let's go to our second poll. How clear a sense do you have today of what music education and community partnerships in the post-COVID ecosystem will look like? Is it getting a sense of how our vision of the future is emerging?

Is everybody on the panel? Placing your bets? I'm not so sure on this one, five more seconds. And if you can't decide, you're not clear. And let's see those results. David.

A few Inklings. Yeah, look, oh, man, we're kind of unclear. A little bit of a sense, but mostly just beginning to get a sense. I mean, that's a perfect time for this conversation. If in fact, we're just beginning to get a feel for what it may be like after this liminal time, what a perfect time to hear from people who are looking forward, seeing what it may be like.

Lecolion
I'd love to have a conversation with the person that was "pretty clear".

Eric
And our third poll: How much of the orchestra field's education and various community partnership work will be delivered online, in an equitable, inclusive, trauma-sensitive and authentic way, even after there's been a vaccine for COVID? How much more of our work is going to be online when we find our way into a new normal?

I know teaching artists are talking about this. The answer is much more, from the teaching artist's perspective. Let's give it five more seconds… and let's see our results.

Yep, look at that over half, well over half, “somewhat” to “much more,” and the majority or the plurality in “much more.” That’s a big change to our field. In fact, we weren’t ready for that, and it’s upon us now. Thank you, David, for a little sense of the uncertainty we find ourselves in as we enter this conversation with seven colleagues.

Rather than do painfully inadequate introductions of our seven panelists, we’ve asked them each to take one minute to give a quick introduction of their name; and then, if they can squeeze it into that minute, maybe just a little bit more information about how their institution is doing, and something about how they personally are doing in this pandemic time. We’re going to go alphabetically, and if we could start with Hakeem.

Hakeem Bilal
Thank you, Eric, and Lecolion. Thank you all for having me.

Hello, everyone. My name is Hakeem Bilal and I am the Assistant Professor of Trombone at West Virginia University. I live in Pittsburgh. I am also an avid chamber musician, I have two of my own groups: C Street Brass, which is the brass quintet and Beauty Slab, which is a funk fusion electronic group—also based in Pittsburgh—and I’m also a freelancer, I perform as a substitute musician with the Pittsburgh Symphony and the Cleveland Orchestra. When COVID struck, I was actually in the middle of a tour with the Cleveland Orchestra; that got canceled, so this really hit close to home.

Something positive about this whole situation is that I have become much more sound in troubleshooting any kind of technical difficulty. So my trigger finger on electronic devices has gotten much quicker.

Eric
Super, thank you Hakeem. And Charles—Chuck.

Charles Dickerson
Morning, thank you so much Eric, and Lecolion; and to you too, Simon, thank you to the League for having this wonderful webinar today and for inviting me to participate. I’m Charles Dickerson, everybody calls me Chuck, and I hope that you will, too. I am the Executive Director and Conductor of two orchestras: the Inner City Youth Orchestra of Los Angeles, and the South Side Chicago Youth Orchestra.

Both of these institutions were specifically created because there is a real lack or dearth of youth orchestras that serve communities of color. I know all youth orchestras are open to everyone. We all—particularly in the youth orchestra world—talk a lot about the lack of access for people of color, and as a consequence, the numbers that seem to fall off for most youth orchestras—our programs, both in Los Angeles and Chicago—are set or are set right in the midst of the inner city communities. To use your phraseology, Lecolion, so many orchestras really just refer to “communities” and really never visit.

Eric
Thank you, Chuck. And can I introduce Paul?

Paul Murphy
Hi everybody, my name is Paul Murphy and I'm really glad to be here. Like many of my fellow panelists, I come to this conversation wearing many hats; I'll quickly name three of them today.

First, I come to this conversation as a professional musician, having played for a number of years in New York City as a freelancer with groups like Orpheus in St. Luke's and American Symphony Orchestra and on Broadway.

Second, I come to this conversation as a bit of an entrepreneur. About nine years ago, I helped to start Decoda, which is an affiliate ensemble of Carnegie Hall. As a musical group, our skill set includes, but runs deeper than great performers of our instruments. My colleagues at Decoda and I have come to believe that community engagement—real, deeper, multi-year work in communities—community engagement is something that's become vital to our artistic identities, and in fact it's changing our artistic identities.

And my third hat: I come to this conversation as a music educator. I'm currently working towards my doctorate in music education at Teachers College. And for 13 years, I've been blessed to serve on the Teaching Artist faculty at the New York Philharmonic through our Philharmonic Schools Program. I've been teaching at elementary schools, through our School Partnership Program all throughout New York City.

Of these three different hats I wear, I suppose I've come to prefer the term Teaching Artists, maybe because it allows me to bring my full identity as musician, entrepreneur, educator… to bring all of myself into the work that I do. I'm looking forward to having a great conversation today.

Something personal, something real: I am currently almost entirely unemployed during this period of time. But something positive: I have never had so many incredibly creative conversations around this topic, topics around equity, inclusion and diversity. I'm really excited for what's going to come out of this trauma that we're experiencing, but I'm really excited for what's gonna come after.

Eric
Thank you, Paul. Can we have an introduction from Myran? Hi, Myran.

Myran Parker-Brass
Hi, thanks, Eric. Good afternoon, everyone, I'm delighted to be joining this conversation. I am recently retired from the Boston Public Schools as Executive Director for the Arts, prior to that I spent 20 years with the Boston Symphony Orchestra as the Director of Education. I also work as a musician: I'm co-founder of the New England Spiritual Ensemble and right at this point, like every other musician, [I'm] waiting to get back to that space of performing. I'm also currently doing work as a Strategic Planning and Cultural Planning Consultant.

I continue to be engaged with Boston Public Schools as the Chair of the Board of Trustees for the Boston Arts Academy. Like all districts, BPS is grappling with how to make the right decisions right now

to ensure that there is quality teaching and learning and that none of our students lose *another* year of learning; we can't afford for that to happen. I don't think I have a particular new learning from this new environment, but I continually get validation for the role and the necessity of advocacy, around music education, which is needed more than ever right now.

Eric
Thank you, Myran. Suzanne. Hi.

