

QUARTER NOTES

News for Hartford Symphony Orchestra Donors & Friends

DONORS MAKING A DIFFERENCE: CREATING HSO'S 41ST YOUNG ARTISTS COMPETITION

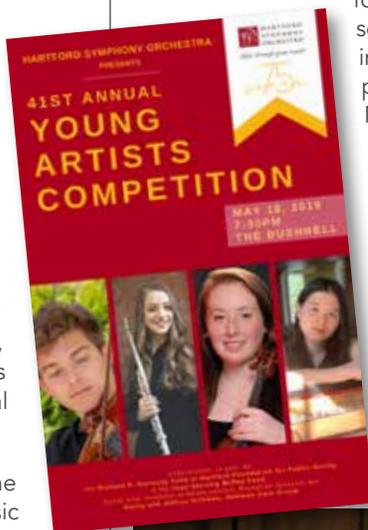
Donors make magic happen. In HSO's 75th Anniversary season, the magic was the return of HSO's Young Artists Competition.

For ninety minutes on Saturday night, May 18, 2019, you could have heard a pin drop in the Belding Theater. Audience members sat in hushed silence, as they listened to four Young Artists Competition finalists perform their final round with the Hartford Symphony Orchestra. The chance to perform with a professional symphony is rarely available to high school musicians, and each of our young musicians made the most of this exceptional opportunity.

The audience was awed by the moving, mature and virtuosic performances and, together, musicians and audience waited anxiously as the judges deliberated before announcing the winners. Honorable mention was awarded to pianist Jiaqi (Kaki) Su, third place to flutist Grace Helmke, second place to violist Gabe Galley, and, in first place, was violist Sofia Gilchenok, an 11th grade student from Columbia, Connecticut. Sofia is a student at Julliard's Pre-college division and will continue her studies at the Curtis Institute of Music in the fall of 2019.

Our four remarkable finalists were chosen from an original field of 30 applicants,

all Connecticut students in grades 9-12. From the original group, ten of our young musicians were invited for a second in-person semi-final round held at Trinity College on Friday, May 17, at which the four finalists were selected to compete in the public performance on May 18th.



The final round judges included Melvin Chen (Director of the Norfolk Chamber Music Festival, Deputy Dean and Piano Faculty at Yale School of Music), Larry Alan Smith (Dean of

the Hart School of Music at the University of Hartford) and Eric Trudel (Vocal Faculty at Hart School of Music at the University of Hartford, Piano Faculty at Southern Connecticut State University.)

The competition would not have been possible without the generous support of donors who stepped forward to make certain that young musicians are given essential support and encouragement to pursue their art. Our 2019 Young Artists Competition was supported by the Jean Sterling McRae Fund and a grant from the Richard P. Garmany Fund at the Hartford Foundation for Public Giving. But it was the commitment of 28 individual donors which brought the Young Artists Competition to life, teaching our young musicians about the importance of philanthropy and encouraging them to always pay it forward.

Continued on next page



Carolyn Kuan and Steve Collins with the four winners and three judges of the Young Artists Competition.

Continued from previous page:
Donors Making a Difference



Sofia Gilchenok, Violist, Winner of the Competition, in the final round performance.



Gabe Galley, Violist, in the final round of the Competition.

YOUNG ARTISTS COMPETITION DONORS

Judith & Ken Boudreau
Donna Collins
Nancy & Ron Compton
Ruth Ann Davis
Hollis Dorman
Lois Muraro & Carl Elshans
Barri Marks & Woody Exley
Karen Fritsche
Rosemary Gaidos
Rona Gollob
Beverly & Arnold Greenberg
Nancy Grover
Wendy Haller
Laura Harris
Nancy & Jeffrey Hoffman
Helen & Don Hughlett
Susan & Robert Izard
Claire & Jan Kennedy
Irene Loretto
Ann McKinney
Genevieve & Michael Pfaff
Joan & Alan Reiskin
Dara Ribicoff
Amy Lynn Silverman
Joseph Spada
Debby Szajnberg
Diane Whitney
Eliane Sandler & Larry Zemel

THE CONDUCTING LESSON: AN AFTERNOON WITH ADAM BOYLES, HSO'S ASSISTANT CONDUCTOR



Adam Boyles, with his class of delighted first-time conductors!

