



Dear Colleagues and Friends,

I extend warm greetings and heartfelt congratulations on the exceptional work showcased since the December report! Over the past months - December, January, and February - we have been treated to a plethora of remarkable performances spanning various genres. From enchanting Holiday concerts to captivating Masterworks, and even a special Holiday movie concert event, our journey culminated in three mesmerizing performances of "Enduring Love Stories" on the Masterworks series just last week.

Notably, "Enduring Love Stories" served as a splendid tribute to the transformative power of new music, showcasing its ability to resonate deeply with audiences, expand our repertoire, and champion the development of unique artists like composer Clarice Assad and the "Boyd Meets Girl" guitar and cello duo. As we ponder our next commissioning project, I encourage you to share any suggestions or recommendations for soloists or composers you believe would enrich our upcoming endeavors; it was such a suggestion that led to the collaboration that gave us last week's magnificent piece. Also, in the realm of championing new works and celebrating exceptional artists, let's applaud our 2023-24 season's Joyce C. Willis Artist in Residence, Melissa White, on her recent Grammy Award! Melissa, as a member of the Harlem String Quartet, along with the Imani Winds, secured a Grammy for Best Classical Compendium, a testament to her outstanding talent and dedication.

Looking ahead, I am excited to spotlight an upcoming event that promises to be a delightful reimagining of the string quartet. On March 19th, HSO violinist Simon Bilyk will lead a quartet comprising three of our esteemed colleagues in "I Am Every Woman: An HSO Pop Strings Concert" at Hooker Live in Hartford, part of Thomas Hooker Brewery. Simon has ingeniously arranged beloved tunes from both past and present by prominent female artists, ensuring a night of lighthearted enjoyment, complete with a cash bar and food available for purchase from Thomas Hooker Brewery. Keep an eye out for HSO social media updates regarding this engaging occasion and join us!

While June may seem distant, it looms near in terms of HSO programming. I am happy to announce that the third annual "Symphony in the Park" concert is scheduled for June 15th at 2pm in Hartford's Bushnell Park. This event, free for all, presents a great opportunity for individuals to experience the magic of the HSO alongside special guest artists, fostering greater accessibility and community engagement.

Thank you all so much for the wonderful work we can accomplish as a unified team. The HSO's community impact is felt so deeply by so many, in ways large and small. Onward!

### **Exciting Announcement from the Marketing Committee!**

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The Marketing Committee has unveiled a new Masterworks subscription plan designed to keep subscription purchases flowing throughout the season and to enthusiastically welcome new patrons who may not be ready to commit to a full subscription package.

Encourage anyone who may be new to the HSO or who may appreciate a more flexible plan to embark on a musical journey that offers savings and flexibility tailored to their preferences:

- Choose 2 or more concerts throughout the remainder of the Masterworks series.
- Enjoy an exclusive discount of up to 20% on tickets.

Subscriptions may be purchased by calling the Box Office at 860-987-5900, Monday through Friday, from 10 am to 5 pm. Note that while we strive to accommodate your preferences, seating arrangements may vary for each concert.

Please help us spread the word!

### **Mayor Arulampalam's Arts & Culture Recommendations**

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As Hartford's mayoral leadership transitioned from Luke Bronin to Arunan Arulampalam, Mayor Arulampalam formed a committee to articulate priorities of the arts and culture community for his consideration. The committee was formed with widespread representation of all arts and culture sectors; its mandate is to determine the optimal utilization of financial and other resources to bolster the sustainability and vitality of Hartford's arts and culture scene, positioning the city as a destination rather than merely a thoroughfare.

[Read the full article on page 7](#)



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**Carolyn Kuan to Conduct the New York Premiere of "An American Soldier"**

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The Hartford Symphony Orchestra proudly announces that its esteemed Music Director, Carolyn Kuan, will take the conductor's baton for the eagerly anticipated production of "An American Soldier." This poignant opera, composed by Huang Ruo with a compelling libretto by Tony and Grammy winner David Henry Hwang, is scheduled to grace the stage of the Perelman Performing Arts Center, New York, from May 12 to May 19, 2024. Here at home, Jacomo Bairos will conduct Vivaldi's "Gloria" on April 12-14, 2024, and Adam Kerry Boyles will conduct Mozart & Prokofiev on May 10-12, 2024.

[Read the full article on page 8](#)

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**David Roth Rejoins LAO Board of Directors**

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HSO Board of Directors member David Roth recently rejoined the board of the League of American Orchestras. He is a man who has had an incredible arc of a life and to have done incredible things. Expanding quality of life improvements for our community is a significant reason for much of what he does. It's also the mission of the Hartford Symphony Orchestra: to enrich lives and communities through great music. We caught up with him to ask about the League's activities and his experience with the Hartford Symphony.