Suzanne Perrino
My name is Suzanne Perrino, and I'm the Senior Vice-President of learning and community engagement at the Pittsburgh Symphony in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. And Myran, I can't agree with you more. We've been talking about advocacy for music education, we need to be in the midst of this right now in a very strong way. One of my personal learnings through this period of time is personal accountability and personal investment that you need to make in yourself.

During the COVID shutdown, we went very much online with programs, and we named the programs "Make Time for Music," so that people would remember to make time for music within play—and for kids to continue to practice, even though they didn't have ensembles; and for individuals who are in more isolated situations, as an uplift to their day, a bright spot to their day.

Eric
Thank you, Suzanne. And Victor.

Victor Sawyer
My name is Victor Sawyer. I am based in Memphis, Tennessee. By trade, I'm a trombone player, but that role has taken me to the Memphis Music Initiative down in Memphis, Tennessee, in which we actually plug into public schools, charter schools. Any school that has people that need music education and needs support from professional musicians… the Memphis Music Initiative is there.

I also work at the Stax Music Academy—excuse me, the *world famous* Stax Music Academy. (The branding, right? the branding is important.) This environment has personally provided an opportunity to rededicate myself to the avant garde.

I think that being in the habit, I'm a teaching artist as well. You perform, you make money; you perform, you make money… and without that—losing all of the work—it was, "wait a minute, I actually like this other thing a lot more." It's been nice to rededicate myself to the things I learned in conservatory, so long ago. As a teaching artist, there's such a huge opportunity right now in the world of music education. I think for me, it points to the questions: What are the actual goals of music education programs without the carrot-and-stick of performance? What is the actual goal for these music programs? How can we have these positive outcomes for young people without this sort of marquee, tentpole moment? What does that mean, and how do we rethink music education?

Eric
Beautiful. Thank you, Victor. Dalouge?

Dalouge Smith
Hi, thank you, thank you to the League for this invitation to participate. It's an honor to be amongst all of you. Quick shout out to all of our El Sistema-inspired programs, creative youth development programs, that are here—those are the focus of the work that I lead as the CEO of The Lewis Prize for music, which is founded by Daniel Lewis.

Daniel is part of this new ecosystem. He is a longtime orchestra funder who has moved away from funding orchestras because he was not seeing adequate commitment to music education and opportunities for music education for young people. He's focused locally in the Miami Dade community, building collaborations with the school districts and nonprofits there. We're doing the work nationally to support creative youth development organizations who are working in communities primarily serving young people who have the least access to resources, or are most historically marginalized.

Why am I here with [Daniel]? because I was CEO of San Diego Youth Symphony where we partnered with school districts and rebuilt music and arts education for 40,000 children. And so I've got that practice to bring to this work alongside him with The Lewis Prize.

The big lesson, that just gets affirmed and reaffirmed over and over is that *communities know what is best for them*. They know what they need, and they know what they want. Those of us to be of service… *they* know what they want us to do with them and for them. This really compels us to approach communities as fellow citizens and *not* approach community as missionaries, as colonizers, or as tourists.

Eric
That Dan Lewis challenge… orchestras were not contributing enough to what he felt was the call of the moment for music education, for responding to racial and social equity: that's a challenge on the table. In talking to a number of orchestras, in this swirl of concerns that they face at this time, very often these issues can fall to the backburner. I'm so glad we get to the front burner with this issue in his first ongoing webinar. And Lecolion, let me hand it to you to lead a second round.

Lecolion
Thanks to everyone for sharing all of your personal stories. Many of you shared pieces of what's happening with you and your current communities, but everyone didn't; I think it'd be helpful for the audience right now to have a good sense… right now, each person feels so alone, we all feel like we're the only ones dealing with the challenges that we have right now. And so Eric and I really want to have a moment for some of the panelists you shared, you know, the moments of unemployment and the challenges that you're having and being able to deliver on your programs. It'd be great if you could share a little bit more about some of the challenges at the moment, because one of the things about these moments and having sessions like this is to create a sense of community. If you could all just share a little bit about what are some challenges that you have? Are you canceling performances? Are you canceling programs? Are you furloughing staff members? Are you cutting back on hours? Can we get a sense of the complexities of this moment within all of your organizations? Anyone have any thoughts on that? Victor?

Victor
I'm glad you asked that. In the Memphis community, in the music education community in general, one thing I've noticed: A major challenge comes around training and reframing. When you're in this physical space that we were in for quite some time for these decades, there's quite a bit of control that lies with the adults in the room, the administrators, the teachers. The level of control has really been democratized, in a lot of different ways; everyone's equal on the worldwide web. I'm noticing that a lot of people are really having a hard time relinquishing control and actually, as someone else said, allowing the community to speak for themselves, whether that community's a neighborhood, a school, a class, whatever; I'm noticing that the people that have had the reins are finding challenges and rethinking what they do, because they don't have that same level of control that they once did.

Lecolion
That's a really good point, Victor. In some of your other organizations, what have you seen that relates to these shifting power dynamics within the organizations? There's becoming this necessity, and necessity is the mother of invention. So what have been these things that maybe you have seen that have been kind of a shifting of what you have considered to be the traditional power dynamics?

Paul
I guess maybe I can jump in a little bit. Just to piggyback on Victor:

Orchestra, as an art form, traditionally, you could argue, has a very hierarchical culture—like the statue of the dead white German man on top of the building, who are the composer gods—all the way right down the hierarchy. And that filters through into how we function as institutions, in how we do employment structures. As we think about shifting towards more of a community-centered model, if that's going to really be important to the work of these institutions, (what Victor was talking about) we need to find a way to embrace this idea of flattening our organizations.

I'm involved with a community of teaching artists right now. We're unemployed, but we've been meeting by the dozens, and we're talking about issues that include: Are we going to diversify our faculty? How can we be valued by different institutions that employ teaching artists? Because we sort of feel like we've been thrown away, and not even acknowledged or communicated with, for the most part, during this period of time.

I've seen that at different institutions. I've also seen again—on the positive, I have seen at some institutions—I think it's easier for smaller institutions that are more nimble. They've been really innovative, and even at places where there's no work, we've been finding ways to continue conversations and continue our internal community-building, so that we're ready to go forth after this period.

