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LEAGUE OF AMERICAN ORCHESTRAS

Addressing Gender Equity On and Off the Stage

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(Music)

>>> Welcome to the League of American Orchestras' online conference.

I'm Lee Ann Norman, director of leadership and learning programs. Thank you for attending today. We thank our exhibitors and sponsors. Please learn more about them by visiting the online exhibit hall on the left hand of the PheedLoop. I want to give acknowledgment that there may be members of the press in the audience. The League understands how valuable the online
conference sessions have been for you. However, by waiving registration fees this year we rely on our sponsors and donors, so please consider making a gift to the to the stronger together campaign. Whatever you decide, every dollar makes a difference. You can donate by clicking the stronger together button on PheedLoop or visit us on our website. Thank you to everyone who made a gift already. Today's session is part of the equity, diversity and learning track made possible by generous grant from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation. During today's session, we will take audience questions. To participate, please use the chat function in PheedLoop or Zoom and we will answer as many questions as possible. As a tip, if you navigate away from this broadcast in the browser window you will leave the session. But you can easily rejoin by clicking on the session. A recording of today's session along with other materials will be available in the session schedule by tomorrow. We would love to hear about
your experience today. In PheedLoop there’s a link to the brief survey for feedback on the session. They help us shape future conference content. Thank you again for attending this session today. We are joined by four outstanding panelists. Erin Hannigan, principal oboist of the Dallas Symphony Orchestra. She has been a guest oboist with the New York Philharmonic, Los Angeles Philharmonic and many other orchestras. Kim Noltemy joined the Dallas Symphony Orchestra as Ross Perot President and CEO in January, 2018. Since her arrival, the Dallas Symphony Orchestra has embarked on a new bold plan. She launched the women in classical music design. She unveiled the southern Dallas residency in 2018. Its educational initiative launched in summer, 2019 to make the transformative power of music education accessible to all children in southern Dallas with free instruments and lessons. She negotiated the transition of management of the Symphony center from Dallas to the Dallas
Symphony association. She was chief operating officer for the Boston Symphony Orchestra, and Boston Pops, since 2015.

Sheila Williams is a storyteller and author of Dancing on the Edge of the Roof, the basis for the Netflix film, Juanita.

And the Secret Women, to be released in 2020. She is the librettist for the opera, Fierce. She's a former corporate legal assistant and a board member of the Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra. Patrichi Shah has 25 years of experience in talented HR in the nonprofit and for-profit sectors. Prior to launching FTMS she was the chief talent officer for independent sector. She often speaks about talent strategy to national audiences. She has been quoted in the New York Times in the annual giving section.

She is on the board of League of American Orchestras and councils for equity and inclusion. She has an MBA from American University and executive coaching certification from the New Field network.

To Pratichi, now. Thank you.
Lee Ann, thank you so much and to everyone here today. We're delighted that you can be here and we are glad to have you part of it. Many thanks to the League for the agility they embodied in moving the conference online and continuing to have these unbelievable sessions. So thank you, Lee Ann and the rest of the League team. To the League, for leaning on this conversation around EDI, as we all know, it's a complicated subject with lots of facets. We will go deep on the notion of gender equity and its own complexities. We will hear from our panelists, their experiences, have a dialogue around some things that need to be in place for gender equity to happen. And talk about some imperatives in doing so, and take some of your questions.

Kim, please start us off, tell us about your experiences in putting in place strategies for greater representation at the DSO. Some things you learned coming out of the women's summit, that would be great.
>> Thank you, Pratichi. I'm lucky to have been given many opportunities to break the glass ceiling in this industry. I worked very hard to do so, but when I was working through it all, you also had to have people help you along the way. I feel it's my responsibility to help as many women as possible move forward in their careers and our industry. So I ended up being the first female CEO of the Dallas Symphony. I didn't know that when I was applying for the job and was excited to be the first. There was a real DNA in the orchestra and city about women being an important part of what was going on in the arts community. For example, a huge amount of the philanthropy in Dallas in the arts district and broader arts was powerful women in the community who wanted to be sure we had the best organizations possible in Dallas. That meant there was a lot of women leadership on boards, in general. Maybe a little less so on the executive board level. But definitely,
not unusual for women to be in these
important leadership roles. The Dallas
Symphony Orchestra itself has had a long
history since the 70s of having much
better agenda balance than, say, the
average large orchestra in the country.
That doesn't necessarily translate into
having a say at the table.

