

AMERICAN ORCHESTRAS' FUTURES FUND

Made possible by the Ann & Gordon Getty Foundation

2017 Grant Recipients

Albany Symphony (NY)

The Futures Fund will support the expansion of the Albany Symphony's American Music Festival, an annual multi-day celebration of living American composers and new orchestral commissions, and its associated year-long education and community engagement programming. For nearly 20 years, the Festival has been at the center of the Albany Symphony's core mission to bring the new music of living composers to regional, national, and international audiences. The Festival offers a wide range of activities including concerts, composer reading sessions, recording sessions, symposia, and in-school music literacy programs. Through the themes of "Water Music" (2017) and "Beyond Borders" (2018), the Albany Symphony will encourage inclusivity and experimentation, embrace diverse cultural perspectives, and present newly created and reimagined concert formats and ensembles as well as new media crossover projects.

Boston Symphony Orchestra (MA)

The Boston Symphony Orchestra (BSO) will use the Futures Fund grant to launch BSO in Residence, a new neighborhood engagement initiative designed to build reciprocal partnerships between specific Boston neighborhoods and the orchestra over a period of three years. Developed in response to community needs articulated in the "Boston Creates" cultural plan – the city's first comprehensive effort in decades – BSO in Residence represents a new approach to community work for the orchestra. Investment in this program has led to restructuring the BSO's education and community engagement department as well as its marketing department and to new ways of building relationships with Boston's neighborhood partners. Shifting the focus away from simply bringing people to the symphony or performing standard repertoire in community venues, BSO in Residence places the orchestra in the position of listener and learner within the community, with the goals of 1) increasing access to performances and learning opportunities that are of direct value to the communities, 2) championing the artistic and cultural assets of Boston's diverse neighborhoods, and 3) enabling the BSO to be informed and enriched by the communities it serves.

Dallas Symphony (TX)

The Futures Fund will support the Dallas Symphony Orchestra's (DSO) audience development efforts, focusing on three key initiatives: the DSO Teen Council, ReMix concert series, and SOLUNA International Music & Arts Festival. The DSO Teen Council works with musically involved students in the Dallas area and gives its members a voice and creative role in several artistic initiatives of the DSO. In the case of the annual Teen Concert, council members contribute to every element of production, including programming, selecting guest artists from among local young musicians, writing program notes, and more. In its fourth year and acclaimed as a welcome addition to musical offerings in Dallas, the ReMix concert series experiments with performance elements such as a smaller and casual concert venue, shorter concert length, artist and audience interactions, and low ticket prices. SOLUNA International Music & Arts Festival, the DSO's largest community impact program, focuses on partnerships, collaboration, and diversity. Working with 30 partner organizations, SOLUNA creates culturally relevant programs that reflect the community of Dallas and that attract audiences from across North Texas and around the world.



Detroit Symphony Orchestra (MI)

Driven by the belief that “we must mean more to more people,” the Detroit Symphony (DSO) will use the Futures Fund grant toward expansion of the DSO’s Neighborhood Residency Initiative, which is designed with community-mindedness as a core value. With a new collective bargaining agreement in place that fosters a greater level of collaboration with the members of the orchestra, the DSO as an organization is able to learn from and serve the Detroit communities in ways that were unimaginable in previous years. Under the umbrella of the Neighborhood Residency Initiative, the DSO takes a 28-part concert series and activities to neighborhood venues, schools, community centers, and places of worship across seven distinct neighborhoods. Since its launch five years ago, the Initiative has been embraced by resident communities and has become part of the DSO’s core business operations. The Futures Fund will additionally support a formal publication that will feature the DSO’s Neighborhood Residency Initiative journey and outcomes and that will be available to all League members. The grant will enable the DSO to connect more deeply with its neighborhood audiences to heighten the DSO’s learning and diversify its service to the metropolitan Detroit area.