Lecolion
Thank you. I have a question for you, as someone who in some ways is representing the academic institutions that are also parts of many of the communities in which our partners exist. Can you give us a little bit of a sense of what's happening, what's happening in the academic space? What's happening

in academia right now? Are you thinking about just the boots on the ground? Are the people being furloughed? Are you seeing lower instances of adjunct faculty? What are some things that you're recognizing in your space?

Hakeem
Yes, thank you. I'm seeing exactly what your what you said. There are universities that don't have the deepest pockets that are furloughing employees; they're on hiring freezes, you're seeing nationwide hiring freezes. But the biggest thing that I've seen with my students and with the community, especially in West Virginia, is the lack of accessibility. [With] this pandemic, there was already a need for accessibility, especially for the rural areas, we're not talking about just a black—we're talking about everyone having a stable internet connection, so that when you had to have a remote lesson, you had something you can receive that instruction from. There are students who have who have to go to a McDonald's parking lot to get free WiFi, just to have a lesson. There's a major disconnect from people who have internet and say, "all right, we're gonna go online, we can do that." We're leaving out people who don't even have internet before the pandemic who were left in the dark; that's been a major, major roadblock, but we're managing and so I don't have an answer for that yet.

Lecolion
Well, I think that you pose something that is mentioned in the Q&A here, that this movement that we're making, it's going to happen moving online, but it may not be equitable or inclusive; and I think that you referenced that. There are some students who I know myself and my sons, they can just jump online, but some of the kids in my son's school, they have to drive to school and sit in the parking lot of the school in order to have access to WiFi in order to take their lessons during the day. I'm wondering if those of you who are within organizations right now, are there some things that you're recognizing—not only challenges for yourselves and your staff—but also challenges for the constituency that you're working with and supporting and partnering with? Are there some things that you're seeing there as well, that might parallel things that others may be seeing in other spaces?

Dalouge
I think that the crux of this is, how specialized or adaptive are you? I think orchestras have an incredible specialization that, it turns out, is not adaptable to a changed environment.

To me, it's not a question of "what is the challenge?" The world is always in change moments, it's always in flux. The question is, "what is your capacity for being responsive to those change moments?" and this particular circumstance, again, going back to the creative youth development field, programs that had historically offered music, education, and meals and transportation, they've actually retooled those, so that now the transportation is a meal delivery service to the families. Where I believe orchestras could do some important introspective work is… what are all the assets we have? and how do we actually evolve those assets into a different shape or a different form to serve our communities differently than we were originally built to do?

Suzanne
Just thinking outside the concert format can be stressful to orchestras thinking, "what can we do besides a concert?" because when you're in a scary pandemic situation you want to go back to what

you feel comfortable doing. For the fall, we're creating five digital episodes that are contextual and historical, but also offer an opportunity, a platform for local artists, so that we're not saying we're going to do another concert but we're opening it up to offer different voices, different perspectives, different aspects of the region, to celebrate and involve other people and other topics—which is very scary. We're launching, we're going down that road, but it fits into all of this, that it is about adapting, pivoting. As a large organization that's been around for 125 years, we're going through that pain right now, how can we improve it?

Lecolion
And Chuck, just in 30 seconds, before I hand it back to Eric, could you please make your comment?

Charles
Well, I just want to underscore how important it is for us to realize that it is incumbent on us, those of us in the field, the leaders—to be the ones who are nimble, and not to look to those who are within our ensembles and within our groups to be the ones who need to make the change. We are the ones who need to make the change.

My orchestra also serves as the orchestra for California State University, Dominguez Hills. We have an orchestra class, and what we're usually doing in orchestra classes, everybody goes to orchestra, we pass out music, we practice and we perform. I've had to change, because as everyone I think knows, the technology has not allowed for us to do a lot of ensemble performance stuff. What I've had to do is change the class so that we're not actually performing music, but we're listening to a lot of music. I've distributed about a hundred different scores of different composers, and now the job of the student is to learn who that composer is, what their music is like, and perhaps introduce them to music that they otherwise would never have had the opportunity to learn. The underlying point I want to make is that it is upon *us*, as those who are the leaders, to be the ones who are nimble and flexible. We've got to find other ways to deal with, particularly, the technological challenges that the pandemic has thrown upon us.

Lecolion
Thank you, Chuck. That's a perfect segue into Eric's conversation about us.

Eric
Thanks. And man, *all* the big issues, they're coming out fast! Let me invite, again, short responses from our different panelists. Are you seeing actual things emerging in this interim time, that you have a sense are actually indicators of a longer term change? Are you actually seeing changes that your institutions say, "this is the direction our field is heading"? And we certainly mentioned, right in our initial poll, that community connection through the internet is with us; that is an actuality that is going to be a long-term change. What else are you spotting, are you experiencing?

Charles
Well, I'll take a shot at this, Eric real quickly, and this is this is a negative, not a positive. And I'm sorry, but I don't mean to be negative. We are suffering from a fear, perhaps more than a reality, that we're going to lose some of our participants because of their having to rely on technology, not necessarily

yet, to some extent, because some of the young people that we have the privilege of serving don't have the technology, the devices. But that's not the bigger issue. The bigger issue is, how [do we] maintain connection with the young people who are in our groups, and with their parents? Some of them just simply seem to have fallen off the map; they don't want to come online. It's time for us to get together and have our weekly prayer, and some of them just choose not to pray. I have a fear, a concern: How are we being creative and making sure that we can maintain connections with the very people that we are there to serve?

Suzanne
I'll add to that, Chuck, to say that that social emotional support, to make sure that we're there for others, is like a music therapy approach, like using music as a tool for health outcomes for the betterment of those participants. The negative side of not having that social emotional support is you see kids move away, and disconnect, and return their instruments to the music store to drop out of band class, to drop out of Youth Orchestra. And so what we have to do is change the approach there. It's about the "we"—we're in this together. How do we support the larger ecosystem of social, emotional, supportive music education?

Victor
I'd like to chime in there. Your "emotional" portion of this music education thing, when it comes to specifics… one thing I've noticed in Memphis, and this is really a positive… the connectivity issues—the more digital technology based on connectivity issues—are there right now, we're still trying to solve that. I think everyone's trying to solve that. How do we increase connection? In the examples where that connectivity *hasn't* been lost, I noticed something really positive, in which instead of people focusing on the 80—hundred member orchestra in music education, I'm seeing teachers and specifically *teaching artists* focus on mentorship now. Now, they're focusing on smaller groups, they're focusing on chamber groups, they're saying, "You know what? Maybe it's more important, if I spend an hour with these three kids to just see how they are in general."

