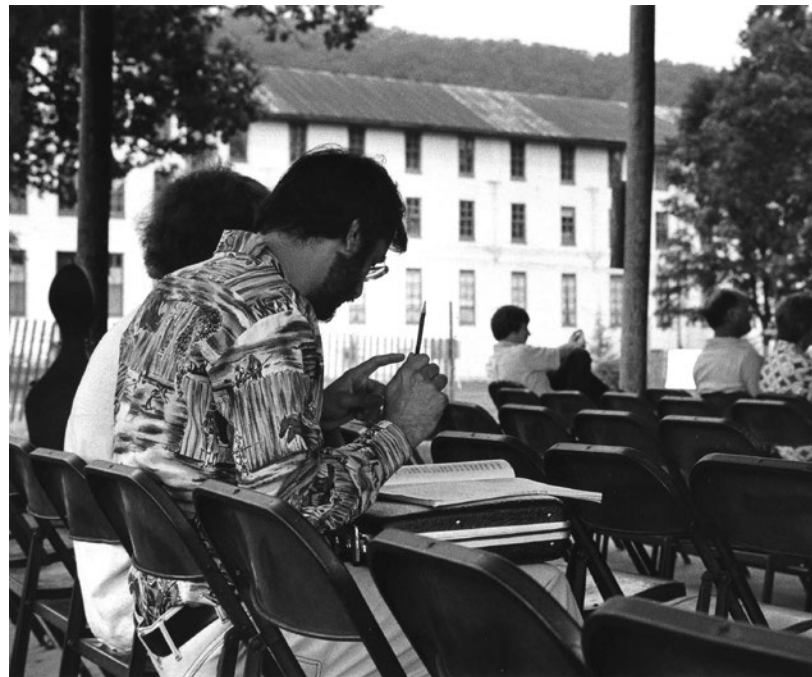


Artistic Statements

The League's artistic programs have a long history of supporting and connecting composers, conductors, and orchestra musicians. Like orchestras themselves, these programs continue to adapt to meet the needs of changing times.



A scene from the League's 1961 Conductors Workshop in Asilomar, California, with, from left, two unidentified musicians, John Edwards, Dorothy Nelms, Helen Thompson, Bill Nelms, Charles Thompson, and Dr. Carl Thompson.



From the above photo's July 1978 caption: "A student conductor 'conducts along' with the orchestra from a safe vantage point, while fellow students take their turn on the podium, during the Conductors/Musicians Workshop in Orkney Springs (VA) during July, sponsored by the American Symphony Orchestra League."

by Steven Brown

Most tours might encompass a state, region, or country. But one recent tour embraced a single city: Philadelphia. Composer Hannibal Lokumbe and a Philadelphia Orchestra string quartet began in February at the city's African American Museum, where they presented Lokumbe's *Fannie Lou Hamer*, a tribute to the civil-rights activist. When that performance ended, the group headed three blocks away to the National Museum of American Jewish History. The audience there heard *A Star for Anne*, Lo-

kumbe's "musical statement of thanks and gratitude" to Anne Frank. "As a child of color growing up in Texas, it meant a lot to me to read her diary," said Lokumbe in a February 2017 radio interview. "It let me know that insanity was not confined to the part of the world I lived in." Lokumbe's childhood also had shown him that music can restore the spirit in the face of life's hardships. So he and the quartet took his two compositions onward to Broad Street Ministries, a homeless shelter. The troupe's next stop was the Philadelphia Detention



Composer Hannibal Lokumbe (right in photo) and Kyu-Young Kim, artistic director and principal violin of the Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra, during a Music Alive convening in Minneapolis, February 2017.

orchestras are: they are ensembles of artists performing together. And there are a variety of challenges that orchestras face with respect to how they undertake their artistic work.”

