

QUARTER NOTES

News for Hartford Symphony Orchestra Donors & Friends

DE COM POSED

De-Composed, a feature that explores the composers we want to know better.

This November, we will present the music of two American icons: Leonard Bernstein and Aaron Copland. From *West Side Story* to a popular beef commercial, their music is so well known that the two are household names. But one of their contemporaries, a brilliant woman composer, remains virtually unknown. Please meet Margaret Bonds, one of many Black composers who deserve our attention and recognition.

MARGARET BONDS (1913 – 1972)

Margaret Bonds is no lightweight in the world of music. She was the first African American soloist to appear with the Chicago Symphony when she performed the world premiere of Florence Price's Piano Concerto in D Minor in 1934.¹ (Composer Florence Price was featured in our first Decomposed column, in the Spring 2021 Quarter Notes edition.)

Margaret was born in Chicago on March 3, 1913. Her father, Monroe Majors, was a physician, lecturer, author and activist, and her mother, Estella Bonds, was a trained musician who taught piano, and served as the church choral director and organist.² Her parents divorced when Margaret was four, and Margaret grew up in her mother's household, which routinely welcomed the leading artistic and literary figures of the day.³ The encounters were so extensive that Margaret would later claim that she

knew every living African American composer.⁴

Margaret started piano lessons with her mother, but by age eight, she was studying piano formally. In high school, she studied composition with William Levi Dawson (a famed Black composer of the time), and in 1929, she was one of the few Black students admitted to Northwestern University.⁵ She was permitted to study but was denied the right to live at the school or use their facilities.⁶ It was Margaret's first encounter with institutional racism, and she found strength in the poetry of Langston Hughes, which she discovered in the Evanston Public Library:

"I was in this prejudiced university, this terribly prejudiced place – I was looking in the basement of the Evanston Public Library where they had the poetry. I came in contact with this wonderful poem, "The Negro Speaks of Rivers," and I'm sure it helped my feelings



of security. Because in that poem he [Langston Hughes] tells how great the Black man is: And if I had any misgivings, which I would have to have – here you are in a setup where the restaurants won't serve you and you're going to college, you're sacrificing, trying to get through school—and I know that poem helped save me."⁷

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[CLICK HERE TO DONATE NOW](#)



In Margaret's third year at Northwestern, her song, *Sea Ghost*, won the prestigious Wanamaker award.⁸ In 1936, she met famed poet/playwright Langston Hughes through a mutual friend, and the two became exceedingly close friends. Hughes attended a Sunday afternoon musical hosted by Bonds' mother, and from that day forward, "we were like brother and sister, like blood relatives."⁹ Margaret earned




her bachelor's and master's degrees in music from Northwestern and in 1938, founded the Allied Arts Academy in Chicago and began a collaboration with Hughes.¹⁰ Economic difficulties forced the closure of her school, and at Hughes'

urging, Margaret relocated to New York in 1939.¹¹ Margaret embarked on a successful career composing for the Glenn Miller Orchestra, Cab Calloway and others, and she performed regularly on radio.¹² Her compositions were performed by countless concert artists, including Louis Armstrong and Woody Herman.¹³ She routinely performed at the Apollo Theater and musicians began to commission her works. Bonds arranged "He's Got the Whole World in His Hand" for Leontyne Price in 1963.¹⁴



In 1942, Bonds published her composition *The Negro Speaks of Rivers*, setting to music the poem by Langston Hughes.¹⁵ The piece was dedicated to Marian Anderson with the hope that she would premiere the song, but when Anderson declined, the honor went to Etta Moten, the singer Gershwin had in mind to portray Bess in *Porgy and Bess*.¹⁶ To hear Price singing the piece she commissioned from Bonds, click here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dEuU7CB678I&t=82s>