Somebody pointed out, we all feel like we're lost in the wild right now. And so one positive development I'm seeing is that people are really focusing more on the individual. That's at least been true here in Memphis, with some of the marquee organizations. The focus on smaller groups and individual development has been a major positive.

Myran
So I just wanted to build on Suzanne's comment about the "we". I think what we are seeing here, and particularly in Massachusetts, with our music educator, is that they've all been thrown into this new territory together. We've quickly begun to understand that we're stronger as a collective. Music educators across every district, they're beginning to have those earnest conversations about: What are we teaching? How are we teaching it? What are best practices? What are the issues that we're all dealing with? Because we're at a point now where it doesn't matter. Your budget size? It doesn't matter. Your capacity? We're all in that same space? How do we move to this new form of teaching? We're all losing resources, and revenue, how are we as a collective going to build this new way to teach and [new way] for our students to learn?

We're seeing that similar thing in our arts and cultural organizations as well. We have to—as a collective—understand that it will look different, it will continue to look different. What are the tools we're going to provide to our teachers, to our music educators? That's a new kind of conversation with our higher ed partners on how we train teachers. It's that conversation about how we engage our teaching artists, and what are the tools we're going to give them?

Even in our schools, where we're in this hybrid model and everybody's trying to figure out, how do I teach the folks that are in front of me—the teachers and the kids that are online at the same time—and engage them? But also, how do I invite my partners back into the building? How do I invite you back into this new mode of teaching and learning? I think that is the positive that's coming out of this, because we're having this collective thinking and conversation.

One of the negatives, and I think we also need to keep in our forefront, is that our schools and our districts, they are having those difficult conversations about resources and revenue. Whether we acknowledge it or not, we're seeing this reduction and sometimes elimination of music positions and music programs. How far down the road are we going to have to recover, if this continues, and we're not in this collective having that conversation?

Eric
And Lecolion, I want to note for our participants, that's a big challenge for orchestras that Myron just laid out. What is your role in those collectives? I noticed in your quick ticking off of the people that are pulling together to figure out how to sustain an advanced music education, orchestras were conspicuously absent as contributors in those collective conversations. That's something at the local level that needs to be addressed.

Lecolion
I wanted to uplift some things from the chat, from the Q&A, but Dalouge had a comment about the conversation we're having currently, I wanted to give space for that.

Dalouge
Thank you, Lecolion. I want to highlight that the circumstance in which—picking up on what Myron is saying—the circumstances in which orchestras and arts organizations work in community, and [where they] work in schools will be different from what it was previously.

Here is a simple example of this, and this is where orchestras I believe, have to decide where we are putting our attention. In San Diego County, it's been reported that thousands of students at the highest income bracket are pulling out of public schools. They are basically building private academic hubs, pods; going on to in-home learning, homeschooling, etc. At the same time, the lowest income, most family-unstable students are dropping out of public school, they're just disappearing. They're not even actively withdrawing from school, they are just *evaporating* from school. And this began last spring.

One of our programs that we fund surveyed their young people, this is a program that focuses on hip-hop music, and 90% of the young people they serve said they were not participating in virtual school in the spring. So the reality of who's even in school is changing, the reality of why they're in school, and

what resource pool they're coming from. I believe if orchestras want to really be responsive to the circumstances of their communities, and really meet young people where they are, finding partners who are tightly connected to young people is going to be important. These programs are setting up academic hubs. They're trying to use music as a way to get young people to come to a space where they have WiFi, where they will log in and participate in school, and then do music-making work after those academic hours. I just can't state enough that orchestras have immense resources in our communities, and for those resources to not be directed to these young people who are at risk of essentially losing education entirely, I think is basically an abdication of civic responsibility.

Eric
Lecolion, you had a question to address.

Lecolion
A few things happened in the chat that I wanted to bring to light. There was some appreciation of Hakim's mention of the McDonald's parking lot, as an option, which I think speaks to [that] there's just a lot of fear. And people are having a hard time just knowing how to manage this moment. I was wondering if, Eric, in this in this portion, just to allay some of the fears that may be in the room in the moment—I know there's a moment later, which we're going to talk about some actual tactics people can use in real time—but just to allay some fears and challenges and concerns that we have in the moment, I thought maybe if there are some who have a tactic or two that people might use, it might allow people to be more present in the conversation that we're having as well. Does anyone have a tactic, as you think about your work, something that you are feeling is successful?

There was also a mention here in the Q&A around music therapy, and the value of music therapy at this time. That might be a way to think through this, not only from how you're providing the instruction, but also what is the content?

Victor, you alluded to a little bit of that on the mentorship side, but if others have some tactics that people may be thinking of, it seems to me like our community is asking us to respond on some level to that.

Dalouge
I can speak to what we're seeing from El Sistema-inspired programs and other creative youth development programs. They are being attentive to the to the gaps in virtual access. Ways in which they are instructing, I think they've started doing hybrid instruction ahead of… not ahead of permission to do it, but essentially realizing that they needed to find ways to do that.

The El Sistema movement is so focused on the large ensemble, and there's been a really big evolution, as was mentioned earlier, toward individual instruction, individual lessons for young people, but then also at the same time conversational gatherings, ways in which young people actually get to just share what's going on for them, share with each other what each other's stories are. I think that this is an important recognition that engagement is not just about the music, it's actually starts with the relationship, and the strength of the relationship is actually what holds young people close over time.

Suzanne
Yeah, I'll back up Dalouge on that one, to say that it's happening in the Pittsburgh public schools here with the arts teachers. Specifically, that the first part of the class is not, "let's get into heavy content," and "let's start rehearsing"; that first part of every elementary and middle school and high school arts class is: How are you doing? Is there anything that you'd like to share? Are there any questions you'd like to ask? To acknowledge that the environment that these kids are operating in right now it's very complex, very stressful.

When people start to open up, they start to introduce an arts activity or engagement that can help with release of stress, of movement, of whatever it is; but starting off the first class with five minutes of just acknowledging: "This is a hard time."