Music Alive

The artistic needs for orchestras that the League has addressed, Rosen says, have come in two areas: connecting orchestras and their audiences with living composers; and cultivating conductors who can grow into music directors. Before Music Alive came along, composer residencies generally focused on turning out works for orchestras’ subscription concerts; the composer would create the new score, the orchestra would perform it, and—often—that would be that. Music Alive, a collaboration with New Music USA, takes a much broader view: it encourages each host orchestra and composer to tailor their activities to that community. Among the five current Music Alive pairings, which began last fall, Lokumbe and the Philadelphia Orchestra are striving to help people who face homelessness and other hardships. Their efforts dovetail with the

Center, a medium-security facility that houses about 1,000 prisoners.

Sharing music’s power would have been justification enough for these appearances. But Lokumbe also was laying the groundwork for *Healing Tones*, an oratorio he will compose as the focal point of his three-year Music Alive residency with the Philadelphia Orchestra. When Lokumbe’s stint in Philadelphia concludes in 2019, Music Alive will be reaching its 20th anniversary—making it one of the most durable programs produced by the League of American Orchestras, which this year marks its own 75th anniversary.

For nearly as long as the League has existed, the organization has worked to enrich the art form its members celebrate. In 1952, the ten-year-old organization sponsored one of its first conducting symposiums, a collaboration with the Philadelphia Orchestra and Eugene Ormandy. The next year brought workshops for orchestral musicians and for music critics. Composers came into the picture in 1960, when the League staged an Institute for Conductors, Composers, and Orchestras. The artistic programs and projects have gone on from there—alongside efforts to help orchestras tackle such issues as fundraising, marketing, board development, and governance.

“This is, after all, a performing art,” says Jesse Rosen, the League’s president and CEO. “This is an area where we provide support and help, because that’s what or-

chestra’s wide-ranging HEAR initiative, which uses music to foster health, education, access, and research.

The South Dakota Symphony Orchestra’s Music Alive residency reunites the ensemble with Jerod Impichchaachaaha’ Tate, who composed *Waktégli Olówan*—a cantata in the Lakota language, whose title means *Victory Songs*—for the orchestra in 2009. As part of the orchestra’s goal of connecting with its wider community, the program is designed to “create understanding through sharing something we all love,” says Music Director Delta David Gier in a statement. The orchestra and Tate, a Chickasaw Indian, will go into American Indian communities in an extension of the group’s Lakota Music Project, a collaboration created in 2005 between the orchestra and leaders of the Lakota community.

Orchestras that took part in the previous round of Music Alive residencies have already seen them pay dividends. Before

For nearly as long as the League has existed, it has worked to enrich the art form its members celebrate.

Music Alive came along, the Dayton Performing Arts Alliance’s three branches—the Dayton Philharmonic, Dayton Opera and Dayton Ballet, which merged in 2012—had never performed together. “Creating new and inventive work was one of the DPAA’s key founding goals, and the Music Alive residency helped us get a big jump-start on that,” Philharmonic Music Director Neal Gittleman says. The cross-fertilization fostered by the Music Alive support climaxed with Stella Sung’s opera *The Book Collector*, which in 2016 marshalled all three groups in their first joint production. Gittleman saluted *The Book Collector* for a second reason: “It’s not often that a brand-new opera can enchant and



At the Pacific Symphony, composer and Music Alive participant Narong Prangcharoen discussed creating a score about Orange County at a free Community Celebration before a performance of the work. In photo, he’s with Susan Kotses, Pacific Symphony’s vice president of education and community engagement, at the event.

1942

Cassius Clay (Muhammad Ali) is born in Louisville, Kentucky.

1942

American Symphony Orchestra League is founded when Leta G. Snow, manager of the Kalamazoo Symphony Orchestra, organizes a meeting in Chicago on May 21, 1942 of 23 representatives of orchestras. Snow serves as League president from 1942 to 1946.

First issue of *Inter-Orchestra Bulletin*, League newsletter about the orchestra field.

1943

In the U.S., WWII-related rationing goes into effect. In Poland, the Warsaw Jewish Ghetto Uprising against the Nazis.

1943

League dues are \$2.00 for individuals, \$5.00 for orchestras.