Bonds had difficulty coping with two profound personal tragedies, the death of her mother in 1957, and the death of Langston Hughes in 1967. Reportedly, she turned increasingly to alcohol for comfort and in 1972 died of a heart attack.¹⁷ Sadly, much of Bonds' music was lost following her death. Of more than 200 compositions, only 75 scores exist today, and of those, only 47 were published during her lifetime.¹⁸ She did not maintain a catalogue of her works and often sent original copies directly to the artist who had commissioned the work. It is likely that her manuscripts are all over the country but, owing to a great stroke of luck, one box of her scores was found next to a dumpster in New York City.¹⁹ One of her largest and most important works, *Montgomery Variations*, was written in 1965 during the Selma Freedom March, and was dedicated to Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.²⁰ The work was performed for the first time in 2018 by the student orchestra of the University of Connecticut, conducted by Paul McShee. 

To become better acquainted with the music of Margaret Bonds we have a few suggestions we think you'll enjoy:

One of Bonds' piano compositions, *Troubled Water*, is performed by pianist Samantha Edge: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hf4tZHXROWc>

The University of Connecticut performance of *Montgomery Variations* may be heard here: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=y_1Hzm2Q3sY.

Parts of the same work were performed by the Santa Fe Youth Symphony in 2019: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZMh0iuZDqHE&t=7s>

The Unsung Heroes of the Box Office: THE ONES WHO HELPED YOU RETURN TO HSO'S LIVE PERFORMANCES AFTER 18 MONTHS OF CANCELLED CONCERTS

In a "normal" year, the HSO box office staff would follow a well-established and familiar action plan. Subscription renewals would have gone out in March and by May, all renewals would be confirmed, along with accommodations for any requests for seat or date changes. By July, even the new subscribers would have confirmation of the seats they selected. This year, as we prepared to return to live performance in October of 2021, our usually well-ordered plans were completely upended.

The process to ensure subscribers and patrons easy access to their choice of tickets is difficult enough in a "normal" season, but these past 18 months could hardly be described as "normal." Restarting after so many months is a challenge, and when it comes to ticketing, the HSO box office team is responsible for all the heavy lifting.

The uncertainties created by the pandemic caused a two-month delay in the subscription renewal process. The renewal brochure was not sent out until May, and the renewal responses arrived at the same time that our small box office staff was doing their best to re-program the box office systems to accommodate the new health and safety regulations that were put in place for the Talcott Mountain Music Festival, HSO's summer season.

To those uncertainties, we added another complication. Due to the cancellation of the entire 2020/2021

main season, the usual "automated rollover" of subscription information was not possible. Using data from 2019/2020, the last true Masterworks season, our box office team had to manually inspect every subscriber account from that season, compare the results with any renewals for 20/21, determine whether any requested seating changes had been made, and then input that data into each account before any renewals for the new 2021/2022 season could be sent. If it sounds exhausting to read and comprehend, just imagine what it took to execute: the lengthy manual four-week process involved over 1,000 individual seats.

To make matters even more difficult, the cancelled concerts had resulted in account credits for some of our subscribers. To accommodate those with credits, before subscription renewals could be mailed, box office staff had to determine which subscribers had accrued credits, and then calculate the amount of the total credit due. The available credit for each subscriber was computed on an individual basis and then included in a handwritten note to accompany that subscription renewal.

And those who didn't renew in 2020/2021? The box office took care of them, too. Prior subscribers who had not renewed were sent a renewal invoice based on their most recent history, and for ALL subscribers dating back to the 2019/2020 season, every effort was made to ensure that they would have priority in retaining their subscription seats from nearly

two years ago. If a renewal was not returned, subscribers received reminder emails and e-blasts.

Who did all the work? Our box office team consists of just two people: Jennifer Berman (who began with the HSO in 1995!) and Charles Feierabend (who began in 2018). They are dedicated professionals, music lovers and musicians.



Jennifer Berman (with the HSO since 1995)

To reach everyone, Jen and Charles invested an enormous amount of time in personal phone calls to every subscriber who had not returned a renewal form to make sure that no one was omitted. Messages were left, calls were returned, and gradually, connections were made. Over a period of five to six weeks,



Charles Feierabend (with the HSO since 2018).

the two of them personally contacted more than 200 subscriber households for one simple reason: our family of patrons is our highest priority. Jen and Charles wanted the public to know that we were watching out for them. They triple checked the records to make sure no one was accidentally dropped.