Eric
I just want to hand it back to Lecolion, to take the next step, and to throw in one observation, following up on Dalouge, that El Sistema and [other] in-depth after-school programs, I have found almost all managed to get access for all of their students to sustain that relationship, to somewhat heroic degrees, and that they're actively using every tool they have—interpersonal, socio-emotional and musical—to keep that thread alive, until it becomes clearer how to advance the musical learning.

Dalouge
Can I just add quickly, Eric? They are feeding families, they are replacing income, they are translating health mandates. They are thinking about so much more than the music, and I think that's sort of the call for our field.

Eric
Lecolion**,** take us to the next step.

Lecolion
Thank you. Thank you, Dalouge, and Victor, I would love to hear your comment as well, and I think there'll probably be a place for your comment in this conversation as well. One of the things I like to share before I begin, is when I do workshops with people, I do a lot of work in racial equity. I tell people, we are not going to solve systemic racism in our hour-and-a-half workshop that will take *two* hour-and-a-half workshops.

I don't mean that to be to be flippant, or to joke about something as important as systemic racism, but I think that it's important to understand that [these] things are systemic, are really important; and oftentimes, you can't fix systemic things with just tactics… you have to understand, what is the thing that you're solving *for*?

There's a saying that says, everything is broken, we have to do something. *This* thing is something so let's just do that, because you just feel like you must act in the moment. Oftentimes that acting can be part of the problem. That can oftentimes exacerbate the challenges of the moment.

With that in mind, I would love for us to think about: What are some things that we—maybe organizations—are doing right now? And a vision for the future… but I want us to think about this one a little bit more from the perspective of the music therapists who were mentioned in the Q&A. Think about, what are we going to do in the future? We've got 330 million people who have this collective trauma, what are the ways in which we're going to evolve our work to become more trauma-sensitive?

Also, in this moment in which many people in the country are galvanized around the racial inequity that exists, what is the role that an orchestra is going to play in this trauma-sensitive space? and also, in this now-national conversation around racial inequity? What are some ways in which orchestras can now use this as a pivot point and inflection point to become part of these broader conversations?

You've all been talking about it child, don't act like you're scared now!

Victor
Somebody mentioned in the Q&A, I saw they were talking about specific tactics. Lecolion, to your point, I think from an organizational perspective, one thing we did at Stax Music Academy is to literally look at your mission and vision; we do that all the time, right? You look at your mission and vision, and you ask yourself a few questions: What are the goals for this organization? What are the goals for the youth? and what are the goals for the community? Often those aren't aligned. During this time, it's so important to really list out [these goals] and then say, well, what is the purpose? This has been the hardest question for a lot of organizations to [ask]: Am I needed in this environment? Is this particular part of my programming needed in this environment?

From a tactics perspective, I think you really do have to just look at your organization and look at your own practice, and [ask], What are my goals, what are *their* goals? Are they aligned? What's our purpose? And then when you do define and say, *this is important, this is important, this is important,* you then have to ask yourself, how do we deliver it? Are we the ones to deliver it, and why? And you ask yourself those whys: Why is it important to talk about the context of race in America as it relates to music in the 1950s? Why is it important to relate protest songs to what it means to be a rapper in youth education in this current culture? What does it mean to uplift the arts of black culture in traditionally anti-black spaces? I think you really do just have to think about your purpose. Ask yourself, why, and as always, write it down.

Lecolion
Thank you, thank you for just a lot of heads nodding. Does anyone want to uplift components of Victor's comments or share some of your own?

Suzanne
I just totally agree with Victor and everything that he's saying. Sometimes it's even difficult for an organization to think about itself, other than its main purpose of doing concerts. So what are the assets that you have? What are the assets that you hold that you don't even know you're holding? How can you uplift others? Very easily in many ways, but come to terms that it's not stuck in the learning and community engagement department like this has to be an institutional, systemic initiative. So much gets

stuck in the silo of learning and community engagement, we really need to explode it and get it out and make it institutional.

Charles
This is a complete paradigm shift. For those of us who are traditionally involved in the orchestra world, we're used to people coming to us; it's time for us to go to them. We're used to coming to the great temple on the hill, where we do all this great music and we celebrate all these people who have gone on before who've done this wonderful composition work. And yeah, that I guess it has its place, but if we're going to be relevant, if we're going to continue to exist, it's time for us to come off those hills, and get down to the valleys, into the places where the young people are—who are, as Dalouge said, are vanishing and disappearing. This is not easy work. It's not easy work to go find that child who has vanished, or those children or that entire community that has vanished as a result of this situation.

The great thing about doing that is it's fun, there's so much opportunity when you walk into a place like this, where we're just not used to being, you will find that these are people who are ready, willing and able if *somebody* would just come and say, hey, I've got a bowl of soup for you. Would you like to come and have a little drink from it? Gosh, they would. They will drink and drink and drink and drink and be just so willing and excited about what it is that we offer.

This is not a usual space for orchestras. We're not used to doing this kind of work. We're not used to going to the people. We're used to having the people come to us, and that's a major paradigm shift. I hope that those of us in this in this industry can exhibit that kind of flexibility.

Lecolion
I think you bring up a great point. And, Paul, I'll get right to your comment, you bring up a really great point. I think that people aren't currently engaging with some of y'all, and they're not going to some of your stuff, I think that's an important topic as well. Being really candid about that, there is probably some type of disconnect. Paul, do you have a comment?

Paul
I was just thinking. Finally, one, both Victor and Chuck, in my identity as a white teaching artist who's been employed by various cultural institutions in the classical music world, to go into schools: My students in East Harlem, most of them have family connections to Jamaica. What I am doing with them, it's really important that cultural organizations prepare their teaching artists—and their musicians and the organization, the institution—to be able to value the cultural wealth that's already in the room. So that I'm not doing that thing that Chuck was saying, where if I'm just handing out Beethoven, that can be damaging. We actually still talk about Beethoven, but we talk about Beethoven and my students, you know, he taught me about "Buffalo Soldier" and Bob Marley. And then we have a conversation, a real conversation. I think that a lot of people who look like me do not have enough preparation and training to understand the sensitivities that need that are needed to do this work.

Charles
I think you have plenty of education and training man. Don't discount yourself. I will be one who will say that perhaps our conservatories and institutions [have] so much focus on how to play excellently, and

hopefully, we will start to emerge, perhaps even offer classes on how we can become relevant to our current-day community in our schools. But, Paul, don't you for a minute think that you are not capable of bringing, even teaching how to play Bob Marley.