Handel and Haydn Society (Boston, MA)

Boston-based Handel and Haydn Society (H+H) will use the Futures Fund to support new market research that will identify strategies to increase the racial diversity of its audience. It is well documented that America is becoming increasingly racially and ethnically diverse, with Millennials being the most diverse generation in our country’s history. As a result, being relevant to the next generation also means engaging a diverse audience. The H+H study will focus on learning from people of color who enjoy classical music but aren’t attending concerts in order to a) understand the size of the Black, Latino, and Asian classical music markets; b) understand the barriers to attendance and the comparative importance of each; c) remove identified barriers to attendance; and d) recommend strategies and tactics to increase attendance. H+H will test a number of hypotheses coming out of the study, measure the results, and continually revise and improve its implementation. This project aims to meaningfully increase the diversity of H+H’s audience as well as provide other orchestras with a new and concrete approach to audience diversification.

Houston Symphony (TX)

The Futures Fund will support the Houston Symphony’s Community-Embedded Musicians (CEM) initiative, expanding the orchestra’s team of full-time CEM members with four additional hybrid positions. Members of CEM are outstanding and accomplished performers as well as dedicated teachers and community presenters. CEM members spend 80% of their working hours engaged in a cumulative 700 education and community activities annually. They also have 40 performances with the orchestra each season in classical series concerts as well as family and student concerts, where they are often familiar faces to children who have met them during pre-concert visits to their schools. Houston Symphony’s staff and board worked closely with members of the orchestra to create the framework for this program, one that the musicians could embrace, and one which adheres to the terms of the CBA and maintains the orchestra’s artistic quality. The goal of the CEM initiative is to transform how the Houston Symphony collaborates internally as well as externally to meet the needs of the communities it exists to serve, and to matter to the city of Houston in ways previously unexplored.



Knoxville Symphony (TN)

The Knoxville Symphony Orchestra (KSO) will use the Futures Fund grant in two ways. First, the KSO will create UnStaged, a concert series unlike any other currently offered in Knoxville. This series will feature collaborations and partnerships with local artists, new classical music, popular music fusions, core repertoire presented in a new way, visual components, and crowd participation. UnStaged will also promote a social atmosphere to attract new concert-goers. The second initiative further develops the KSO's Music & Wellness program. Launched in 2003 to explore ways that live music benefits populations in healthcare settings, the Music & Wellness program has evolved into robust partnerships with the University of Tennessee Medical Center (UTMC) Cancer Institute and Cancer Support Community, bringing live music to chemotherapy treatment bays, the neo-natal intensive care unit, brain injury rehabilitation areas, senior care floors, patients with mental health needs, and hospital waiting areas. To quantify the effects and to demonstrate evidence-based outcomes, the KSO will conduct research in collaboration with UTMC to document the effects of live music focused on UTMC's Neonatal Intensive Care Unit. The KSO plans to substantiate raw data from patient observation records such as indications that 72-79% of infants showed improved heart rates with live music intervention.

Los Angeles Philharmonic (CA)

With support from the Futures Fund, the LA Phil seeks to deepen the impact of its Youth Orchestra Los Angeles (YOLA) program both locally and nationally. Launched in 2007, YOLA breaks down the economic barriers to receiving a high-quality music education by providing free music instruction in a safe and healthy afterschool environment. YOLA is inspired by El Sistema, the dynamic Venezuelan youth orchestra movement that nurtured LA Phil Music and Artistic Director Gustavo Dudamel, and that serves children with the greatest needs, fewest resources, and little or no access to instrumental instruction. During the grant period, the LA Phil will expand YOLA's local and national influence through three initiatives. Locally, the LA Phil will introduce YOLA's fourth site through an in-school model developed in partnership with the Camino Nuevo Charter Academy. Secondly, the LA Phil will introduce a pre-professional track for advanced YOLA musicians, offering them private lessons, conservatory application support, and financial assistance for auditions and high-quality instruments. Nationally, the LA Phil will stage the National Take a Stand Festival in the summer of 2017, hosting a symposium for practitioners from El Sistema-inspired programs across the country and a week-long youth orchestra camp for 100 students.