I felt we want to do something that
was meaningful and sustained effort to
make changes. We hired a principal guest
conductor, a woman, for, we committed to a
ten year period of time. Our number two
artistic figure would be a woman. We also
decided we would have a composer in
residence, a woman, over the same period.
First, we had Julia Wolf for two seasons,
and now we appointed -- as our second
composer in residence. She's a new
position for us. We committed to making
sure 50% of all the works we commissioned
were by women. We decided we needed a
forum to talk about all the different
aspects, so from the administrative to the
orchestra side, to composers, teaching, et
cetera, and we launched our first women in
classical music symposium, and had around
250 people participate.

    It was an amazing thing, and I'd
love to read some quotes of people who
attended. These are from all different
ages, from those who were young in the
field, to people who have been there a
long time. Also, students and people from
other arts groups.

    After meeting women from all stages
of their career I have a better picture of
the reality of the industry. The
symposium broke down the silos of
generations. I've never experienced
people being so generous with their
advice.

    There are a lot of, a lot of
feedback we got. The key thing we were
trying to do is create a dialogue, where
people would feel comfortable talking
about the different experiences they have
had, their fear about their career and all
the positive stories, as well. It is not
just about not being able to fulfill your
destiny. To change the conference for
next year, we are having more musicians
from our own orchestra and from across the
country to be in panel discussions. Even
on the administrative level, there's a lot
of people who are young and wanting to be
in the field, and they don't necessarily
know all that goes on behind the scenes on
the artistic side. If you're not in
artistic or production, you may not know
what's happening with the musicians, why
is it that there aren't more female
conductors leading large orchestras in the
country, and those kinds of questions.
It's important to have the women as
part of the dialogue. Also, it's
important to honor trail blazing women.
It's important to acknowledge those who
did a lot of the hard things that helped
the rest of us be able to move more
successfully through this industry. Last
year, we honored -- American singer who
devoted her teaching and life to ensuring
that women have a strong position in the
classical music industry. Part of what we
do is ask the person who wins the award to 
bestow that honor on someone they are 
mentoring. That's part of the conference. 
We decided to expand the award, to give an 
administrative person an iconic figure, 
the award, for all of us who are working 
in the business. And Hilary Hahn will 
receive the artistic award.

Last year, we didn't talk about the 
role of women in their own families, which 
is a different thing. So how does having 
a family stop one from achieving their 
full potential or not in our business? We 
heard they felt barriers, for someone who 
wanted to have a family and be working at 
an orchestra, which is shocking in a way 
because you'd think in a not for profit 
world that would not be an issue. We 
deided to have a association that next 
year, and not make it something like, you 
have to talk about this in a way that is 
embarrassing, or that this is a thing that 
would stop you from achieving everything 
you should have, whether or not you had 
children. There's still a lot of
sensitivity on this, in this business. I have two children myself and it was very difficult to perform at the level I wanted to, and manage things at home.

Part of it is the idea of managing one's own perspective on perfectionism, and being forgiving of oneself, not feeling you have to have an excuse to take care of your own child, so some of these specific ideas came out of this conference in November.

One of the most important things we got out of having the conference was people really wanted a networking opportunity to stay in touch and develop a relationship with those who they met at the conference. Personally, I've kept in touch with probably 15 people I interacted with at the conference, who I did not know prior to their coming to Dallas. It's different types of relationships, some mentors, some are about figuring out how we trust each other so we can get interesting ideas from each other, even though we may not be in the same job or
same field because we didn't have speakers
and attendees from museums, from different
types of arts organizations.

We felt energized and empowered,
and I want to say I feel like that every
day, but that would not be a true
statement. So it's great to be with all
these wonderful people. We look forward
on building that next year, hopefully
link, if not, digitally. That's the
essence of what we have been doing in
Dallas.