Paul
What's so cool is that in this sort of less hierarchical, more collaborative potential of being a teacher who's a facilitator, instead of always having to be an expert, learning can go in multiple directions. That's kind of amazing when that happens. So yeah, I feel like it's possible. I've been doing this work for thirteen years, my journey, from where I started to where I am now is, is very different.

Lecolion
Thank you, Paul. And that whole thinking around asset-based and bi-directional relationships in teaching, I think is really important.

Dalouge, I know you have a comment, I'd like you to make it, and I also want to prep Myran—I have a question for you just as it relates to advocacy, there are some things in the Q&A about advocacy—and what is the role that orchestras can play in being an advocate to mayors, to city council people, to the state senator? What are the ways in which an orchestra—as is oftentimes this beacon, that those in those groups look to—how can they become advocates for that? That's a big question, which is why I want to prep you for it. But that is the question I will ask you to speak about, because you're someone who has experience on both sides of that, where you have been within an orchestra, but you've also been in city government working in the school system. I'd love to hear your thinking there.

Dalouge, please, you have a comment?

Dalouge
I want to return to the "competing truths" point that you were making at the beginning of the session, Lecolion. One of the competing truths related to the question you're raising is, what is the space or place for orchestra work in racial justice? in community trauma recovery?

I think that the competing truths here are [that] orchestras are long accustomed to setting the agenda; they set their annual concert season, they are viewed within their own communities by some—not by all but by some—as the premier music organization. What that does is it gives orchestras an access to leaders and assets that other members of their community don't have; this is the competing truths aspect: If orchestras can bring that resource relationship, with humility and with generosity, into other spaces, and not—as Chuck was saying—not expect people to come into orchestra space, and not expect people to believe ultimately in the sanctity of the orchestra, but actually to engage in a new cultivation of the relationship… I think there's so much potential for orchestras, but it's going to require new work.

I'm going to put into the chat, a resource we just published last week, there is an essay in this collection of three essays by Sebastian Ruth of community music works, in which he describes their anti-racist journey at community music works. This is a white-founded, predominantly white artist collective that has been working in communities of color for up to two decades now. Twenty years in, they were

beginning to work on anti-racist practice. It can start at any moment, anybody can be doing it, and doing it with honesty and integrity is essentially the first step.

Lecolion
Thanks, Dalouge, and thank you for bringing anti-racism into the conversation, a term that I think is relevant for the orchestral field to recognize, as a term that is relevant inside that field. Myran, your thoughts on advocacy?

Myran
I think I'll build a bit on what Dalouge was saying. Orchestras have big voices, and what we need to do is help them change the narrative when they're using those voices. Orchestras are, in their city governments all the time advocating for funding, but that funding can sometimes be narrow, focused—so when they're advocating, let's change that narrative so that it includes the entire musical community, the entire music education landscape, so it's not just about them as an orchestra and what they bring to the city, and we know what they bring. But because you need others behind you, you need to build that up in order for you to be that beacon, so change that narrative, help them understand how to do this conversation in a collaborative way.

Encourage them to—because they do often wait; as has been said, they wait to be invited—to be the leader. And so you open the door, you begin this community conversation, you open opportunities for more voices to be in a space talking to each other.

I think this is also a time for orchestras to really help our schools understand how and what the curriculum needs to look like. Because it's going to change all music ed [curricula], we're going to still teach the basics, but how we teach those basics is going to look very different.

Orchestras are a wealth of content, you've got content all over the place, your recordings, your archives. How do you work with music educators to build this new teaching and learning opportunity that's about to happen? But then, how do you help orchestras continue to understand what their audience and what their community is going to look like? We're in a space where we know our students; and our millennials, they access music differently, they access arts differently. You're now entering into *their* space as orchestras just because you're now doing many more *online* opportunities [for them] to engage with you as a performance venue than you've ever done before: Well, this is *their* territory. How do you bring them into this conversation about this new space of concert performance, engagement, conversation?

I think it's really now time for us to help orchestras change their narrative and change how they engage, or *when* they engage—because they will engage, but they always wait to be invited into this space. Now you need to be a leader in this conversation. You need to lead and then understand how to bring people with you.

Lecolion
Chuck, you first and then Victor.

Charles
People will ask—I couldn't agree more with Myran—people will ask, particularly in the orchestra world, how do we do that? And it's easy, it's really very easy, I want to give you one or two or three ideas about how you can do that.

I would bet that every single person who's involved in their orchestras knows their city council person, and by "their city council person" I mean the city council person who represents the area where the orchestra is housed. It's time for those people, for *us* as orchestra people, to know the *other* city council persons, the city council persons who represent that part of the community that, frankly, is 90% of the time left out of orchestral music.

Go and have lunch with him! Call him, say, "hey, I am the Altadena Orchestra. We always play Altadena, but I know that you've got needs and wants, how can I be helpful?" It's not always that everybody has the answers, but start the dialogue. This goes back to what Lecolion was saying about relationship. Start the conversation. Call your local head of your NAACP. Have lunch with them, find out what's going on. Ask, "how can we as an orchestra be helpful in your community?" Call your school board representative, have lunch with them. How can we be helpful?

This is what I mean when I say it's time for the orchestra to come into the community, rather than us just waiting to be invited. As Myran said, it's time for us to be the leaders, to go in and say, "How can we be helpful?" We may not always have the answer, but at least we open up the dialogue, and opening the dialogue is the first step.

Victor
Oh, yeah, yes, absolutely. 100%.

When it comes to this idea of connecting with a community, I had been wondering before the pandemic: We have these names attached to these orchestras—the Little Rock Symphony Orchestra, the Memphis Symphony Orchestra, the LA Philharmonic—and the question I began asking myself, even before the pandemic, is how does the Memphis Symphony differentiate itself [from] the Nashville Symphony? Oftentimes, these organizations and symphonies have the name of a city in their title, but you could literally take that orchestra and drop them in any other city, and nothing would actually be different. These orchestras are claiming our cities, they're claiming our communities, and the only way that they're connected, oftentimes, is by zip code.