The effort it took was even more difficult than usual, as much of their work was done from home, while we awaited the reopening of our working space in The Bushnell. Personal calls were made to every subscriber who asked for any change in their performance dates or seating. The public response to these efforts was inspirational. Many wrote messages of gratitude on their renewal forms. Exclamations of "Hooray!", or "We're so glad to be coming back!" or "Thank you – thank you – thank you!" encouraged our small staff as each renewal envelope was opened, letting them know that their efforts

were recognized and appreciated.

Over the years, Jen and Charles have come to know subscribers and ticket buyers by name. Friendships have formed, and relationships have developed. Phone calls with subscribers can last anywhere from 5 minutes to 35 minutes or longer, as Jen and Charles do not merely explain seating locations, discuss concerts and choices, or help people access our on-line seating maps, but they also take time to reconnect on a personal level that goes beyond "mere business."

During the height of the pandemic, between March of 2020 through May of 2021, our entire staff worked entirely from home, without access to printers, mass mailing or even proper supplies. From home, the box office staff dealt with the ongoing process of refunds, donated tickets and credits that emanated in waves as concerts continued to be cancelled throughout that time. Our goal was personal service – and a determination to let every ticket buyer know that they truly matter, and that your best interests are of paramount importance.

It's been working. The remarkable staff efforts have paid off. Thus far, we've seen a 75% return by existing subscribers this season, which is consistent with prior years and an astonishing achievement given the pandemic. As of September 1, 2021, we welcomed 153 new subscribers. Jen and Charles also kept the public updated on the status of cancelled concerts over the course of the last 18 months, and in 2020/2021, their personal calls and communications encouraged patrons to donate their tickets, valued at \$93,587. As they worked on subscription renewals for our new 2021/2022 season, we were delighted to learn that roughly 50%

of our total subscription revenue consisted of account credits from previously cancelled concerts. The picture painted by the data reveals the remarkable faith of HSO subscribers. By donating tickets, by subscribing even when a season is in doubt, you are telling us that no matter the hardship, and no matter how long it takes, you are with us for the long haul. You prove it time and time again: we can't be us without you.

You may already know Jen and Charles through the HSO box office, but you may not know that in addition to their HSO "day jobs," each is an accomplished musician. Charles is a vocalist who regularly performs with Schola Cantorum (at the Cathedral of St. Joseph), and the chamber ensemble, Alchemy, associated with the Greater Middletown Chorale, so you've likely seen him on multiple stages in the Greater Hartford area. (Fun fact: as a child, Charles participated in HSO's Young Artists Competition – on violin!) Jen often appears on stage with the Hartford Symphony's flute section. Recently, given her 25-year history of performance with the Waterbury Symphony, Jen became the personnel manager for that symphony. Although she leaves her position with the HSO box office, we hope to see her on the HSO stage in performance this season.

We thank Jen and Charles for the supreme efforts they made to make certain that all, subscribers and patrons, could return to the music (and to your seats!) as we resume live performance this season. Jen and Charles are the ones who helped make it happen, so when you see either of them at an upcoming HSO performance, please be sure to let them know how much they are appreciated! 🎵



TALCOTT 2021: HSO RETURNS TO THE SOUNDS OF SUMMER



Talcott's 25th season, which was to have been celebrated in 2020, was just one of the many casualties of the global pandemic. Our music – along with so much of the performing arts – was silenced. But not anymore.

To our immense joy, Talcott – and the celebration of our 25th season – roared back to life in the summer of 2021. We were focused and determined, even when our returning music festival competed with uncooperative weather conditions. Dodging threats of imminent rainstorms, our first concert was rescheduled twice due to thunderstorms, and our second concert was cancelled because of unparalleled flooding that placed three of the four parking areas under

water. Yet, together with you, our faithful audiences, we prevailed, and thousands of you showed up, undaunted, with umbrellas in hand. With precautions in place due to COVID, our usual Family Fun Tent for children was transformed into HSO Kids Concert Kits. With help from our sponsor, Citizens Bank who provided more than 1,000 branded backpack bags, each young attendee received a bag with concert-specific DIY activity kits that ranged from egg-shaker maracas to paper-plate tambourines



to a specially designed July 4th themed coloring and activity book.