[Read the full bio and interview on page 18](#)

## 2024-25 Masterworks Season Sneak Peek

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Experience the tradition, the stories and the emotional power of classical music as it was meant to be heard. Our nine-concert 2025 Masterworks season has been set and includes breathtaking selections from the world's most inspired composers, performed with a passion that will stir your soul and bring joy to your heart.

[Read about the full line up on page 9](#)

## 2024 Talcott Mountain Music Festival

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The HSO is proud to announce an extraordinary lineup for the Talcott Mountain Music Festival 2024, set to enchant audiences at the Simsbury Meadows Performing Arts Center.

- June 28, 2024: Aretha: A Tribute
- July 5, 2024: Celebrate America!
- July 12, 2024: The Music of the Rolling Stones
- July 19, 2024: Country Hits: Songs from Nashville
- July 26, 2024: Hotel California

[Read about our full line up of summer concerts on page 13](#)

## Albert Schweitzer Organ Festival

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The HSO will collaborate with the prestigious Albert Schweitzer Organ Festival again this year for an extraordinary musical event this fall. The collaboration will take place at the Trinity College Chapel on Saturday, September 21, 2024, at 8:00 p.m. and Sunday, September 22 at 3:00 p.m.

[Read the full article on page 14](#)

## 2024-25 POPS! Season

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The HSO is delighted to unveil its FY25 POPS! lineup, with a fourth concert soon to be announced, all promising audiences an unforgettable journey through the realms of music and magic. From spine-tingling tales of Halloween to the enchanting world of Harry Potter, the series offers something for everyone, blending captivating performances with visual spectacle.

[Read the full POPS! article on page 15](#)

## Strategic Planning Update

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The Education and Community Engagement Committee (EdCE) has made great progress in developing our strategic plan. With the ultimate goal to "Revitalize Education Programs", the EdCE committee is focusing on supporting students and adults with access to the orchestra and relevant learning opportunities. Goals have been developed along with action steps. Some of these steps include expanding our ensemble concerts in schools, developing teaching partnerships with schools and sharing more educational content with adults.

Similarly, the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committee has developed goals and action steps to "Accelerate the pace of change in DEI." To do so, we are focusing on promoting ethnic, racial and gender diversity within HSO while also developing programming that represents community interests. By actively seeking a diverse field of candidates, partnering with a variety of community leaders and organizations and expanding free programming, we expect to provide more inclusive experiences.

### Capital Campaign Update

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As the HSO embarks on a transformative capital campaign to achieve financial stability, advance DEI initiatives, and elevate artistic development, it has been seeking a dynamic Capital Campaign Officer to play a central role in propelling the HSO toward an ambitious fundraising goal. This pivotal role involves overseeing day-to-day operations, coordinating campaigns, analyzing major gift prospects, managing donor events, and crafting campaign materials. Collaborating closely with the Board Chairman, President and CEO, and Development Director, the Officer will contribute to a compelling case statement, support leadership and develop volunteer training, and actively engage in prospect cultivation and solicitation.



The Hartford Symphony Orchestra is pleased to announce that **Rich McCarty** will join our Development Team as our new Capital Campaign Officer. A talented musician in his own right, Rich has extensive Capital Campaign experience, having led 5 successful campaigns ranging from \$3 MM-\$125 MM. A Connecticut native, his recent roles include Chief Executive Officer of the New Britain-Berlin YMCA, Vice President for University Initiatives & Advancement for Goodwin University, and his current position, Vice President of Healthy Living & Social Responsibility for the Northern Middlesex YMCA. Rich will report to Eric R. Hutchinson, HSO's Director of Development, and work closely with our CEO and Board of Directors to lead the HSO's upcoming Capital Campaign. He will begin on Tuesday, March 5th, 2024. Welcome, Rich!

### Gala Planning Update

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We are thrilled with planning for our upcoming Bravo! Gala, a dazzling celebration taking place on Saturday, April 27, 2024, from 6 to 11 p.m. at the Exhibition Hall in the Connecticut Convention Center. Join us for an extraordinary evening in support of the HSO, featuring an immersive experience for the senses curated by our gala committee--Andrea Hawkins and Mark Christopher, co-chairs. We extend our gratitude to our Music Director Carolyn Kuan and the entire HSO team for their dedication to creating an event worthy of your applause.

Table Hosts (deadline: March 1, 2024) and sponsors (deadline: March 15, 2024) play a crucial role in the success of our gala.