>> Kim, thank you so much. You
hit on a lot of interesting things that
touch the issues we're talking about,
about building those networks, having
someone to go to whether it's just a kind
of problem solving, or mentoring, building
trust. The importance of shared
experience and building networks around
relationships to continue supporting each
other. Thank you so much for taking us
through that. Erin, I wanted your
thoughts, you're a musician, entrepreneur,
experience the DSO from on the stage.
Talk to us about your experiences on the stage, personal experiences, et cetera.
Thank you for bringing up the humanness of all our experience with his family, et cetera, and opening that door, Kim. Erin Hannigan?

>> Thank you so much for having me here. I'm very happy to offer my experiences. I'd love to talk about my experiences in the Dallas Symphony, starting as a young woman, twenty years ago and seeing the evolution over that time. There's been an evolution artistically and also of culture. That over the past two years has been really incredible to watch. I will tell a little bit of the background.

I got my position twenty years ago. I was brought up in an environment of your effort equal to outcome. I have this position, a leadership position, I'm trying to do everything that needs to happen onstage and off stage. On stage, I never felt the -- to lead. I felt respect of my colleagues and conductors. It's
been very welcoming. Off stage has been
more difficult in the area of
inclusiveness. That's what I'd love to
talk about. I consider positions in the
orchestra to come with certain
responsibilities. Principle oboe, you
have a vote and a contribution,
leadership, your opinion matters, what you
do on the stage transfers into the respect
that then the conversations off stage are
based upon.

That didn't happen for me as
easily, I felt respect on stage, but
things like music director searches, we
never had a woman on the music director
search committee. So I thought I will
just keep working harder. Because work is
translated into respect, and that turns
into inclusion. I struggled with this for
quite a while. Then, a board member asked
me out to dinner. She talked to me about
something I never, honestly, had never
crossed my mind. She noticed I was not a
part of some of the big decisions taking
place within the organization. She was
trying to figure out why. She had been a lawyer during a time when the field was male dominated. She wanted to guide me on the situation. She said you need to force your way into the table. If it's social things, whatever, force your way. I left that dinner upset, because I felt like I won this position, it was an artistic, but I haven't broken through, that seat at the table, regardless of my sex, to be there for the principal oboe. That was a moment I struggled with, because I wasn't brought up in this kind of thinking. I just thought it couldn't be that. But then I thought, I am the only woman on the sidelines. I want to move ahead with this. The past two years showed me how right she was, because I must credit Kim with what she has done for the orchestra. She brought awareness, and with that comes inclusion. It's done so beautifully and professionally, things like Kim saying we should include so and so in this conversation, invite in those seats at the table.
Or, saying we need to, with that first principal guest musician, I remember saying to Kim we needed to elect a woman to this community. It was, the changing of a culture, changing of a long established history of, primarily male principal players, who I believe now, it was not done with any intention. It is a simple awareness. As we move ahead, evolve, I don't see pushback on this. I see light bulbs going on. I see awareness. We're growing as an organization and opening up the culture. Kim has been a catalyst for that. Also, seeing women in key positions is changing the culture of the organization. We have several capable, now creating names for themselves, young women in our assistant conductor position.

Now we have a new, very artistic, well spoken woman in our principal guest position. We have a CEO, a woman, creating huge waves of change. We have our principal players taking their seats at the table. That has been very
meaningful to me. And even having been on the other side, is frustrations that came along with that, actually make me a better leader now, having struggled a little bit. Having a seat at the table is meaningful to me and gives me encouragement to have my students be aware of what they should expect as they go us through the ranks in this field.

It has helped me be a better leader in the community as far as getting out beyond the orchestra, and insisting on change or on awareness of all types. The professional manner of opening people's minds has led to a new norm, and it feels amazing.

>> Thank you so much, Erin, it's such an unbelieve luxury hearing from both sides as someone who has been on stage, led the orchestra, and helped lead the evolution. The conversation with your board member gave me goose bumps. Sheila, you're in so many roles, in different organizations. You bring a significant perspective among the many other things
you do on the creative side. I want to
hear your experiences in those roles, but
also the perspective of advancing equity
from a board seat.