Think you'd have no problem standing on a podium and waving your arms in front of an orchestra? On the afternoon of Thursday, May 23rd, HSO subscribers and donors got a chance to try it. Following a moderated conversation with Adam Boyles, led by HSO Executive Director Steve Collins, all attendees were treated to a conducting lesson. The art of communicating different information to different musicians, using each hand independently, is challenging enough, but after less than two minutes, participants were astounded to find that it is physically draining as well.

The idea of a musical ensemble with someone in a position of "authority" dates as far back as the Middle Ages, when the 'leader' used hand gestures. In churches, the leader often held a large staff to signify his role, and, as music became more rhythmically driven the conductor moved the staff up and down to mark the beat. Some leaders resorted to pounding the staff on the floor to beat the time, a sound that must have been deafening to the musicians and the audience. The instrumental music of the Baroque era relied on a member of the ensemble to take on the role of conductor, and that job invariably fell to the first violinist (or concert master).



Assistant Conductor Adam Boyles, chatting with Steve Collins

By the early 1800's, a dedicated conductor was the norm, and the baton (easier to see than bare hands or rolled up sheaves of paper) became more common. Today, the primary role of the conductor is to "shape" the music, using tempo, articulation, phrasing and changes in dynamics.

But it's even more than that. As he taught conducting techniques, Adam also explained that a good conductor must also accurately "cue" the musicians and, like any good leader, must take the time to understand the needs of each individual musician in order to help each play their best. Adam discussed the importance of properly communicating the **ictus**, defined as the moment when a downward vertical motion connects with an imaginary horizontal line. The ictus signals the start of the piece, a movement or a phrase. It can be the cue for the entire orchestra, or for one musician's entrance. Nonverbal communication skills are essential tools for every conductor and learning how to accommodate the many personalities in an orchestra requires a conductor who is sensitive yet clear, who can command authority without being dictatorial, and who can inspire musicians to perform at their highest levels. It's a juggling act, to be sure, and we are so lucky to have Adam Boyles, our brilliant assistant conductor and juggler extraordinaire! 🎭

If you are interested in invitations to the special events offered to subscribers throughout the new season, please contact Julie Jarvis at 860-760-7310, jjarvis@hartfordsymphony.org

MUSIC BUILDS COMMUNITY (MBC) UPDATE: WE'D BE NOWHERE WITHOUT YOU!

In April of 2017, with a generous \$300,000 grant from the Hartford Foundation for Public Giving, the Hartford Symphony Orchestra embarked on an ambitious mission: raise \$10 million to secure the Symphony's future.

It seemed like an impossible mountain to climb, but by the time we publicly announced the campaign in April of 2018, we had already received commitments for an impressive \$4.6 million. Today, a scant two years from the date we began, our campaign stands at \$8.4 million – 84% of our initial goal.

What made the impossible possible? **You did.** People just like you pledged over \$5.9 million, amounting to 71% of the total raised. Many of those gifts are transformative, which means that person's gift is the largest they've ever given to a non-profit organization. To date, 185 individuals have stepped forward, helping us turn an aspiring vision into an attainable reality: achieve the entire \$10,000,000 goal by December 31, 2019. We still



have further to go – but what remarkable progress has been made!

YOU, our treasured community of patrons, audience members and music lovers, have responded with an outpouring of enthusiasm, excitement and hope, making clear that our entire HSO family shares an unshakeable belief in the power of music to change lives and build community. And there's even more good news.

At the HSO's 75th Anniversary Gala on April 27th, we proudly announced that an anonymous company will equally match every dollar raised over \$10 million up to an additional \$1 million. With the momentum building, we are on track to

raise \$12 million - \$2 million more than our original goal. You have transformed a dream into a reality.

