

MSOL Connect Madison Symphony Orchestra League

Project Description:

MSOL Connect is a series of one-hour online events offered free to MSOL members. Each event is an informative and entertaining presentation related to classical music. Members register online. We use the Zoom platform to host. Since the launch, events are scheduled for the third Thursday of each month at 7:00 p.m. Our inaugural event featured Steve Kurr, a dynamic instructor, musicologist, and conductor, who narrated an hour-long tour of the life, music, and legacy of Beethoven. Subsequent event topics have been: "Music & the Brain," "Humor & Classical Music," "A Brief History of Classical Music," "Development of the Modern Orchestra and its Instruments," and "Humor and (Classical) Music the 20th Century Parodists."

Project Timeline:

The concept was proposed at our May 14 MSOL Board meeting; planning began immediately after. Our first session was on June 15, and the second event on June 29. Events have been held monthly since then.

Project Goal/Evaluation:

Our goal was to keep members connected to the organization during a time when in-person activities would not be possible. Our volunteer organization quickly realized we would need to engage with members beyond our usual ways (luncheons, fundraisers, concerts, etc.) to stay relevant and meaningful in both the short and longterm. During our membership renewal period (May-June), we wanted to underscore the value of MSOL membership. Longer-term, not knowing when we would be able to meet again, we didn't want to "go dark" for an extended period.

We evaluated the initiative based on attendance (did it attract members) and satisfaction with the experience. The first two events attracted 26 and 31 attendees respectively and had overall positive reviews. In the four months since the award was submitted, we have continued to attract about 55 registrants; with many couples watching so the actual number of people watching is probably closer to 70 people. We continue to receive positive feedback.

Project Revenue:

The only expense is our presenter. Our presenter did not charge (or even suggest) a fee; he graciously agreed to accept our offer of a \$100 honorarium per presentation. We consider this an in-kind donation of his time to prepare for and present the program. We have spent \$700 on honorariums to date.

Fundraising was not the goal of MSOL Connect, but we did see an opportunity for donations. We have taken in \$1,145 in donations with only a "soft" ask with the donate link at registration.

Volunteer/Staff Involvement:

MSOL Connect is a volunteer-driven initiative. Eleven members serve on the committee. Committee members are responsible for contacting the speaker, organizing the logistical details, drafting copy for the invitation and reminder emails, posting on our Facebook page, and coordinating and compiling a post-event satisfaction survey. The committee works closely with the Madison Symphony Orchestra (MSO) marketing team on the email outreach, web content, Zoom logistics, and also with MSO's development staff on the donation opportunity. It is a true collaboration between volunteers and staff. The committee also works with the MSOL's paid administrative assistant to send acknowledgment letters to donors.

Recommendations:

We have made slight improvements with each event — from the timing of when emails promoting the event go out to when those registered receive the final link to the event. A key recommendation is to develop an event template that details tasks, timing, and responsibilities. We then update with new dates and any additional changes to procedures for the next event; this helps provide seamless project management. We also conduct a committee call following each event to review the event and discuss any changes or adaptations. We would recommend this as a best practice.

For more information or questions, contact:

Beth Rahko, President
Madison Symphony Orchestra League
bethrahko@hotmail.com, (608) 798-1999

Madison Symphony Orchestra (Group 3)
222 W. Washington, Ste. 460
Madison, WI 53703

Note: The population of Dane County
(where Madison is located) is approximately 553,000.

MSOL Connect Madison Symphony Orchestra League

EVENT IMAGES



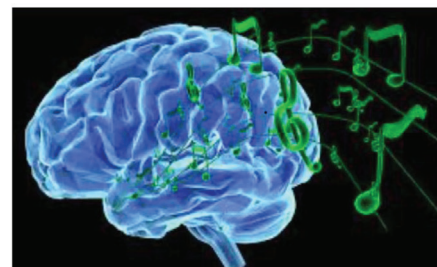
MSOL Connect Launch

Our new online program MSOL Connect launched on June 15 with a great Beethoven presentation and discussion by Steve Kurr. Thanks to everyone who attended this first event!

Kudos to Beth Rahko and her planning committee: ViAnn Cabezal, Ann Lindsey, Linda Lovejoy, Chuck Snowden, Daria & Mark Thomas, and Carolyn White. They've been hard at work brainstorming ideas and lining up engaging presentations for upcoming segments. Have a suggestion for a speaker or musical topic for this new format? Please email [Beth Rahko](mailto:Beth.Rahko@hotmail.com) (bethrahko@hotmail.com).



MSOL Connect featuring Michael Wu, Piano
Thursday, July 23 — 7:00 p.m.
Join us tonight!



MSOL Connect: Classical Music and the Brain
Thursday, September 24 — 7:00 p.m.



MEMBER E-NEWS



MSOL Connect:
A Brief History of Classical Music
August 20, 2020



REGISTRATION CLOSES TODAY!

AUGUST 2020

A Brief History of Classical Music
Thursday, August 20 — 7:00 p.m.

Who We Are:

The Madison Symphony Orchestra League (MSOL), which began in 1956, is an organization of 378 members (men and women) committed to supporting the artistic, financial and educational mission of the Madison Symphony Orchestra, a Group 3 orchestra. Members support the award-winning Education and Community Engagement programs of the MSO through a variety of annual fundraising events and activities. Members enjoy the fellowship of other music lovers through special concert previews, lunches with musical performances, and social events.