Minnesota Orchestra (Minneapolis, MN)

With this Futures Fund grant, the Minnesota Orchestra will enhance "The Minnesota Model," a unique organizational framework that is leveraging the talent and passion of all stakeholders of the orchestra, expanding the role of musician leaders, and creating dynamic two-way partnerships with the orchestra's increasingly diverse community. At the heart of this model are collaborative teams – made up of musicians, staff, board, and community members – that replace siloed committees, allowing the orchestra to nimbly address organization-wide priorities and create shared ownership. Specifically, these collaborative teams will reimagine the annual Sommerfest and holiday programs, research and test alternative classical concert formats, design pre- and post-concert experiences that illuminate the work being performed on stage, expand access to enriching educational activities, and create meaningful opportunities for musical and cultural exchange at Orchestra Hall and beyond. Building upon recent innovation projects, these initiatives and the broader framework for "The Minnesota Model" grew out of a collaborative year-long process that engaged musicians, staff, board, and numerous community members in identifying and analyzing the orchestra's core opportunities for continued growth.



Nashville Symphony (TN)

Nashville is changing at a rapid rate, with significant migration of new residents and dramatically diversifying ethnic and cultural demographics. As one of the major cultural institutions in the city, the Nashville Symphony believes that the orchestra must equitably reflect the viewpoints and talents of the community. The Futures Fund will support the Nashville Symphony's institutional diversity plan in three ways: 1) offering inventive musical programming through cross-cultural collaboration with artists from outside traditional classical music and through partnerships with civic organizations, 2) implementing educational initiatives such as the Accelerando Program, which prepares gifted young students of diverse ethnic backgrounds for the pursuit of music at the collegiate level and beyond, and 3) altering the organizational culture through efforts such as adapting hiring practices, building organizational capacity through training and education in systemic racism and anti-racism work, and collaborating with the symphony's musicians' committee and local union to identify potential solutions to creating pathways to orchestral careers for musicians of color.

New Haven Symphony Orchestra (CT)

With support from the Futures Fund, the New Haven Symphony Orchestra (NHSO) is launching a string fellowship program to encourage inclusion and diversity in the concert hall and across the greater New Haven community. The goal of the fellowship program is to address the lack of diversity in the orchestra in two ways: through the introduction of diverse orchestral fellows into the orchestra, and through the creation of educational programs that help diverse populations of children develop an interest in music, creativity, an appreciation of different cultures, and resilience. The program will accept two string fellows at the emerging level of their careers each year. During their two-year fellowship, these musicians will be paired with NHSO musician mentors to form a string quartet; this quartet will be integral to the NHSO's education programs. In addition to receiving lessons and the opportunity to perform in NHSO concerts, fellows will join NHSO musicians in leading community conflict resolution workshops and resilience programs for children in New Haven Public Schools, where they will use classical and contemporary music as empowerment tools for New Haven's minority majority community. The NHSO will track the educational impact of this project with the innovative Child and Youth Resilience Measure.

New World Symphony (Miami, FL)

The Futures Fund grant will support two audience initiatives by the New World Symphony (NWS): a collaboratively-sourced symphonic video and NWS Fellow-driven concerts and events. With the goal of creating a deeper relationship with the local community, NWS has introduced Project 305, asking South Floridians to participate in the creation of a collaboratively sourced symphonic video. Using a smartphone app, residents will contribute sights and sounds from their daily lives that represent their city, Miami. These audio and video clips will be the raw material of a crowd sourced symphony and film that will receive their world premiere in October 2017. With Fellow-driven concerts, NWS Fellows vie for several opportunities each season to design and produce a concert program from start to finish. With guidance and support from NWS staff, selected Fellows define a target audience, articulate an overarching artistic concept, design a program, plan a marketing strategy, form and manage a budget, and coordinate auxiliary events (e.g., post-concert social gatherings). These two initiatives are guided by NWS's mission: to develop Fellows as future leaders in orchestras, ensembles, and other arts organizations. Their professional careers will be informed by the greater insight and imagination developed through these experiences in new and challenging performance scenarios.