Every person is vital to the success of MBC – and the future of the HSO. Never think that your contribution is too small or doesn't "move the needle." Our strength comes from our unity and shared purpose. Achieving a monumental goal takes all of us, pulling together in the same direction. With each person who says "yes", or spontaneously asks about ways to participate, we are inspired to work even harder. Together, we CAN reach beyond our grasp.

Every gift is vital to the success of MBC. For more information on how **YOU** can make a difference and join the community's commitment to keep the Hartford Symphony Orchestra on track for generations to come, please contact Campaign Manager Ted Bruttomesso, Jr. at tbruttomesso@hartfordsymphony.org or 860-760-6309.

DOUBLE YOUR IMPACT: THE POWER OF MATCHING GIFTS!

The news is looking good for nonprofits and charities: charitable giving is on the rise. The most recent statistics regarding generational giving as reported on the website NonProfit Source reveal that 72% of Baby Boomers make regular gifts to charities. But, to our surprise, Millennials lead the population, with 84% of Millennials making regular annual charitable gifts.

How can we harness this positive charitable energy? By leveraging the power of matching gifts. According to the website Double the Donation, more than 18 million individuals currently work for or were previously employed by companies with matching

gift programs, and approximately \$2 to \$3 billion is donated annually through matching gift programs. Unfortunately, we have not fully utilized the power of the match: an estimated \$4 to \$7 billion in matching gift funds remains unclaimed each year.

At the Hartford Symphony, we are doing everything possible to maximize the power of your gift, and we've made it easy to find out if your contribution qualifies for a match. The matching gift page of our website has a built-in search engine created to make it easy to match a gift. Just type in the name of an employer or

company to learn if a matching gift program is available, and then click on the company name for detailed information about how to file for a match. We encourage everyone to use the resources on our website: <https://hartfordsymphony.org/individual-support/matching-gifts/>

In addition, we are always available to help. If you are curious to learn if your current or former employer offers matching opportunities, use the resource offered on our website, or contact Jen Galante at 860-760-7302 or jgalante@hartfordsymphony.org.



Let's use matching gifts to leverage the incredible generosity of our Millennials, Gen X'ers, Baby Boomers and the Greatest Generation. There is no telling what we can accomplish together.

Sparkle!

A GALA TO CELEBRATE HSO'S 75TH DIAMOND ANNIVERSARY SEASON

On Saturday, April 27th, nearly 430 guests gathered in the Connecticut Convention Center's Exhibition Hall for HSO's Annual Bravo! Gala, Sparkle, to raise funds and support for our vital music education and community engagement programs. Thanks to the generosity of donors, attendees and sponsors, it was the most successful event in HSO's recent history, with net proceeds that exceeded last year by more than 50%.

This dazzling evening was hosted by Gala Co-Chairs Rebecca Corbin Loree and Jeff Verney and, as has become tradition, featured a rousing 45-minute performance by the Hartford Symphony Orchestra.

Highlights included the world premiere of *To Hartford*, a special composition by Connecticut native and renowned conductor, John Jesensky, to honor the Symphony's 75th Anniversary. John, who was inspired to pursue a career in music when he attended HSO performances as a child, is a graduate of the Hartt School of Music, and now can regularly be

seen conducting the national tour performances of Harry Potter in Concert.

The evening's program included George Gershwin's *I Got Rhythm Variations*, which premiered in 1934 (the very year that the HSO was founded) and featured 13-year-old soloist Ruochong "Steven" Cui on piano. Gala guests, who eagerly await our traditional surprise and audience participation component, were delighted when percussionist and HSO Executive Director, Steve Collins, stepped onstage to perform Leroy Anderson's *The Typewriter* (on a vintage 1934 Royal typewriter manufactured in Hartford) and then invited everyone to perform the "carriage bell" portion, using "Sparkle bells" found at every guest's place.