The music was glorious, the energy was palpable, and the joy was unrivaled. Despite the challenges, Talcott 2021 was, as it always is, the biggest and longest party of the summer in Connecticut.

Thank you all for your resilience and your faith in us. The music is just not the same without YOU – and thank you for making our return to the stage the joyous celebration that it was. 🎵



TALCOTT 2021

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Top photo 1. Carolyn Kuan conducts Celebrate America. 2. Adam Boyles conducts at Talcott. 3. Joyous celebration at Celebrate America 4. Fireworks at Super Diamond!



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11.



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13.

5. Mark Waterhouse and Leslie Cosgrove & guests. 6. Stephen Cassell and husband Salvador Sanchez with their son Sebastian and guests 7. Date night at Talcott! 8. Super Diamond! 9. Disco Inferno 10. Talcott's 25th Anniversary quilt with HSO summer interns. 11. Assistant Conductor Adam Boyles, with daughter Sonia. 12. Steve Collins and Jeff Verney backstage with performers of Disco Inferno 13. Friends return to celebrate for Disco Inferno

MUSIC EDUCATION AND COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS DURING COVID – AND NOW WHAT?

HSO's core value is the belief that music should be part of everyone's experience, regardless of zip code or income. The conviction that all music provides a deeper connection with our shared humanity underlies every program we create, from onstage performances to the Musician Cares programs in senior living spaces to our groundbreaking programs at the Chrysalis Center or the Asylum Hill Boys and Girls Club.

The 18 months of the pandemic tested HSO's commitment to education and community. Schools were closed to outsiders, field trips were cancelled and in too many cases, music classes were suspended. The cancellation of our school-day Discovery concerts prompted our outreach to teachers and school district administrators to find ways the HSO could meaningfully contribute to community needs in a virtual world. In direct response to specific content

requests, the HSO acted quickly to help fill the void. Multiple educational videos, created by HSO musicians, were posted to a new page on our website, HSO To Go, and offered free for all viewers. Our ongoing conversations with teachers still guide our educational projects.

In 2020 and 2021, to great success, we moved our Young Artists Competition from an in-person event to an all-virtual one, making sure that COVID would not rob dedicated students of important goal-oriented opportunities and much-needed incentives.

COVID gave us all time to assess and adjust priorities, and for Timothy Brown, Manager of DEI Initiatives and Community Engagement, the analysis exposed opportunities for new creative projects. One such project is *Yari's Musical Adventures*, a video series geared to a 2nd and 3rd grade audience, hosted by an 8-year-old



Yari, our puppet host



Yari, with HSO Principal Bass Rick Rozie



Tyler Tan, 1st place winner in HSO's Young Artist Competition



Emily DeNucci, 1st place winner in HSO's Young Artist Competition

bilingual Latina puppet (created for the HSO by puppeteer Anatar Marmol-Gagne, who also voices the puppet.)

The series follows Yari, a first generation American with parents from Venezuela and Honduras, as she shares her own music-rich culture with the student audience. The pilot episode, filmed at the Amistad Center for Art and Culture, includes guest Rick Rozie, HSO's principal bassist, and explores the relationship



HSO Brass Quintet's performance with the Boys and Girls Club program



Boys and Girls club participants with John Charles Thomas, HSO Assistant Principal Trumpet

between music, place, and identity. Working with elementary teachers in the Hartford public schools, we will evaluate classroom responses to assess student impact and shape future episodes.

A new series of four instructional conducting videos with Assistant Conductor Adam Boyles is ready to be launched. It is geared to late-middle and high school students

eager learn more about the art of conducting. As we update the education pages of our website to create a more user-friendly space, these videos, and more, will be readily available for all.