>> Thank you for letting me be
part of this. One fun thing about going
last is you get to take notes, and
everybody has said the good stuff, you can
just comment on it. It's been interesting
for me, because I'm a board member of the
Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra, and just
the names, Cincinnati, evokes a
traditional point of view. That is
definitely true in this city. But some of
our traditions can be surprising. The
Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra began in the
1800's, with two women. Its first
principal board had 13 women and five men.
I've always believed that in my writing
and everything I do, it helps to see
something when it's concrete, then it's
real and you can say, oh, I can do that
because she's doing that.

Part of the Cincinnati Symphony
Orchestra is a tradition of women being
part of the board. At present we're a little over 50%. We have a strong tradition of women leading arts organizations in the city. You see it, then young women and women everywhere say I can do that, because she's doing that.

I was listening to Kim and Erin talk about being at the table. I've been on the CSO board for a few years during the tenures of four board chairs. Both were great mentors and examples. They quietly made sure women were included in the primary decisions. A woman led the music director search for our current director. A woman led the search for our current CEO, as well. And women were on both committees, musicians were also on both committees.

They are part of and share many of the committees of our organizations, throughout finance, social services, they are from education, from health care. And they're musicians, as well. So I have that grounding because as a board member, I can see the leadership being provided by
the women in the organization and therefore I feel comfortable participating, speaking up, being present. And you have to be present. And sometimes you must use your foot to kick the door a little bit on some of your fellow board members. One tip, it's easier to do in flat shoes than in heels, but it can be done and should be done. I've found that it wasn't intentional, some of the deficits that you see. It was a matter of, I hadn't thought of that, hadn't realized that. If I'm having a bad day, I would say, well, you should have. But when I have a hold of myself, it's, okay, I get that, I'm trying to understanding. But Erin's use of the word, awareness, is important because our task in participating in the classical music world, and in administration and on the stage, back stage and audience and board room is to illuminate a new layered path. We tried to include composers no one has ever heard of. Because they were women, now we make sure that happens.
Also for conductors, and we have at the CSO now, our current concert master is Stephanie -- that's outstanding. And the principal French horn is a woman, and a mother, that's the other thing I thought about. How do you do the juggling act?

The search for perfection, a goal that keeps moving. It never stays still. Those are internal wrestling matches and they're also external. The more we illuminate those things, the less intimidating they are and the more familiar, even to board members who don't have our unique circumstances.

What's become clear is that we're in a whole new world. We have got to figure out how to go forward with our music, mentorship, development of new artists, and new audiences. What platforms do we use? Digital? Personal? What are they? Film? It's a time for new dreams. It's a time for new ways to do things. It will be up to us to e illuminate the path, and raise the awareness, and use our high heels or flats
to kick the doors open where they need to be opened, and to nudge people aside, if they need to be nudged aside. I will end with that.

>> I like a good boot, so that does good nudging. Thank you for bringing that into the conversation. That's important. Thank you so much for sharing that. I deeply appreciate from all of you that we touched on all the things that are process oriented, on a lot of things that are professional, both on the stage and off, but also touched on, again, the humanness of this. This can't addressed merely through process. Strategies, tactics, are important, but it's important to remember this is also the awareness, acknowledgment, recognition that needs to be around our humanness, the challenges, specifics, issues that we might each be facing, while we are at the tables, on stage, back stage, while we're leading organizations.

I want to dig a little bit on strategies. Erin, we had a question,
people are saying the right things, and
saying they're dedicated to inclusion.  
But it doesn't show up in the processes,
policies, whether pay or other things,
what needs to be in place for the
strategies of inclusion to really take
hold?

>> I feel I'm watching this happen
before my very eyes. In the Dallas
Symphony, the administration is creating
this awareness. From that, inclusion is
growing out of it. I don't tend to get
bogged down, I don't know what my
colleagues are making, the equality of pay
the, there's always been a structure in
place so I have confidence there. But I
tend to not get bogged down in some of the
things, like at one point I had been
angry, why I wasn't getting a seat at the
table. I don't carry that anger with me
now. That's important, as women, getting
our seats at the table, that place, that
maybe we have not been able to reach, it's
important not to get bogged down in anger
or looking backwards. It's important to
evolve with strength. A forward view, we know where we want to be. But with Dallas, it took a leader like Kim to come in and start building a new culture. It's been done so seamlessly, and without any kind of pushback. I feel like it's simply, someone coming in, and with intention, creating the new awareness.