[Read the full announcement for this report on page 16](#)

### **Introducing New HSO Staff Members**

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The HSO happy to announce that Second Violinist Nathan Lowman has graciously assumed the additional role of orchestra librarian. Tasked with the meticulous organization of musical scores and parts, Nathan will provide all music needed for performances and maintain the orchestra's library of parts and scores. We also extend a warm welcome to Daniel Larkin, our newly appointed staff accountant. Charged with overseeing the daily financial operations, Daniel will play a key role in managing banking, cash disbursements, receipts, and General Ledger reconciliation. Together, Nathan and Daniel embody a commitment to excellence and a promising future for our organization.



**Nathan Lowman**, a versatile and accomplished musician, currently graces the Hartford Symphony Orchestra (HSO) stage as a Second Violinist.



**Daniel Larkin** a seasoned accounting professional with over 20 years of experience, has recently become the trusted accountant for the Hartford Symphony.

[Read more about Nathan and Daniel on page 17](#)

### **Introducing Carmen Joelle Flavetta!**

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John Michael and Geanna Flavetta are delighted to announce the arrival of their beautiful daughter, Carmen Joelle Flavetta, born on December 1, 2023. Both mother and baby are doing well, and the Flavetta household is filled with joy and laughter. Carmen, photographed here posing with her father's French horn, has already stolen our hearts. Join us in celebrating the joyous occasion and sending warm wishes of love and happiness to the Flavetta family as they embark on this wonderful journey.

### **HSO President and CEO Collins Serving on Mayor's Arts and Culture Committee**

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As Hartford's mayoral leadership transitioned from Luke Bronin to Arunan Arulampalam, Mayor Arulampalam formed a committee to articulate priorities of the arts and culture community for his consideration. The committee was formed with widespread representation of all arts and culture sectors; its mandate is to determine the optimal utilization of financial and other resources to bolster the sustainability and vitality of Hartford's arts and culture scene, positioning the city as a destination rather than merely a thoroughfare.

Following a series of discussions and analyses, a preliminary report has been compiled, offering both short-term and long-term recommendations. These recommendations encompass initiatives such as establishing a dedicated Office of Arts & Culture within the Mayor's Office, creating an Artists Bill of Rights, and establishing arts districts, among others.

The committee's initial findings suggest that supporting arts organizations and artists can catalyze economic growth and enhance Hartford's economic viability, thereby increasing tax revenues for the city (refer to the AEP6 study cited below). Such investments foster improved communication among arts and culture entities, municipal government, and local residents, fostering greater trust in these organizations and stimulating increased activity and reinvestment within local communities. The committee's endeavors are ongoing, with a final report slated for submission to Mayor Arulampalam and subsequent public dissemination in the coming months.

For further insights, refer to the [Arts & Economic Prosperity 6 \(AEP6\) study](#), which underscores the essential role of arts and culture in communities, demonstrating their capacity to drive economic development, nurture a visitor economy, generate employment, enhance community livability, bolster local commerce, and elevate overall well-being. [Regional breakdowns, including that of the Greater Hartford area compared to other regions in Connecticut](#), are available through the AEP6 study and its associated resources.

## **Hartford Symphony Orchestra Music Director Carolyn Kuan to Conduct the New York Premiere of "An American Soldier"**

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The Hartford Symphony Orchestra proudly announces that its esteemed Music Director, Carolyn Kuan, will take the conductor's baton for the eagerly anticipated production of "An American Soldier." This poignant opera, composed by Huang Ruo with a compelling libretto by Tony and Grammy winner David Henry Hwang, is scheduled to grace the stage of the Perelman Performing Arts Center, New York, from May 12 to May 19, 2024. Here at home, Jacomo Bairos will conduct Vivaldi's "Gloria" on April 12-14, 2024, and Adam Kerry Boyles will conduct Mozart & Prokofiev on May 10-12, 2024.

Co-produced in collaboration with the Boston Lyric Opera and the American Composers Orchestra, "An American Soldier" is a powerful and unforgettable experience, delving into the true story of Chinese-American Army Pvt. Danny Chen. Found dead in a guard tower in Afghanistan on October 3, 2011, the opera explores his journey and the subsequent court-martial of Chen's fellow soldiers. This New York City premiere brings to light the powerful and tragic narrative of a young soldier from Manhattan's Chinatown, revealing that his greatest threat came from those sworn to protect him.

Told through the multidimensional music of Huang Ruo, renowned for his works such as "M. Butterfly" and "Book of Mountains and Seas," and featuring a poignant libretto by David Henry Hwang, the opera is directed by Obie Award winner Chay Yew ("Cambodian Rock Band," "Sweatshop Overlord"). "An American Soldier" promises to be an immersive experience, shedding light on a story that demands to be heard.