With cautious optimism, we plan a return to live child-centric performances in 2022 that will include school-day Discovery Concerts, LinkUp (a Carnegie Hall

collaboration program for children) and even a special new Family Concert for families and children. To the extent that it is permitted, live in-school educational programs will return to classroom teachers and schools.

We are especially eager to resume the work we began with community partners. Our pre-COVID project with the Boys and Girls Club continued over the summer with three club partners that included Asylum Hill, Trinity and Southwest. This virtual program centered around the transformational power of music, featured sessions on art and activism and music and race. It also included an introduction to brass instruments that culminated with a live performance by the HSO Brass Quintet at the Bushnell Park Pavilion. Our programs are designed with our partner to match the club's mission to help children develop healthy lifestyles and an ongoing commitment to learning.

The project with Hartford-based Chrysalis Center is a music therapy-informed program designed to promote wellness and healing for their selected group of participants. The project that began in our 2019/2020 season but was abruptly cut short due to COVID, is now set to resume as the center returns to in-person activities. With music as a foundation, participants explore and engage in mindfulness exercises, proven to reduce perceptions of anxiety, while increasing emotional expression. This unique program, the first of its kind in Connecticut, was designed in partnership with Connecticut Music Therapy Services, LLC. Music therapist, Emily Bevilacqua, will join HSO musicians in a new five-week session that begins October 7th in the Center's "back


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patio," a covered outdoor space with good ventilation for safety.

Our newest partnership venture with The Legacy Foundation of Hartford, serves children in the North End of Hartford. Together, HSO and Legacy designed a new monthly weekend program to foster leadership skills, academic excellence and a healthy mindset. With a focus on developing confidence and creativity through interactive sessions, this project introduces students to classical music through live performances and recordings, with the added objective of making students aware of the multiple career opportunities available in all fields of the arts.

The mission of the Hartford Symphony Orchestra is eight simple words: to enrich lives and community through great music. As we all work together to return to communal experiences, we are especially aware of the losses suffered by our children and community during the last 18 months. Our music education and community engagement, always important, are tailored to meet the specific needs of each collaborative partner.

None of these programs would be possible without our funding partners, including Aetna, The Hartford, The Gawlicki Family Foundation, Lincoln Financial Foundation, and countless individuals who help the HSO bring music to all. Want to learn more about our education and community projects? Contact Timothy Brown, 860-760-7328, or tbrown@hartfordsymphony.org 



Forte! table at Talcott Mountain Music Festival

ANNOUNCING *Forte!* HSO'S FIRST 45 & UNDER MEMBERSHIP GROUP

The creation of a "young professional" group at the HSO began internally in 2019, but progress accelerated when two young music lovers, Matt Salner and Peter Brazaitis, joined the conversation. Matt and Peter, good friends and symphony attendees, wanted to share their ideas to encourage other young people to attend.

The fact that symphony audiences skew older is not exactly breaking news. According to a comprehensive study completed by the National Endowment for the Arts in 2008, participation rates for live classical music were declining nationwide, while the median age for classical music attendance was steadily rising. The spark from Matt and Peter



was just the fuel that was needed to address the issue head-on.

Within a few weeks after our first conversation with Matt and Peter, other passionate, young arts lovers were quickly identified and happily joined. With liaison support from HSO staff and Board, a diverse group of nearly a dozen individuals began to meet regularly to discuss solutions. The group openly shared their ideas about events and experiences,



"As a longtime HSO supporter, I saw an opportunity to get more young professionals involved with the Symphony. The HSO team was equally enthusiastic about this initiative, and our collaboration formed a diverse and dynamic committee to guide the creation of *Forte!* We are excited to welcome new members and supporters!"

Matt Salner, *Forte!* Co-Chair

and helped identified barriers, both real and perceived, for younger audiences.