We are so grateful to all who helped make this milestone anniversary Gala an incredible success. Whether you celebrated with us in person or in spirit, we deeply appreciate your treasured partnership in HSO's mission to bring music into the lives of those who need it most. 



Gala Co-Chairs Jeff Verney and Rebecca Loree





We hope to see all of you at next year's Bravo! Gala
PLEASE SAVE THE DATE! SATURDAY, MAY 2, 2020
at the Connecticut Convention Center!

DONORS INSPIRING OTHERS: MEET CAROLYN LESTER

THE NEWEST MEMBER OF HSO'S ENCORE SOCIETY

Carolyn Lester is a proud Hartford Symphony Orchestra donor because she "knows that a financial commitment from every audience member" is needed to maintain a high-level professional symphony in the community. As Board President of Hop River Chamber Music since 2012 (her husband, Ken, was the first board president in the early 1980s), Carolyn recognizes the fragility of our art and music institutions (as exemplified by the loss of the opera and the ballet in Hartford), and is "determined to do her part to keep the music playing." Serious about her desire to protect and preserve music for future generations, Carolyn told us of her most recent decision to include the Hartford Symphony Orchestra in her estate plans, making Carolyn our newest Encore Society member. She hopes to encourage others to do the same.

Carolyn's affinity for chamber and symphonic music dates back to her early childhood in Athens, Ohio, growing up in a home filled with music. Her father was an administrator at Ohio University in Athens for 45 years, and her parents regularly took Carolyn and her two siblings (a twin brother and older sister) to the Community Concerts held at the University. To keep within their household budget, Carolyn's mother volunteered to sell tickets for the concerts, and as "compensation" for her efforts, received free tickets based on the number of tickets sold. Carolyn's mom made certain to sell enough to secure five free tickets, so the entire family could attend concerts regularly.

Carolyn began piano lessons at age seven, then added flute lessons in 6th grade, so that she could join the school band. Carolyn's first "neighborhood" piano teacher inspired and cemented her love of music. When her teacher moved away, Carolyn, then a 7th grader, along with her friend, Beverly, were invited to continue piano studies with a teacher in the Music Department of Ohio University. The two friends delighted in opportunities to perform the repertoire for two pianos, a tradition that continues to this day whenever they get together.

In high school, Carolyn became a volunteer usher for the Community Concerts, ensuring her ability to attend concerts. "Can you imagine? As ushers, we wore formal



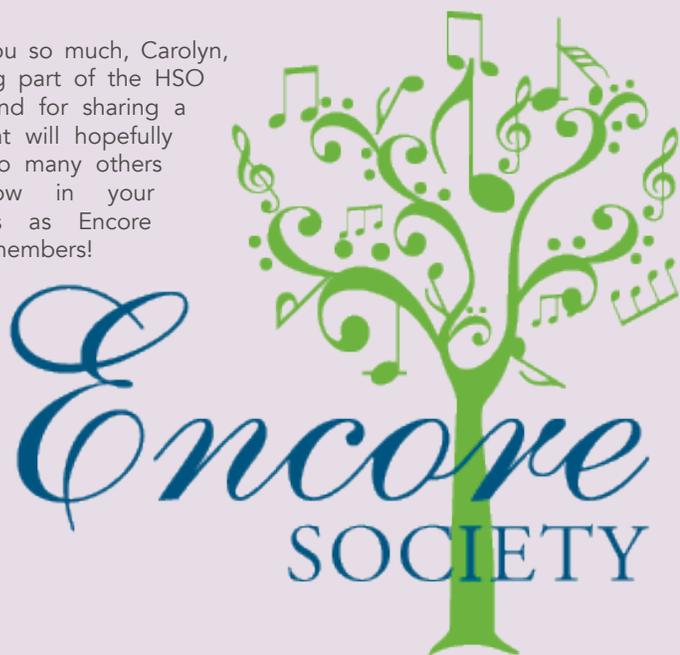
Carolyn Lester

gowns to the concerts!" Carolyn recalled. She became an accompanist in college and for a violin teacher's students and, throughout her life, has played for various worship services.