The original score, written for a 13-musician chamber orchestra, featured a diverse array of instruments, including strings, woodwinds, brasses, bass and snare drums, didgeridoo, Chinese opera gong, Indonesian button gong, and metal wind chimes. Subsequently, orchestration has been expanded to 35 musicians.



## 2024-25 Masterworks Season Sneak Peek

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### **Prokofiev 5 & Peter**

September 27- 29, 2024

Carolyn Kuan, conductor

Leonid Sigal, violin

Jaroslav Lis, violin

Sarasate, *Navarra*, op. 33

Prokofiev, *Peter & The Wolf*, op. 67

Prokofiev, Symphony No. 5 in B-flat major, op. 100

Our season will start in a perhaps unexpected way. We have never featured Prokofiev's *Peter and The Wolf* and the Prokofiev No. 5 in the same concert. These two pieces, plus the *Classical Symphony* are probably the three most beloved and well-known pieces by Prokofiev, yet one rarely will find *Peter and the Wolf* on a major concert, but why not?! It's a piece people love. We hope it brings back warm memories. We anticipate our narrator for the piece will be Rev. Dr. Shirley Best, Chief Executive Officer of the Greater Hartford Arts Council and Pastor of The Redeemer's A.M.E. Zion Church, and we're very excited to be working with her.

One of the best things about the HSO is working with our musicians, and this year will be Jarek Lis' 30th year with us. We can't think of a better way to start the season than to pair Jarek with Concertmaster Lenny Sigal for Sarasate's *Navarra*, one of the most famous romantic duos for two violins. We can't wait!

### **Beethoven's Violin Concerto**

October 18-20, 2024

Leonid Sigal, conductor & violin

Simon, *Fate Now Conquers*

Beethoven, Concerto for Violin in D major, op. 61

Bizet, Symphony No.1 in C major

We continue our celebration of HSO musicians in our second concert of the season, this time celebrating Concertmaster Lenny Sigal's twentieth year with the HSO. As some may know, Lenny has been wanting for some time to conduct, and he's a wonderful conductor! So, Lenny will perform and conduct the famous Beethoven violin concerto and conduct the remainder of the program.

*Fate Now Conquers* was composed by Carlos Simon, a contemporary Black composer who is a "native of Atlanta, Georgia, and whose music ranges from concert music for large and small ensembles to film scores with influences of jazz, gospel, and neo-romanticism. Simon is the Composer-in-Residence for the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, the inaugural Boston Symphony Orchestra Composer Chair, and was nominated for a 2023 GRAMMY award for his album *Requiem for the Enslaved*."<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.carlossimonmusic.com/biography>

Lenny will close the program with Bizet's beloved *Symphony in C*, which will be the HSO's first performance of this work since 1998.

### **Brahm's First**

November 15-17, 2024

Carolyn Kuan, conductor

Inbal Segev, cello

Elgar, Concerto for Cello in E minor, op. 85

Brahms, Symphony No.1 in C minor, op. 68

The Brahms Symphony No 1, which we perform in our third concert of the 24/25 season, is fascinating in the sense that it is one of the few "first" symphonies that is truly fantastic. One might think of Mahler, Brahms, Prokofiev, perhaps Mozart if it's performed with 40 or 41, but one doesn't hear many first symphonies truly celebrated as is Brahms'.

Some might remember our soloist for the Elgar Concerto for Cello, Inbal Segev, from her visit with us a few seasons back. Inbal is a much-respected teacher of how to play the Elgar, and we anticipate great things from her opportunity to engage with students during her visit with us, along with her masterful performance on stage.

### **All Tchaikovsky**

December 13-15, 2024

Jonathan Rush, conductor

Clayton Stephenson, piano

Joyce C. Willis Artist in Residence

Tchaikovsky, Concerto for Piano No.1 in B-flat minor, Op. 23, TH 55, B-flat minor

Tchaikovsky, Symphony No.3 in D major ("Polish") Op. 29, TH 26

We are very excited to have an all-Tchaikovsky concert in December. The concerto—and its very famous melody—is something that many will recognize. We are so excited to share that Clayton Stevenson is going to be our new Joyce C Willis Artist in Residence. He's a wonderful artist and will be performing the piano solo for the concerto. This will be the first time in Maestro Kuan's tenure that the "Polish" symphony is will be played.