Also, I focus on pulling them close. All the women need to hold each other close, welcome younger women and rise with them. When I first came into the orchestra there was the older group, they didn't necessarily like the younger group. We're navigating the social, women weren't even standing behind other women. That's changed. As we get foot hold, women are more apt to back each other. I'm way, way encouraged to make sure women, young women coming in, feel support if they need, any guidance, creating this culture of inclusiveness. We don't have to fight for a voice. It's no longer, I'm going to fight harder than you we have a voice and it brings relief to the
musicians to feel this evolution,
inclusiveness. Administration creates the
culture. Women are expected to be at the
table, and we're doing that. It's been an
enlightening two years.

>> I loved what you said about
hold them close and rise with them. You
mentioned the frustration that can exist,
I've seen comments shared about policies,
processes, not matching what is espoused.
We have all experienced various levels of
frustration. Erin, you said rise above the
frustration, don't look back. The
frustration is a real thing. I want to
name it and put it out there. Ways to
deal with the frustration as we contribute
to healthy cultures, as we step up, take
seats at the table, there is still a
getting there process.

>> I could say that there's a real
fear with certain people when they get
into a role where they can really make
change, of being criticized, of having
unfairness towards men that, kind of thing
we fear for women, you're unfair to men.
Looking at every single thing, we have these goals because across the country, there are unbelievably, and cross the world, talented musicians who don't have a network to help them get the roles, and even if you look at principal players, the skill level is critical, but having helped to figure out how to navigate the audition process, remaining calm and being your best self in an audition, I've heard this from other musicians, you need a network help with you. A lot of women haven't had that network, which is why we said we will hire a composer in residence as a women, and guest conductor, who's a women, so help create that network for that person to do the next thing, to be commissioned as a larger orchestra or be recognized on a bigger level.

A lot of people have criticized, been negative about, Erin, thank you for being so positive, but others have been, well, that's your agenda. It is not an agenda. It is being fair and giving equal opportunity to 50% of the population who
are talented. We're not giving anyone the
gift of a job. They have earned it.
There are plenty of talented people who
are not getting the opportunity they ought
to have gotten because they don't have the
infrastructure, network, to be able to
achieve that goal. Part of it is about
confidence, to be able to do these
wonderful things.
That is so important, and of course
we could all point to stories of someone
saying something negative that is really a
knife in the heart, sometimes. You have
to put it away, put it aside and just
continue doing the right thing, moving
forward. It's about being fair to
everyone, helping our fellow women, but
helping everyone we can help.
>> Thank you, Kim. Sheila,
anything to add on the side of
frustration? Especially for those who may
not be in an orchestra, already make this
kind of shift, but even further back,
maybe, in an orchestra that's not as
progressive, or can not get to being
affiliated with an orchestra at all because of access. How do you reckon with the frustration?

>> It's systemic, sometimes.
Woven in the fabric. You must literally pick the threads out. It's necessary to provide all the support, audition support, and sometimes that needs to come from different places, from a board member, from an administration, other colleagues, it's our job to make, help create and support future musicians and those who are part of our organization. While change can be led from the top down, there are lots of feeder organizations as well. The board has to push and say no, we need to do this, look at this.

If there's wavering anywhere, the administration will know, no, I may not want to do this but it needs to be done because I'm getting the pressure. It's important to keep the pressure on, keep lighting up the path so it allows us to include, rather than exclude.

>> Sheila, what do you think keeps
getting in our way? There's individual
and systemic, often fluidity between the
two, so what keeps getting in our way? In
practice, in thinking, at the individual
level, systemic level?

>> All of those. It's tradition
and fear. Tradition is like this. Fear
is, it gets to be like this. The sky will
fall. So someone has to say, look, the
sky won't fall if we do this. It will be
more beautiful than before. That's what
it is. Fear. Of making changes. To
include and expand. Which is what our
product is all about. Beautiful music.
Touching hearts. All that. You can't do
it if you're going to be in a narrow
alley. You must expand that. So it's
fear.