COVID moved our in-person conversations to virtual meetings but nothing deterred the commitment of the group. We used HSO's time away from the stage to speak regularly, and together, we developed a membership model targeted to ages 45 and under. The new friends organized Zoom happy hours, participated in virtual discussions with Carolyn Kuan and enthusiastically purchased the specially priced "45 and under" tickets to our 2021 Virtual Gala. The working group, which became the advisory committee, chose the name *Forte!* to aptly describe this new venture.

The *Forte!* advisory committee suggestions helped set the framework, from concert selections to the \$200.00 entry-level price point. When the group expressed concern that too many young people don't have a "concert companion", we created a designated section of the theater for *Forte!* Members. Seating *Forte!* members with their peers creates opportunities to form new friendships, which are then reinforced by social events throughout the year.



Radio Host Al Kim and his wife, Colleen

So, the next time you attend the HSO, please notice the younger attendees. Thank you Matt, Peter and all members of *Forte!* Let's launch Hartford Symphony's 2021-2022 season together! 🎵

Memberships are on sale now and can be purchased by calling the box office at 860-244-2999.



"Having played piano and cello growing up and through my young adult years, classical music continues to enrich my life in so many meaningful ways. My hope is that through *Forte!*, the benefits of experiencing classical music can be shared with a wider and more diverse audience."

Jonathan Wang, *Forte!* Advisory Member



"This group provides such an incredible chance to grow organically and invest in creative opportunities. Everyone is excited to try new things, experiment, and be OK learning as we grow. Unlike so many established membership groups, for *Forte!*, feedback from our members will drive the events, activities, and opportunities."

Marissa Baum, *Forte!* Advisory Member



"*Forte!* is so important to me because it creates opportunities for a younger generation to enjoy all aspects of HSO. With the exclusive events, networking opportunities, and roundtable discussions, a broader scope of our community members will have a seat at the table."

Brennden Colbert, *Forte!* Advisory Member

TWO DIFFERENT FORTE! MEMBERSHIP LEVELS ARE AVAILABLE:

FULL FORTE! MEMBERSHIP

Members will sit together in a designated area of the theater, so if you want to come solo, you will be sure to be sitting with like-minded peers!

\$200
(a \$350 value!)

- One ticket to each of these Saturday evening concerts:
 - » *Beethoven 7* on October 2
 - » *Holiday Cirque Spectacular* on December 11
 - » *Rachmaninoff & Tchaikovsky* on April 9
 - » *Scheherazade and Shankar* on May 7
- Invitations to exclusive *Forte!* social events throughout the year

MEZZO FORTE! MEMBERSHIP

Designed for those who already have subscriptions or can't commit to Saturday evening concerts but still want to be a part of *Forte!*

\$50
(a \$100 value!)

- Invitations to exclusive *Forte!* social events throughout the year

SPOTLIGHT ON:

CHARLES FREITAG HSO'S NEW PRODUCTION MANAGER

We are just so lucky to have the best staff at the HSO, and Charlie is yet another example of excellence and dedication. With a degree in film and a background in technical production, Charlie began his career in NYC, working on programs for The History Channel. He returned to Connecticut to work in theater production (Long Wharf, National Theater for the Deaf, Hartford Stage, and others) and we are so lucky to have him on our team.

Quarter Notes: Most of the staff working at the HSO has some background in music, but your degree is in film?

Don't be fooled! My love of film AND music is rooted in my family and my upbringing. My mom owned a video store in Durham, where I grew up, so it makes sense that I fell in love with film. But my love of music also runs deep. My dad regularly took me to concerts, and throughout my school years, I played trumpet in the concert band AND the marching band. And for extra fun, I played bass guitar in a ska band with friends. We performed at multiple public events including the Durham Fair, Tune Inn and the Webster Theater.

QN: For those who need an explanation, please explain a ska band?

Happily! A ska band performs a type of music that began in Jamaica in the late 1950's. In fact, it was the forerunner to other forms of music such as reggae. It combines Caribbean calypso with American jazz, plus some rhythm and blues. Ska features a walking bass line with accented rhythms on the off beat, so as the bass guitar player, I had a pretty important job!

QN: So how do you go from a ska band to film school?