Carolyn, a graduate of Ohio University, began her teaching career in Minnesota, then relocated to Connecticut on an invitation from the University of Connecticut to teach in the Child Development and Family Relations Department. Carolyn completed her PhD at UConn and ultimately worked in the Connecticut State Department of Education as the Kindergarten/Primary Education Consultant.

It was a natural next step for Carolyn to become a donor and Encore Society member. "I've always loved classical music. As I formed connections with HSO's outstanding musicians, administrators, and so appreciate Carolyn Kuan and Adam Boyles, the Hartford Symphony became even more meaningful and personal to me. Being a donor honors a vital part of my life. If I had to be stranded on an island, the most important thing I'd want with me is music!"

Thank you so much, Carolyn, for being part of the HSO family, and for sharing a story that will hopefully inspire so many others to follow in your footsteps as Encore Society members!



“The true meaning of life is to plant trees under whose shade you do not expect to sit.”

~ Nelson Henderson

With each new donor, our **75 FOR 75 CAMPAIGN** to honor the 75th Anniversary season of the HSO, builds momentum. Our goal is to have 75 members of the Encore Society and your role in our mission is critical. You may have already named the HSO as a beneficiary of a retirement account, a life insurance policy, or another asset. Or you may have named the HSO in your will. Simply letting us know of your plans will qualify you as one of the **75 FOR 75**.

The impact of your decision is long lasting. Your gift ensures that music continues for future generations and advances the values most important to you: maintaining music in our community.

Haven't thought about it yet? We would be happy to chat and share the many ways your support can build a strong and bright future for the HSO.

For more information, please contact Ruth Sovronsky, Development Director, at 860-760-7321, or rsovronsky@hartfordsymphony.org

TAX TIPS:



HOW TO EARN TAX-DEDUCTIBLE INCOME AND BENEFIT THE HSO

With good medical care, most of us are living longer than our parents and grandparents. But living longer brings new concerns: will I have enough to last during my lifetime? If you are over 70, the HSO's partnership with the Hartford Foundation for Public Giving offers our donors access to a wonderful tool that helps ensure financial security combined with charitable giving. It's called the charitable gift annuity.

Just like an annuity with an insurance company that pays a fixed income for your life, the charitable gift annuity does the same with a few important differences. First, there are significant tax benefits: there is an immediate tax deduction for the entire principal used to create the annuity (CGA) AND, for a period of years (depending on your age), the majority of the monthly income paid to you by the annuity is also tax exempt from any and all income taxes. Second, upon your demise, the earnings from the annuity remainder will be paid to the charity of your choice.

The HSO's partnership with the Hartford Foundation for Public Giving now gives the HSO the ability to offer our donors the opportunity to create charitable gift annuities

that will benefit you – as well as the Hartford Symphony Orchestra. How does it work? Your gift is set aside in a reserved account and invested. With annuity rates based on your age at the time of the gift, you receive a fixed monthly or quarterly payout for the rest of your life. Individuals or couples can set up a CGA. The annuity may be funded with cash donations, stock or securities. It's considered a “win-win” for both donors and the charities who are the intended beneficiaries.

The older we get, the more we are concerned about having a steady stream of income to secure our futures. The CGA could well be the best answer, while benefitting the HSO you love. Working in partnership with the Hartford Foundation, the HSO's Music Builds Community Campaign has already received three gifts made through charitable gift annuities.