>> Do you have thoughts on what
each of us as individuals, wherever we
are, what can each of us do, we have had
enough of confrontation, but for lack of a
better word, to confront that fear or
dissipate is. Recognizing that it puts
the onus on women to have to do that. So
what do we do? How do we create coalition
so we're not the ones, the only ones
advocating?
>> One of my mentors said the
conversation changes when you're in the
room. If you're, if we're at the table or
in the room, we're in a position to change
the conversation. Our very presence is a
change. It shouldn't all be on us, but we
all have broad shoulders.
>> Excellent. Naming tradition
and fear is an important part of, the most
of we can name something, the more we can
deal with it. So do you have thoughts to
share?
>> When I tried bring a new idea
forward, something I heard often was, we
never did it that way, so no. No. We
can't. It got so frustrating as a new
orchestra member to hear that so many
times. That's tradition, by my
definition. As things have been evolving,
I find it to be an incredibly exciting
time. It's a time of empowerment. A
freedom of creativity, that on and off the
stage, I feel listened to. It's an incredible time of empowerment and creativity. Time away from the stage has been a creative, time think outside the box.

The change and tradition versus the evolution, it was so time to get past tradition. Anyone with a new idea, it was immediate, we can't do it because we never did it. It's like the sun coming out. Very freeing.

>> Thank you. Thank you for naming that it can become part of this conversation. You mentioned part of this notion of fear, if we are putting forth women as leaders, creating inclusion, often that is named as a woman haven a gender bias, or pushing an agenda, so how do we deal with that? The balance is likely to shift. Because there are a lot of male leadership on the artistic side, how do we move the dial without dealing with that allegation?

>> This ties to the tradition that we discussed. A lot of key roles of music
directors, and artistic administrative vice president, have been held by men.
Not exclusively, but more than the average, especially if you go back ten years ago when things started to change.
This relates to networks. If you're a conductor or artistic planner, you're talking to your networks of people to recommend people. When you call someone you trust about should I hire this piano of the, have you heard anything, often you're calling your friends and colleagues who are your same gender, just because that's your network. It continues the same cycle of having the same people being hired, therefore more male than female.
When you're a woman, you must justify that the woman is even more talented, or the person that everyone is talking about, that's why you must look at that person as opposed to the traditional candidates. So it's something that we're starting to see significant change in our industry but there's many decades to catch up.
It's hard to keep it neutral.

Doesn't matter what your role is, whether on the business side or artistic side. As a woman, I have to build more consensus, behind the scenes, to move forward with anything that I want to move forward with, whether artistic decisions, or business decision, budget, et cetera. That's a burden we have across the board. But I will build relationships with various people to move forward. In a way, the fact that I'm not a musician is as big a challenge as being a woman in the business because I don't have the artistic credentials, though I've gone to two hundred concerts a year for twenty years, they're not good enough credentials to decide. It's a complicated equation.

Until we see more people visible, whether leading the orchestra, concert master, we won't see a giant shift, not for lack of talent.

>> Goes back to your point of, if you can see her, you can be her. More we see women in leadership, the more there
will be women in leadership. It's a cycle. We had a question around the issue of making space for folks, commitment to families, often more associated even now in 2020, and more true, women's time, et cetera, how do we create the space so it doesn't become an either-or equation.

That tension existed. We have seen it be part of our national conversation as we respond to the pandemic, literally had to conduct life and work and deal with home. All at the same time, how do we create that space?

>> It's a matter of trust. If you trust your employees, you know the job will get done, regardless of the situation. Whether this are children, or care taker to parents, and that is the key thing that's so hard, people want roles on the management side -- rules. What time do I have to work? Do I have to work evening? et cetera, et cetera, and the problem is if you want to really change the paradigm, you have to establish that you trust each other. Your employees to
do the right thing to get work done and
tell you when they need help and when they
don't have the time or resources for
whatever reason. As it's your
responsibility to make the adjustment to
make each employee the best employee
regardless of their circumstances so the
family piece of it, you may know it's
exists, but it's a secondary thing because
you're creating a work environment that
allows each employee to succeed.