Lecolion
Eric, if you don't mind, I'm gonna put you on blast for a minute, because there's something that you have done; if you don't mind, give me a moment to just share my own involvement with this workshop.

When you talk about people and spaces in positions of power, and being able to find opportunities to amplify the voices of others, Eric is an internationally known teacher of art history, they call him the father of teaching art history. And what Eric has been doing is he says: "If you're going to invite me, I'm going to introduce you to this person. You don't get to have access to me, unless you're bringing others along with me." And that's what Eric did, that's the reason that I'm here. Eric said, well, wait a minute,

there are other people who are in this conversation that you may have never heard about. They have a lot to say and a lot to bring to this conversation, and the answers currently probably aren't in the room, so let's find a way to make a new room. Hopefully you don't mind me putting you on blast like that, Eric, but I recognize that. [This] is something that is a scalable construct, where it's not just an individual. Institutions can have a construct like that as well, and can have a mentality like that as well.

The reason that people are scrambling for answers is because the truth is maybe the answers just aren't in the room, and you got to find a new room. So I want to first thank Eric for that. I'm not supposed to do this as the moderator, but I wanted to put just one thing on the tape in support of what others have said.

Eric
Thank you for doing that. As we're moving toward questions here, this whole launch of ideas around advocacy has appeared in our question board, and I note there seems to be a lot of hunger in the questions for specifics. We had talked about this as a visioning opportunity, rather than tactical one, like a buffet of ideas you can use. *Those* conversations will happen. So we may be a little dissatisfying for those who want a quick takeaway of something they can take back home and put to use. But thank you for that, Lecolion, in suggesting one tactic that I have been using—in a sort of disruptive, anti racist way—is that whenever anyone tries to hire me for a gig now, I insist that [they] investigate the decision-making processes that lead them to call me, and go back to the beginning and rethink: What [are the] other possible ways of making that decision that could actually lead to a young person of color and not an old white man. So it requires we work together, it's often a little awkward, you have to push through that awkward.

Dalouge
At The Lewis Prize, from our founding, the notion of systems change has been central to our pursuits. We've started with the belief that systems change is going to be visible in the access of music education for all young people, but what we have found is that the true power that fuels systems change is relationship. It's the slow, slow change in human dynamics, the building of trust over time, the establishing of some shared realities with each other. People essentially operate systems like machinery, but the people are the ones who are inside it, either managing it or being abused by it. If we are conscious about how we relate to each other, that actually becomes the change factor for altered systems behavior. And this is an example: What you've just done here is you've changed a system of how you as a facilitator get hired.

Eric
I can report from other arts community conversations I've been involved in, two things always come up that I'm hearing embedded in this conversation. Number one is a challenge to the quality of the listening of institutions. There are such habituated ways of listening through the lenses that have served them well for a long period of time, that to learn afresh how to actually hear what is being said in the room is a crucial idea.

The second one that connects to some questions that appear in our Q&A box is new partnerships. I have heard, particularly in theater companies that are closed down and not knowing quite how they're

going to reopen, that they have found themselves in conversations with community partners that they've never talked to before. They're actually discovering alliances in this uncertain time. Are you all finding that? What is your sense of the opportunity of new partnerships?

Charles
I work in the inner city. My orchestra is the Inner City Youth Orchestra of Los Angeles, and the South Side Chicago Youth Orchestra. I guess one of the sadnesses is that all too often, the big gorillas in town, the entities that Victor identified, they don't want to talk to us because they have all the answers. And some were a little bit offended by that, but we nevertheless go ahead and do our work, and we've tried very hard to engage them in our conversations with us.

There's a story that many years ago, a woman who is now the president of the New York Phil, she was in Detroit looking for funds to support the Detroit Symphony. The black members of the State Legislature said, no, we're not giving you any more funds. You've gotta start talking to people in the community, the kind of people *you're* talking about, Eric. And finally, when she started talking to those people, the Michigan Legislature relented and funded the orchestra.

It shouldn't always just be about funding, it ought to be about, how can we be of service? What can we do to uplift the community, how can we be helpful? And as Simon said, at the very beginning, we don't come in as missionaries, as colonizers, we come in with a with a sense of humility, and a sense of recognition of what's already happening. It's about what these young people already know, what their parents already know… and how do we now collaborate, particularly in this time of COVID, and during this time of racial awakening?

Hakeem
If I may jump in, I think that these are excellent responses so far, but in regards to building the relationship of the orchestra in the community, I think there's a lot more room for the ego to be put aside, and the orchestra can teach—Myran, as you said—music education, the basics will always be taught, and I think the basics are changing [into] music recording and empowering students to make music, even if it's not classical music. I think that we can stay relevant as an organization, as a genre of music by empowering those who are younger to just create, whether that's through digital audio workstations, or just finding a way to teach them how to put their thoughts down on paper. That's something that we might be ignoring. That's blatantly saying, hey, you know how to do music, you can teach me how to just record this thing; but we might not see that because it's not classical music. You're not playing Beethoven, I can't teach you that. So there is room for that setting aside of the ego.

Dalouge
Can I offer a tactic for reaching those moments? We talked a lot about the introduction of power brokers in town to communities, but the reverse can also happen. City Council members know what's going on in their neighborhoods. I see a question in here about, how do we find new partners? How do we build new partners? You can turn to your local elected leaders and say to them, here's what we have, we want to learn if this can be of use or of value in a community, who should we talk to? Or, here's something that we're interested in learning more about, who can we talk to and learn from? But I think you have to be really conscious that you're not coming in to put your brand on their work, that's

the *colonizing* side of things. That what you're coming in to do is essentially be peers, be partners, and again, going back to relationship, find people you really like. Don't think of the orchestra as an abstract entity, and a partner. You are a body of people, they are a community of people. Who are the people that you have just such strong personal affinity with that you're gonna have fun figuring it out together?

Charles
I couldn't agree more. There's one more dynamic, one more person I would like to put on the table. At least in the black community, where do black people congregate most? In churches. Get to know some of the churches if you want to be impactful in these communities. And how do you get to know the church? You call the pastor and say, I'm the Executive Director, I'm the Community Liaison or the Education Director from my orchestra. And I know we haven't been to your church. Can we come down and bring 10 violins and start a violin class in your basement?