Sound compelling? Would you like to learn more? For details and more information, we urge you to contact Ted Bruttomesso, Capital Campaign Manager, at 860-760-7309, or tbruttomesso@hartfordsymphony.org

SPOTLIGHT ON MUSICIAN:

EDDIE SUNDRA

HSO'S NEW ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL CLARINET

In September of 2016, Eddie won the position of 3rd Clarinet/Bass Clarinet with the Hartford Symphony. Knowing him as well as we do, we were all thrilled when, in September of 2018, he won the job of Assistant Principal, replacing Ron Krentzman who retired from that position last season. Eddie is a brilliant musician, and you can see a sample of his gifts here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=piHyZnG3tcw> If you enjoyed that, perhaps you'd like to see more! <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EAz9PADC3Vc>

HSO's Hosting Program makes it possible for Eddie to perform with us and he is a treasured member of our HSO community!

Quarter Notes: At what age did you begin studying music?

I started clarinet in fourth grade (around the age of 10 if I'm doing the math correctly). Technically, I started on guitar much earlier, but that was mostly me strumming as hard as I could on a toy instrument.

QN: Was there a teacher who was a powerful influence for you?

I was lucky to start music with a band director, Mrs. Bishop, who also played clarinet. I would skip recess to take lessons with her. I also had an incredible high school teacher, David Blumberg, and my high school band director Craig Snyder for really influencing my decision to study music professionally. Both of them really showed me what music is all about and introduced me to the most incredible music that I still play today. I had a lot of amazing experiences in band, jazz band, and youth orchestra (Delaware County Youth Orchestra) in high school.

QN: How did you choose clarinet?

One of my good friends was starting clarinet, so I chose it too. My parents advised no drums!

QN: Are you ever interested in experimenting with other instruments?

Oh yes! I think bassoon would have been a really fun instrument. If I had to choose one of the strings, I think it would be probably cello. Brass? Probably French horn. I also wish I had learned more piano and taken guitar lesson. I have to file all of these under the category of "future endeavors."

QN: Tell us a little about your formal musical training.

I received my Bachelor of Music (BM) from Penn State University and a Master's in Music (MM) from the University of Michigan, though my football loyalty is to Penn State!

QN: What are your proudest achievements connected to music?

That is a very tough question. Having grown up in Pennsylvania, one of my fondest memories was having the chance to perform with the Philadelphia Orchestra in 2018. While in high school, I went to many Philadelphia Orchestra concerts in high school, so performing on that stage was an unbelievable experience. Another noteworthy memory was performing a chamber concert at a prison in Ohio. It was an incredibly powerful and moving experience to play for people who don't often get the opportunity to regularly experience music. This is something we take for granted – but we must remember that hearing live music is a special gift that not everyone can enjoy.

QN: Do you have any favorite composers?

I love Ravel and Shostakovich, but I have another favorite: Mieczyslaw Weinberg was a Polish composer who lived during the era of Stalin. His music is similar to Shostakovich, but with more Jewish influences and a strong line of melody. He wrote many great symphonies and chamber music, which are finally starting to be recognized.



QN: What about non-classical composers?

There are so many! Sufjan Stevens, Joanna Newsom, many prog and math rock groups, some electronic music (which I compose occasionally), some Irish music (The Gloaming), and Bombino (Saharan Desert Rock), just to name a few.

QN: If you were not a musician what's something else you might be doing?

I always enjoyed tinkering with gadgets and model rockets. For quite some time, I thought strongly about doing an engineering degree, so that would have been my other choice.

QN: What would you love doing on a snowy day?

Skiing! I love downhill but I'm now working on my cross-country skills. And relaxing by a fire, watching the snow fall, is beautiful.

QN: Do you have a special wish or dream you can share with us?

I would love to find a way to use music to bring awareness to social and environmental issues in our community – and in our world.

QN: What are some things about you that no one else would expect?

I compose music and have some pieces published on Potenza Music. You can find more at www.eddiesundra.com And – I make excellent pizza and grilled cheese sandwiches!**

***Eddie's unique culinary gifts were featured as a special auction item at this year's Gala, helping to raise critical funds for HSO's work in music education. Thanks Eddie!!*



Alive through great music!

If you would like to receive this newsletter electronically, please contact Ruth Sovronsky. Call 860-760-7321 or e-mail rsovrnsky@hartfordsymphony.org and provide your e-mail address.