1944

Aaron Copland's *Appalachian Spring* premieres (wins 1945 Pulitzer Prize for Music) at the Library of Congress in Washington D.C. with choreography by Martha Graham.

1944

At the League's national meeting in Chicago, Treasurer Robert L. Barron (conductor of the Amarillo Philharmonic) reports that more than 50 orchestras are League members. At the meeting, members adopt a resolution opposing a 20% admissions tax on symphony tickets.

1945

World War II ends.

1946

League begins collecting and analyzing financial and operational data from member orchestras in annual study that eventually becomes known as *Orchestra Statistical Report*.



Detroit Symphony Orchestra

As part of her Music Alive residency with the Detroit Symphony Orchestra, composer Gabriela Lena Frank met with residents of America House Senior Living Communities to discuss integrating their stories into her compositions.

excite an *Aida-Bobème-Carmen*-happy audience like ours, but *The Book Collector* did!"

The Pacific Symphony in Southern California drew in an array of local community organizations to help Thai composer Narong Prangcharoen immerse himself in the region's setting and people. His impressions spawned *Beyond Land and Ocean*, a musical portrait of Orange County, where the orchestra makes its home. First, a string quartet presented a chamber version of the piece in community settings, and then the orchestra premiered the complete tone poem in a program capped off by Beethoven's Symphony No. 9. "We're looking at that as a model for how we can weave together community engagement and artistic programs," said Alison Levinson, the orchestra's director of community arts participation. The Pacific Symphony has strengthened its links to the Chinese-

American community, which led to the creation of the Lantern Festival, with orchestra and community ensembles joining together during Lunar New Year festivities. The goal, says Levinson, is "to create programming that reflects the plurality of different voices in Orange County."

What can Music Alive mean for a composer? "Artistically, I got to know the orchestra," says Gabriela Lena Frank about her recent Music Alive residency with the Detroit Symphony Orchestra. Principal musicians played solos in her *Concertino Cusqueño* with so much flair, Frank says, that she upped the ante in her Con-



Composer Stella Sung, whose Music Alive residency embraced the Dayton Philharmonic, Dayton Ballet, and Dayton Opera—the first time the three organizations collaborated on a new work.

certo for Orchestra—"a big, powerhouse, 30-minute blockbuster." The players "trusted me to make these demands on them," she adds. "They went for it. They were willing to take on something so tough. I grew so much as a result—writing that piece and trying to live up to my own promise. They made me a better composer."

Frank reaped rewards personally, too. As part of her Music Alive residency, she went into children's hospitals and played for the patients, improvising songs aimed at stimulating their senses and helping them for-

Taking a bow at the premiere of *Requiem Reimagined*, supported by a Music Alive residency at the Albany Symphony Orchestra, are members of the Sleeping Giant composer collective: from left, Andrew Norman, Jacob Cooper, Christopher Cerrone, Ted Hearne, and Timo Andres (not in photo: composer Robert Honstein).



Gary Gold Photography

Melody Eötvös during a rehearsal with the American Composers Orchestra of her composition *Red Dirt | Silver Rain*, premiered by the ACO in October 2015. Eötvös was one of the first participants in the Women Composers Readings and Commissions Program, which provides mentorship and support for female orchestral composers.



Courtesy American Composers Orchestra

just stunned,” Frank says. “They’re trying to take it all in. You see that look, and you think, ‘I know that look! You’re experiencing something that’s amazing.’ I love EarShot and what it’s aiming to do. It’s aiming to give a boost to composers’ confidence. It stuns them when they get to hear their music. And you want them then to move with it.”

Orchestras across the United States have taken

get their ailments. Time and again, she saw patients perk up and parents express gratitude. “It gave me a new perspective,” Frank says. “Yes, I might want to go for the big career. But when it comes to something as basic as not allowing a sick child to just die,

Launched in 1999, Music Alive has supported 115 composers, 77 orchestras, and 119 distinct residencies.

it’s humbling and makes you reset your parameters. It has given me a lot of thoughts on how to be a responsible, caring arts citizen.” Her first step: at her home in Mendocino County, California, in a small town that “doesn’t have a lot of consistent access to the arts,” the composer volunteers in an adult education center, teaching music appreciation. She also has brought in a string quartet to perform high school students’ compositions.