This pandemic has been a total
break through on that because so many
people, almost everybody is working from
home. The reality is thing are getting
done, stuff is happening, good work, Zoom
meeting, people seeing each other. A lot
of people miss the contact but the bottom
line is this is it. The biggest break
through that we can all have about the
work environment because we have witnessed
it. It's a total emotional nightmare that
everyone is dealing it, in their different
ways. Whether kids are home, or you're
all alone with no one to talk to.
Everyone is dealing with something.

We had the discussion today, not really talking about the pandemic, although Sheila brought it up. The reality is everything we discussed doesn't change, no matter what the post pandemic world looks like. We can say orchestra contexts will change, but it doesn't change the dialogue we're having today.

>> Really appreciate your saying that. The pandemic led us to a conversation around what will not be the same, deliberately. What will we not bring back. There was a lot of conversation yesterday around being deliberate in choosing to be in the moment and how do we go forward. We literally in many cases reinvented the way we work in the space of weeks, what else do we need to move aside, for inclusion strategies? What do we need to deliberately dismantle? Things within the entire community to open up the space for people who want to come into the community?

>> Pulling the orchestra as a
whole, the entire group together, and
surviving this time, that's going to take
pulling each other close, getting through
this. Also, as a woman in the orchestra,
seizing this moment, lead fearlessly.

Don't go in feeling like you're less. In
the previous 18 years, I always felt like,
I could push my way to the table, but why
am I not invited? There's a feeling of,
do I need to do more, I take it
internally. But that's wrong. What needs
to be dismantled from my viewpoint is you
need to, in a leadership position, seize
the reins and just go, creatively, without
anger, without fear. Just, I think so
many ideas, and suddenly I can truly
dream, carry out the dreams, and to dream
bigger and encourage others. I've had
several high school students say to me
exactly what has been said in this panel
several times. I see you up there doing
it, so I know I can do it, too. Be the
kind of leader who leads not just for
those young women to you sitting in that
chair, but also, what are you doing in the
community, to fill that leadership position? I'm embracing it. Don't get bogged down in the negative. Soar forward in the positive.

>> Thank you so much.

>> As an adjunct to what Erin said, about being bold, just doing it, we have to stop saying, I'm sorry. It's amazing what you get done if you don't care what other people think. In our new world, new dreams, we will have an opportunity to approach the orchestra perhaps in many small venues. Rather than one large one. We have a music hall in Cincinnati, but there may be different way to approach that. Smaller groups on stage, fewer people in the audience, more opportunities to perform in other venues that are smaller. I don't know. The pandemic has forced us to throw the box out. We have there are unlimited ideas about that. There may be possibilities we have not even considered.

>> Thank you for that. The notion of possibilities we haven't considered is,
we look at the entire work world, all of it, outside the artistic community, et cetera, we couldn't have imagined the future we're living right now. Tripling conference numbers, and a virtual conference that spans six weeks, if we had said that in February, I'd say, what are you talking about?

>> In February, I would have said, what is Zoom?

>> Right! Which know it's a verb and a noun and a proper noun. And a number of other words as well. Kim? Anything to add?

>> I'm a strong believer in really listening, not hearing. There's a lot of things that are going on that affect people's ability to go to the next step in every way. We need to listen to those things and people to feel they have been heard, and of course decisions must be made, you can't get full agreement on anything, but it's so important to at least know the different viewpoints, put it all together and make the best
decisions. Also, flexibility. I have revised our concert plans for June so many times, and I hear, we need an answer, we're not going to know until we know. I wish we knew already. I want to stop doing this, I meant to implement, not write another email. Flexibility is really hard in a time of uncertainty. But we all need to be more flexible than ever to get through this successful.

>> There's an intersectionality of people in our communities as they think in terms of race, other, being transgender, nonbinary, so thinking about this conversation, how it relates to the inclusion of other groups, it is a multi-dimensional conversation any time we talk about inclusion and equity. Do you have thoughts on inclusion at that level? How do we acknowledge all those dimensions that make up identity and continue on the road to inclusion and ultimately towards equity?