Myran
I just want to add to what Dalouge was saying, this notion of orchestras and who they should be in the room with. I know that in Boston, our Office of Arts and Culture, they have these weekly discussions of all the arts and cultural communities, cultural organizations, and particularly since we've been in this space of COVID and pandemic, these weekly conversations about what's happening in our cultural landscape: what are the issues you're facing, etc, etc. And the orchestras—no matter the big or the mid-size, or the small ones—don't engage in that conversation. The question they need to ask is, why don't they feel like they need to be a part of that conversation? You are a cultural organization, you are an arts organization, just like the small theatre or the small string ensemble. Why do you feel like you don't need to be there? I think if you're there, you're learning, and if you're there, you're also adding your expertise. Again, how do we get orchestras to understand that they are part of this cultural ecosystem and musical landscape, and they need to be engaged at every level of the conversation?

Dalouge
I just want to offer that, it is an act of immense privilege to not show up.

Eric
Yeah.

Lecolion
That's *church*. Can you say that again, because that's church. Can you just say that louder, please?

Myran
Very good. Very good.

Lecolion
You got to say that louder.

Dalouge
I will repeat what I just said. It is an act of immense privilege to not show up.

Lecolion
I'm writing that down. Victor, you had a comment as well… but I gotta write that one down.

Victor
I think listening to everybody here, being in the orchestra field, is an outgrowth of white supremacy in the United States. A lot of the challenges, these challenges are not that complicated. Go to a church service, go to your city council, literally ask the young people in your orchestra what they want to do. I think a lot—like dismantling racism, changing the structure of orchestras—we tend to make it a lot more complicated than it actually is. The problems are obvious, how to go about rectifying these things is obvious. Is the process a little bit painful, building relationships across time? Absolutely. But I think that it's on us to stop acting like systemic racism is complicated. We know the problem. We know the solutions, there's centuries of documented evidence of what's happening, we just have to stop BS-ing ourselves. It's not that complicated.

Charles
Eric, I note that we're getting close to the end of our time. And I would like to just say this, if any of you out there have any concerns, or even fears, if I may say that, about how to go into a community… call the League of American orchestras. Call Simon, Simon'll put you in touch with any of us. Or call Eric, Eric will put you with in touch with any of us. And I dare say that all of us who are on this panel would be happy to converse with you. I'd be happy to come to your town and introduce you to the local president of the NAACP, and I don't even know who it is. But if that's what it takes, do it. Use the League as a resource.

Eric
We have just a couple of minutes left. [I have] another angle on the advocacy question, just a couple of minutes before we have to come to close. This may be a question for you, Suzanne. What about the internal advocacy within orchestras? The issues of the orchestra relating to non-ticket-buying communities is not a front-burner issue. Most of the time in larger orchestras, it's in their hearts, it's in their minds. Is there anything we can offer our participants about escalating or elevating the recognition of the challenge and the opportunity within the orchestra itself?

Suzanne
That's a complicated question. If you're asking how we do inreach, to try to build more of a culture around connecting with community, or doing more that is just not a concert, it's really about those relationships, going back and seeing positive work, positive movement, and developing… we have right now a D.E.A.I. task force that's going on that involves staff and musicians and community. For those community partners to be involved in the conversation and to put their hands up and say, "no, respectfully, that's wrong, we should be moving forward in this way"… that's painful, but it helps that relationship, that trust, and our understanding, our education, our personal responsibility, because everyone has their own personal responsibility to get around this, to move forward in a more positive way and in a more inclusive way.

It's a part of the organization, so the entire organization, but it's [a] part. You're moving forward with this group that's smaller, that's positive, to help share across the organization in a bigger way. It takes a lot

of time, it takes a lot of uncomfortable conversations, it takes a lot of active listening—not jumping in and solving the problem immediately. Like Lecolion said, we don't want to jump in and just all of a sudden do something for the sake of doing something or checking the boxes. We need to take time and have this understanding, this platform, this basis of us moving together in a way that's very informed. And I put an exclamation point on that, of *personal responsibility,* to take on your more informed approach.

Eric
Beautiful, thank you. We're actually right at the end of our time. I want to thank partner Lecolion for taking this on, our seven panelists for jumping in with both feet, and with all thoughts and a lot of heart and a lot of hopefulness to me. And thanks, Simon for leading an organization that wants to lead this way.

Simon
Well, thank you, Eric. This was an awesome discussion, and I want to thank you all for the candor and the dynamism on this topic. I come back to where I started, which is: If I if I think about where we were twenty years ago, we were not having this conversation. Twenty years ago, we were simply not *able* to have it, we didn't have the capacity as a field to have it; or maybe if we did, it wasn't surfaced. While I think we all know we have a long way to go when we think about these issues, I'm also proud that we're able to have this really, really open discussion and surface the big issues.

And we think about what we talked about, what you what you touched today, it's about how to listen and hear, it's about how we dismantle racism in our in our work, it's about colonization versus humility, about civic identity, and about how to build civic identity in a unique and inclusive way, not just in an appropriate way. And that idea Dalouge shared with us, [that] it's a privilege not to show up… these are very big ideas that we've been talking about. I'm tremendously happy but grateful to you for surfacing them.

It's interesting, Suzanne used the word "inreach" just then, which is an interesting word I haven't heard for a while about how we may need to communicate with our own organizations. In a sense, I'm frustrated that we even need to have that conversation still. Because as I listen to your speaking, I'm just reminded, I just want to say, again, to everybody: This is our work, this is the work, this is not something on the side, this is the work, and I think you've done a service by helping us to understand that. If we're going to make it the work, everybody in our organizations, all constituencies, all parts of the organizations have to embrace it as the work.

We hope that this conversation will continue. And of course, at the League, we're committed to supporting the continuation of this discussion, especially on the advocacy front, where collectively we can work together to build capacity, and to continue to open up this discussion about equitable access to education.

So just a last reminder: Everybody who registered today, will get an email with the recording and the transcript. Please, please complete the evaluation, we need your input as we develop more programs

like this. And lastly, just one more *huge* word of thanks to Eric, to Lecolion, and to all of you for an incredibly vibrant and memorable conversation, and I hope we can do it all again soon, one day.

So thank you all. Thanks to everybody who joined us and I wish you a wonderful rest of day. Thanks so much.