EarShot, Women Composers Readings and Commissions

In another pay-it-forward gesture, Frank has served as mentor in a different League artistic program: EarShot, a collaboration among the League, American Composers Orchestra, American Composers Forum, and New Music USA that brings composers together with orchestras for readings of their works and other professional-development support.

An EarShot session might mark the first time a composer hears an orchestra play his or her work. “Sometimes the composers look

part, and EarShot handles the setup. The program tailors each workshop to the orchestra’s interests, connecting an orchestra with, for example, composers of its region, Latino composers, or composers from jazz backgrounds, says Derek Bermel, artistic director at American Composers Orchestras. More than 100 composers have brought their works through the program since 2007.

An EarShot session might last one day or several. As the orchestra plays through a piece, the conductor, mentors, and orchestra musicians offer comments and suggestions. The ideas can range from quick fixes for balance problems to approaches a composer might take to his or her next work. Music-industry professionals counsel participants on topics from artist management to preparation of scores for performance.



Chris Lee

Julia Adolphe’s curtain call at the New York Philharmonic’s world premiere of her *Dark Sand, Sifting Light* at the inaugural NY Phil Biennial, June 2014. Looking on are Concertmaster Glenn Dicterow (left) and Music Director Alan Gilbert (right). Adolphe was one of the first participants in the League’s Women Composers Readings and Commissions Program, which provides mentorship and support for female orchestral composers.

1948

NBC Radio’s “Orchestras of the Nation” program broadcasts a session from the League’s convention in Charleston, West Virginia; the League’s first Gold Baton Award is given to Ernest La Prade, the show’s originator, for spotlighting orchestras. The broadcast brings the League its first national exposure.

1948–49

The League and the Conference of Major Orchestra Managers, a separate organization, do their first joint work, setting up a committee to study the federal tax on concert tickets, which both groups call a matter of “deep concern.”

1950

Helen Thompson, manager of the Charleston Symphony Orchestra in West Virginia, becomes the League’s first full-time staffer (title: Executive Secretary). She remains at the League through March 1970.

1951

Federal excise tax on symphony tickets is repealed.

1952

League publishes the book *The Community Orchestra: How to Organize and Develop It*, by Helen Thompson.

League presents its first course in orchestra management in North Carolina in conjunction with Brevard Music Foundation.

League hosts its first conducting symposium and workshop together with the...

1948

Harry Truman elected President, beating favored opponent Thomas Dewey.

1949

Premiere of Bernstein’s Symphony No. 2 (“Age of Anxiety”), by Boston Symphony, led by Koussevitzky with Bernstein at the piano.

1950

Korean War begins (ends 1953).

1952

Singin’ in the Rain premieres at New York City’s Radio City Music Hall.



At the 2016 Bruno Walter National Conductor Preview, left to right: conductor Rebecca Miller, League of American Orchestras President and CEO Jesse Rosen, conductor Stefan Sanders, conductor Conner Gray Covington, Nashville Symphony Music Director Giancarlo Guerrero, Nashville Symphony CEO and President Alan Valentine, conductor Roderick Cox, and conductor Paul Ghun Kim.

All this can continue to resonate after the sessions end. Saad Haddad, an Arab-American composer in his early twenties, brought his *Kaman Fantasy* to a 2015 workshop hosted by Ohio's Columbus Symphony and Music Director Rossen Milanov. Bermel recalls that Milanov was so struck by the work that he took it to

Since their inception in 1995, the League's biennial Bruno Walter National Conductor Previews have spotlighted 80 young conductors and led to more than 50 orchestral appointments.

his other ensemble, New Jersey's Princeton Symphony Orchestra, where he also serves as music director. Now, Haddad is creating a work co-commissioned by the two orchestras, which will each premiere it next spring. "Saad is kind of a poster child for these programs," Bermel says. EarShot helped him "establish a relationship with a conductor who valued his music and appreciated his compositional voice. That's what we hope for with EarShot—that composers develop professional relationships, and that orchestras develop relationships with composers they like."