I was fascinated with the "behind the scenes" components of film. I always wanted to know what was involved in the creation of the movies I loved. I remember one of my favorite things to watch (over and over again) was the 1986 documentary "The Making of the Labyrinth." The *Labyrinth* was a film by famed Muppet-creator, Jim Henson, with music by David Bowie. You can still find the documentary on YouTube. I attended Full Sail University in Orlando, Florida, to study film.

QN: So, what did you do with your film degree?

I had a wonderful time working with a production company, Suitcase Productions, in New York City, creating programs for The History Channel and the Discovery Channel. In fact, I'm actually in one of the pieces we filmed about the raising of the flag at Iwo Jima. They needed someone to play the soldier for the re-enactment and that was me! The problem was that I had a goatee at the time, and they needed historical accuracy. (No soldier on active duty in WWII would have had a goatee.) I should have just shaved my beard but instead, they positioned the camera so you would only see the back of my head. That night, I shaved my beard in case something else came up!

QN: Which productions did you enjoy the most while you worked in theater?

Some of my favorites were *Water By The Spoonful*, *The Comedy of Errors*, *Murder on the Orient Express* and *The Engagement Party*. While at Hartford Stage, I worked on Carrie Fisher's one-person play entitled, *Wishful Drinking*. I was a big fan, since *Star Wars* was one of my favorite movies and whenever I was home sick from school, I watched the trilogy. During the theater production, a




Charles Freitag

very petit older woman walked into the lobby. An usher explained that the house was not yet ready, and that she would have to wait in the lobby. She looked really disappointed, and when she said, "I'm so sorry to hear that because my daughter is in the show" I realized who she was. I said, "You're Debbie Reynolds!" Needless to say, I did not make her wait in the lobby!

QN: What the best thing about working at the Hartford Symphony?

I am so eagerly looking forward to working with live music again. Being on stage was fun but for me, those days are in my rearview mirror. I find that I am well-suited for work behind the scenes. The planning and support during the event is a thrill and knowing that I helped create the final product the audience will see on the stage is the best feeling. The organizational culture at the Hartford Symphony is quite special. This is a real team with very strong bonds and high professional standards which elevates all of us and creates the best possible audience experience.

QN: What do you look forward to accomplishing in your work at the Symphony?

While I am a fan of multiple music genres, I don't know nearly enough of what I want to know about the world of classical music and the operations of symphonies. I firmly believe that every life experience is a chance to learn, and I already have learned so much in the span of just a few months. I am excited to call the Hartford Symphony Orchestra my new home! 

ENDNOTES:

- 1 <https://afrovoices.com/margaret-bonds-biography/>
- 2 Ibid
- 3 Ibid
- 4 <https://www.blackpast.org/african-american-history/bonds-margaret-1913-1972/>
- 5 <https://afrovoices.com/margaret-bonds-biography/>

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- 8 Ibid
- 9 <https://www.library.georgetown.edu/exhibition/margaret-bonds-and-langston-hughes-musical-friendship>
- 10 Ibid
- 11 Ibid
- 12 [https://www.kusc.org/](https://www.kusc.org/culture/staff-blog/open-ears/open-ears-margaret-bonds/#:~:text=However%2C%20much%20of%20Bonds%E2%80%99%20music%20was%20lost%20following,scores%2C%20only%2047%20were%20published%20during%20her%20lifetime.)

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- 15 <https://www.library.georgetown.edu/exhibition/margaret-bonds-and-langston-hughes-musical-friendship>
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- 17 <https://afrovoices.com/margaret-bonds-biography/>
- 18 <https://www.kusc.org/culture/staff-blog/open-ears/open-ears-margaret-bonds/#:~:>

[text=However%2C%20much%20of%20Bonds%E2%80%99%20music%20was%20lost%20following,scores%2C%20only%2047%20were%20published%20during%20her%20lifetime.](https://www.library.georgetown.edu/exhibition/margaret-bonds-and-langston-hughes-musical-friendship)

- 19 Ibid
- 20 Ibid