>> You start by saying at a high level, this is important, we need to do
it. You won't get buy in right away from everyone. A lot of people will be quietly saying, yes, we should, but not feel strong enough to say it publicly. It needs to be done. In this time, a lot has been illuminated across the board. Many of the boundaries have begun to dissolve. We recognize we're in a new environment. Because of that, the possibilities are endless. And for some, they're frightening. This is the world we find ourselves in. We want to survive in it. We want to be sure our work is heard. Or we don't.

>> Thank you. Other thoughts?

>> It's a challenge in an industry that is very traditional. We're sitting here talking about how long it's taken women who have been deeply involved in the industry for decades to get a seat at the table, place at the top of the organization. Artistic decision making authority. The biggest challenges we can not wait another thirty years to slowly build inclusiveness because we will be
totally irrelevant to society at large if we don't push hard. It must be on all levels, at the top, but the board, orchestras must embrace the day we have an audition system, how do we get more qualified candidates to audition who are not just a certain group that's been audition is for decades? These are not easy questions. But we literally have to figure out a way to move forward as quickly as possible. Otherwise, the world will change around us. The pandemic is an example of the world changing around us, and demographics are changing every year. The orchestra has been on the side lines. The legal tried hard to make it at the forefront but it's not being embraced across the board, and it needs to be. Nobody is blaming anybody. But it's a significant challenge of the industry, we must work together. No one orchestra or music school can solve this. The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation has been active in trying to work on this, but no one foundation can do that a. All the
money in the world won't solve this problem. It's really something that we all must think long and hard about.

>> Thank you. The time is now, act, we need to act now. Erin, anything to add?

>> In my community out reach, I have learned that the orchestra is the community. Community is the orchestra. We have to be aware of that. That means inclusiveness on so many levels. We have our south Dallas project, making classical music accessible to all young kids. So that is a program that's addressing the barrier that's kept some kids from accessing it, whether listening or playing themselves, learning an instrument. The act of being part of the classical music world or even the world music, doesn't have to be classical, we need to remember, backing up what Kim said, it needs to happen quickly. The orchestra is made up of community members. The community has to feel a connection to the orchestra.

These are all important aspects to
that connection.

>> Thank you. We covered the spectrum from tactics and processes, to emotional issues, trust, lifting others up, inviting others in especially for those in position to do so. There are differentiatalities and intersectionality of whatever affiliation or categorization, orientation that, they might define themselves with and using this particular time because it's specific and we have reinvented so many things in the last ten weeks. So using this time to move forward with the things we want and leaving behind things we need to.

Let me give you any parting words of wisdom you want to share with our community today.

>> Sheila, you're most wise, so you start.

>> I will just repeat the quote, it's time for a new dream. Time for a new way. I will leave it at that.

>> Beautiful and wise. Thank you.

Erin? Kim?
I feel it's my responsibility to do whatever I can on all these issues we talked about today, which are not issues, but the life, it's life now. I encourage anyone listening today who didn't get their question answered, please email me and I will be happy to have a dialogue.

Thank you. Erin?

I offer a similar closer. I know there are questions I didn't answer. I'm happy to answer them after the fact. As a woman in the business, you just, my neck of the words in Dallas, I never felt more inspired or part of the fold, or positioned to be a leader. I hope we have lots of other women in orchestras across the country feeling the same way in the near future. Not just women, but minority groups in general. We all have is to work together to make this happen. Embrace each other, and let's rise.

Fabulous. Thank you so much.

If you're in a position to affect change, I encourage you to embrace this moment.
We see in the last ten weeks, phenomenal change is possible. And to reach out to those who may be eager for change to happen and it might be necessary for them to be part of our community.

Thank you all. I will turn things back to Lee Ann. Thank you to the conference for its overall commitment in general.

>> Thank you so much, Pratichi, Kim, Erin. And thank you all for joining us. I encourage you to complete the brief feedback survey and consider making a donation to the League by clicking the stronger together button or visit our website. Remember to check the session schedule frequently on PheedLoop. Please visit the online exhibit hall on the navigation panel. Please join us tomorrow at 1:00 eastern time. Look forward to seeing you at the rest of the online conferences.