EarShot is the gateway to another League project, the Women Composers Readings and Commissions Program, which is administered with the American Composers Orchestra and EarShot, and

is supported by the Virginia B. Toulmin Foundation. Since its launch in 2014, the program has provided orchestra sessions and mentoring for 20 women, and it has commissioned works from seven. Julia Adolphe, one of the program's first composers, reminisced in *Symphony's* Summer 2016 issue about staying up all night during the 2014 EarShot workshop with the New York Philharmonic to revise her *Dark Sand, Shifting Light* in keeping with mentors' tips. The success of that work led the Philharmonic to commission her Viola Concerto, which the Philharmonic performed in November 2016 with Principal Viola Cynthia Phelps as soloist.

"My life has changed dramatically in the past year and a half," Adolphe wrote in *Symphony*, "and I am now a full-time composer pursuing my dreams.... I am incredibly grateful for the opportunity to share my music."

Bruno Walter National Conductor Preview

The Utah Symphony this fall brings aboard a new assistant conductor: Conner Gray Covington, who was a conducting fellow at the Curtis Institute of Music last season. Covington was one of five participants in the 2016 edition of the League's Bruno Walter National Conductor Preview, a showcase the League inaugurated in 1995 and the latest iteration of the League's ongoing support of conductors, work that goes back in multiple forms to the organization's earliest years. Donald Thulean, former music director of Washington's Spokane Symphony, helped launch the

League's first National Conductor Preview, which was later named for legendary conductor Bruno Walter. The showcase compensates for an important missing ingredient in the business of conducting.

"Conductor training in reality is like training a doctor or lawyer—which is to say, when you finish school, you're not ready to become a professional conductor," says the League's Rosen. "Conductors need an internship and residency in the same way doctors do. But the system doesn't provide that. So the League has addressed that through a variety of means." Several years ago, Rosen recalled, the League sponsored resident-conductor positions with U.S. orchestras. More recently, the League's efforts have concentrated on the Conductor Preview as well as occasional master classes taught by podium veterans, including one hosted



Roderick Cox, shown here conducting the Nashville Symphony, was one of five participants in the League's 2016 Bruno Walter National Conductor Preview. The other four were Rebecca Miller, Paul Ghun Kim, Conner Gray Covington, and Stefan Sanders.

by Marin Alsop and the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra in conjunction with the League's 2016 Conference. Alsop coached five young up-and-comers as they worked with her orchestra in Aaron Copland's *Appalachian Spring* and movements from Brahms's Symphony Nos. 2 and 3. Since their inception, the National Conductor Previews, held biennially, have spotlighted 80 young conductors and led to more than 50 orchestral appointments. The Nashville Symphony and Music Director Giancarlo Guerrero—himself a Preview alumnus—hosted the May 2016 edition. It began as orchestra leaders from across the United

The inaugural Ford Musician Awards for Excellence in Community Service were presented at the League of American Orchestras' 2016 Conference. From left: Baltimore Symphony Orchestra Percussionist Brian Prechtli; South Dakota Symphony Orchestra Principal Oboe Jeffrey Paul; Oakland Symphony Cellist Beth Vandervennet; League Chairman Patricia A. Richards; Ford Motor Company Fund Community Relations Manager Elizabeth McAdam; League President and CEO Jesse Rosen; Detroit Symphony Orchestra Bass Clarinet Shannon Orme; Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra Violist Penny Brill.



Richard Lippenholz

States watched Covington and the other participants take turns in closed work sessions with the orchestra, with Guerrero making suggestions. In a first for the program, the finale was a public concert that let the orchestra professionals observe the young conductors in the heat of performance.