New York Philharmonic (NY)

With the support of the Futures Fund, the New York Philharmonic will use Facebook Live to engage new and diverse audiences around the world by broadcasting a series of full-length concerts and selections of chamber music pop-up concerts. These online experiences will be enriched with backstage interviews with orchestra musicians, commentary by featured guest artists and conductors, educational content about the works being performed, historical information from the New York Philharmonic Archives, and glimpses into the craft of music-making by the artists themselves. During these broadcasts, the orchestra will connect with audiences by encouraging conversation through Facebook's dynamic interface, allowing for questions and comments to be fielded by orchestra staff in real-time. This initiative will reach people across the globe in an interactive format, challenging real and perceived barriers to entry for classical music. Facebook Live is a new technological frontier for the New York Philharmonic, one that will help the orchestra engage existing online communities while building new audiences for classical music at David Geffen Hall and beyond. The New York Philharmonic plans to share its learning with the wider orchestra community so that other organizations may consider adopting this digital media platform to engage their own audiences.

Oakland Symphony (CA)

With a storied history and a long tradition of political and social justice activism, Oakland is one of the most diverse metropolitan areas in the U.S. The city is also grappling with the shifting cultural landscape and the tension that arises between the old and the new. With the support of the Futures Fund grant, in January 2018 the Oakland Symphony will launch a new series, called Playlist, to explore the impact of music, cultural equity and other pressing issues. This innovative blend of a concert with a town hall will engage thought leaders and doers in creating and hosting a radically different musical experience that will be guided by Music Director Michael Morgan and that will feature Oakland Symphony musicians, guest artists, and community partners. For the inaugural Playlist concert, socio-political comedian, activist, and Emmy-nominated CNN host, Oakland's own W. Kamau Bell, will bring music that inspires him -- from jazz to classical, from rock to funk -- to the stage to be performed by the Oakland Symphony and conducted by Michael Morgan. The musical selections will be enhanced by Bell and Morgan's commentary and discussion about the profound and sometimes unexpected roles music plays in the world beyond the concert stage.

Orchestra of St. Luke's (New York, NY)

With the support of the Futures Fund for an initiative called Classical Music Made Digital, the Orchestra of St. Luke's (OSL) will explore how a symphony orchestra can develop an impactful, audience-centric digital content development strategy. To investigate various content approaches from across the music industry, the OSL will commission comprehensive audience-focused research on the consumption of online classical music content. The research will also examine best practices gleaned from other art forms, including popular music, to inform strategic development of content production and distribution models. Using resulting data, the OSL will create a content strategy based on its artistic programming and the wide range of activities at The DiMenna Center for Classical Music, OSL's home in New York and a resource for the city's musical community, offering affordable, state-of-the-art rehearsal and recording facilities. This research and discovery process will yield critical data necessary for strategic digital initiatives and will inform future programming choices for the orchestra.



Pacific Symphony (Orange County, CA)

Pacific Symphony serves a broad region in Orange County, California. Though there is no defined urban center, this region's demographically and economically cosmopolitan communities make it distinct from a traditional suburban environment. As a critical strategy for enhancing its relevance to these communities, the Pacific Symphony has adopted a responsive, decentralized approach to programming and engagement. With support from the Futures Fund, the Pacific Symphony will continue to experiment with new concepts such as site-specific concerts and partnership-based participatory programming while expanding the organization's curatorial capacity to more quickly implement pilot programs. For site-specific concerts, the symphony will collaborate with regional partners, establishing two or three new strategic partners and locations per season. Together they will create customized programming for specific locales and audiences. Programming will constantly evolve, offering multi-disciplinary and multi-sensory experiences tailored to the collaborating artists and art forms. Through these efforts, the Pacific Symphony strives to become more artistically and creatively effective, while being more responsive to its growing community.

Portland Symphony Orchestra (ME)

The Futures Fund will provide near-term and endowment support for the Portland Symphony Orchestra's PSO Explorers program. Launched in 2013 as a response to a community survey that identified literacy as a critical need in the area, PSO Explorers is an arts-integrated literacy program in the Portland Public Schools. As an arts-integrated curriculum, PSO Explorers uses music to advance literacy of early elementary school students through a well-rounded learning experience. By integrating musical concepts into everyday studies, PSO Explorers helps students achieve grade-appropriate reading skills by third grade while also enhancing their social and emotional skills. Studies have shown that students who reach grade-appropriate reading skills by third grade are four times more likely than their peers to graduate from high school. The program is currently serving K-1 grades in two Portland schools. With the support of the Futures Fund, it will expand one grade level per year until K-3 classes are being served in both schools.