For Mi Ryung Song, the League's director of strategic initiatives, the Conductor Preview is "a great platform to see how the participants took feedback and adjusted—even from one day to the next. For the people looking for potential music directors, it also raises the game. You see how the conductors handle the nerves." In another first, the Nashville Symphony posted the concert video online for 45 days, enabling far more orchestra leaders than before to check out the aspiring conductors. Plans are in the works for the League's 2018 Conductor Preview to be shared online.

Ford Musician Awards for Excellence in Community Service

Orchestras couldn't exist without orchestra musicians, of course. And as more and more musicians are active outside the concert hall as evangelists for classical music, in 2016 the League launched the new Ford Musician Awards for Excellence in Community Service to honor and support their efforts in education, cross-cultural diplomacy, and bringing music's therapeutic power to hospitals and special-needs facilities. In addition to recognition, each award includes \$2,500 for the musician and \$2,500 for his or her orchestra, earmarked for professional-development sessions helping other musicians serve their communities. The awards are made possible by Ford Motor Company Fund.

Inaugural honorees included South Dakota Symphony Orchestra Principal Oboe Jeff Paul, who initiated the Lakota Mu-

Choreographed Visuals for Orchestra

- True visual accompaniments
- As seen on PBS
- Perfect timing beat by beat
- No click track
- Holst: *The Planets*
- Dvořák: *Symphony No. 9*
- Mussorgsky: *Pictures at an Exhibition*



1-800-270-0480

www.adrianwyard.com

Music Project that Music Alive composer Tate will help extend. The Lakota Music Project is a multi-year effort to bridge musical cultures by performing for and with American Indian musicians and presenting programs that meld Native and Western European styles. Also honored in 2016 was Detroit Symphony Orchestra Bass Clarinet Shannon Orme, who won the award for her participation in the Neighborhood Residency Initiative, which includes musician visits to healthcare facilities and nursing homes, subscription series and chamber music in surrounding suburbs, and in-school and other educational activities. The DSO subsequently launched a lunch-and-learn series featuring guest speakers on subjects such as musicians and healthcare; working with students; and music and literacy. Another Ford award went to Pittsburgh Symphony Violist Penny Anderson Brill for her Music and Wellness Program, which brings live music to healthcare settings and develops the complementary relationship



Baltimore Symphony Orchestra Percussionist Brian Prechtl with members of the bucket band he directs as part of the BSO's OrchKids program. Prechtl received one of the League's Ford Musician Awards for Excellence in Community Service, which recognize orchestra players' work in education, cross-cultural diplomacy, and bringing music's therapeutic power to hospitals and other special-needs facilities.

between musicians and music therapists. The orchestra followed up by having music therapists train five musicians in providing bedside therapy sessions.

"We know that our musicians play at an extraordinarily high level," Rosen says. "Here is another area in which our musicians are demonstrating real quality and excellence." The awards "recognize that the orchestra and the musician work hand-in-hand and need each other," Rosen says. "The musicians are doing this work in the context of the organization, which often is arranging and setting up the relationships with community partners. You need both sides." **S**

STEVEN BROWN, a Houston writer specializing in classical music and the arts, is the former classical music critic of the *Orlando Sentinel*, *Charlotte Observer*, and *Houston Chronicle*.

Music Alive is made possible through a lead grant from The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation with additional support from The Aaron Copland Fund for Music, the Francis Goelet Charitable Lead Trusts, The Amphion Foundation, and The ASCAP Foundation Bart Howard Fund.

The Bruno Walter National Conductor Preview is made possible by generous support from Martha Rivers Ingram and the National Endowment for the Arts.

Brass Transit

COLOR MY WORLD - The MUSIC OF CHICAGO

"Saturday In the Park", "If You Leave Me Now", "Does Anybody Really Know What Time It Is"

"Among the best concerts ever" - "The audience was spellbound" - Dayton Philharmonic
 "Five standing ovations" - Mississauga Symphony Orchestra
 "The Best of the Best" - Bemus Bay Pops

Booking Contact: Marilyn Rosen / Marilyn Rosen Presents 617. 901.9580
marilyn@marilynrosenpresents.com