Richmond Symphony (VA)

Support from the Futures Fund will enable the Richmond Symphony to continue its multi-faceted approach to building public relevance in three ways. Through the Big Tent Project, the symphony will take a 5,700-square-foot mobile outdoor venue to green spaces throughout the Richmond metropolitan area to offer multi-day, collaborative community festivals. In the first year of this project, over 180 different organizations came together to plan and execute the events, developing a shared sense of ownership and shared success. The Futures Fund will also support youth development initiatives through programs like VIBE, an afterschool music instruction program for Richmond Public School students. With support of the Futures Fund, the symphony will also offer alternative musical experiences tailored to local audiences through programs such as Rush Hour at Hardywood Park Craft Brewery and the Casual Fridays concert series. All three of these projects demonstrate the Richmond Symphony's commitment to creating new opportunities for collaboration and audience building. Through this work, the symphony strives to meet a variety of audiences on their own terms (and in the case of the Big Tent, in their own back yards); to create experiences that feel authentic, meaningful, and inclusive; and to showcase the power of live music in the vibrant and growing city of Richmond.



San Diego Symphony (CA)

In recent years, the San Diego Symphony has elevated community engagement to the forefront of institutional priorities, engaging every part of the organization in expanding the orchestra's role in the community. With its location on the border of the U.S. and Mexico, and on the Pacific Rim, the city is in a unique position for greater cultural exchange. Moreover, the region's cultural identity has been redefined as San Diego County has welcomed more refugees than any other region of California in the past seven years, many from Iraq and other parts of the Middle East, as well as from Africa, Central America, and Asia. With support of the Futures Fund grant, the San Diego Symphony will actively participate in expanding the role of arts in the civic life of this diverse city and county by creating dialogues through thoughtful artistic programming and by cultivating a culture of learning and innovation in the organization. Key to the effort will be annual month-long festivals designed around thematic ideas addressing important issues of today. The most recent festival, *Our American Music*, explored the question, "What is our American voice?" The festival brought the San Diego Symphony together with jazz, hip-hop, and country musicians; film makers; poets; playwrights; mathematicians; and engineers from diverse cultural heritages for performances and creative projects.

San Francisco Symphony (CA)

The San Francisco Symphony will use its Futures Fund grant to continue developing programs for SoundBox, a new concert series in a refurbished rehearsal hall which debuted in late 2014 and in which the *Financial Times* saw "[endless] possibilities for the future." To create Soundbox, conceived of as a near-reversal of the traditional symphony experience, the production team works with symphony musicians as well as guest musicians, sound designers, visual artists, stage directors, composers, and other collaborators to design immersive concert experiences that enable the audience to approach classical music in a new way. SoundBox has also enabled symphony musicians and staff teams to work in new ways, collaborating more directly and working closely with new kinds of cross-departmental teams. The series includes numerous innovations – such as a flexible, club-like performing space, a technologically advanced audio system, removable video screens and lighting arrays, provocative concert programs curated by guest stars, and a rotating menu of drinks and snacks that patrons can take to their seats – that offer ideas for further development in the main concert hall.

Seattle Symphony (WA)

The Futures Fund Grant will support the Seattle Symphony's Simple Gifts initiative, which is a multi-year, institution-wide commitment to help those experiencing homelessness in Seattle and King County. Homelessness is a problem that touches the lives of over 10,000 people in King County on any given day; it was proclaimed a civic emergency by the city of Seattle. Over the last five years, the symphony's partnerships with over 60 nonprofits have shown that performing arts organizations have unique capabilities to create impact in ways that money or traditional human services alone cannot achieve. The goals of the Simple Gifts initiative are to empower those who are experiencing homelessness to connect with their creativity and to help build greater community. Toward these ends, the symphony will partner with 18 nonprofits on community-artistic collaborations, collective community service projects, strategic communications, and advocacy work. With this initiative, the Seattle Symphony seeks to contribute positively to social change and to identify new methods and strategies that orchestras may effectively employ to address issues important to the cities and regions they serve.