### **Sirena Plays Sibelius**

February 14-16, 2025

Carolyn Kuan, conductor

Sirena Huang, violin

Dawson, *Negro Folk Symphony*

Strauss, *Don Juan*, TrV 156, op. 20

Sibelius, Concerto for Violin in D minor, op. 47

In February of 2025, Sirena Huang will be joining us to perform the famous Sibelius violin concerto, an achingly beautiful work. We feel like we've seen her grow up, and as some may know, she's about to be married. We're thrilled to have her back for our Valentine's weekend concerts. It makes sense to play something romantic, of course, so *Don Juan* comes to mind. There's no need to take a trip to experience something exotic; come to the Hartford Symphony and let the music take you away.

*Negro Folk Symphony*, by William Dawson, is a piece our audience will very much enjoy in its HSO premiere. In 1934, Dawson, a 35-year-old African American, was said to have composed “the most distinctive and promising American symphonic proclamation which has so far been achieved.” And the New York Times proclaimed, “This music has dramatic feeling, a racial sensuousness and directness of melodic speech.”<sup>2</sup>

**Mozart’s Requiem**

March 14-16, 2025

Jack Pott, conductor  
Hartford Chorale

Mozart Symphony, TBD  
Mozart, Requiem, K. 626

In March the HSO will perform once again with the Hartford Chorale, this time with the Chorale’s Music Director Jack Pott conducting. Many will know the Requiem, of course; it’s just thrilling. While Maestro Kuan won’t be conducting, it’s one she enjoys conducting. From the fast and furious Day of Judgement (Dies Irae) to the stunningly beautiful moments of Remembrance (Recordare), prepare to be transported to Elysium while enjoying this concert.

**Eroica & Four Seasons**

MW7: April 4-6, 2025

Carolyn Kuan, conductor  
Julien Labro - Bandoneon/Accordion

Selections from Vivaldi, Le Quattro Stagioni, Op. 8  
Selections from Piazzolla, Cuatro Estaciones Porteñas  
Beethoven, Symphony No.3 in E-flat major, op. 55 (“Eroica”)

For our April concert—one of our blockbuster concerts—HSO performs Beethoven’s third symphony (the “Eroica”) and there’s nothing quite like it. In fact, the fourth movement is one of the pieces that drew Maestro Kuan to conducting—the ending chorale is so simply gorgeous... “It feels like a glimpse of heaven, or of hope... all that is good in the world. Sharing this music is what makes being a conductor so special.”

About the Four Seasons: We have wanted to collaborate with Julien Labro for some time now, and he had been wanting to undertake a Four Seasons project for the bandoneon. The Vivaldi version audiences may know, and they may know the Piazzolla for the violin, but it is believed to have been originally written for the bandoneon. For our concert, we will alternate “seasons” between Vivaldi and Piazzolla, featuring Julien’s own arrangements written especially for the HSO. We’re looking forward to seeing how it will come together.

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<sup>2</sup> <https://www.npr.org/sections/deceptivecadence/2020/06/26/883011513/someone-finally-remembered-william-dawsons-negro-folk-symphony>

***Fire Shut Up in My Bones***

May 10, 2025

Carolyn Kuan, conductor  
Featuring two vocalists and  
members of the  
Terence Blanchard Ensemble

Selections from the Opera

Our May Masterworks concert will be a very, very special program. Eight years ago, the Metropolitan Opera, for the very first time in its history, featured a black composer—Terence Blanchard. His *Fire Shut Up in My Bones* was a huge and overdue success, and we're thrilled to be partnering with his team to bring this to Hartford. We're especially excited because this is really a community-driven project, thanks to members of our board and to supporters who want this work to be shared in our area. Mr. Blanchard will be with us in person for this one-night-only performance. We are very much looking forward to working with him.

***Rachmaninoff & Rhapsody in Blue***

June 6-8, 2025

Carolyn Kuan, conductor  
Clayton Stephenson, piano  
Joyce C. Willis Artist in Residence

Adams, *Doctor Atomic Symphony*  
Gershwin, *Rhapsody in Blue*  
Rachmaninoff, *Symphonic Dances*, op. 45

Clayton Stephenson returns for our final concert of the 24/25 season to perform Gershwin's timeless *Rhapsody in Blue*. Teeming with Americana and pianistic virtuosity, we can think of no better way to conclude Clayton's residency with the HSO.

The John Adams' *Doctor Atomic Symphony* (2007) may not be familiar to some, but the story is that of the movie *Oppenheimer*. That is, the story of U.S. physicist J. Robert Oppenheimer, the "father of the atomic bomb," and the moral struggle and moral injury of decisions made regarding its use. The opera boasts one of the most beautiful arias by a contemporary composer. For the symphony, that aria becomes a trumpet solo that's absolutely gorgeous and heartbreaking. The end of *Doctor Atomic* is another one of those moments in music that gives us hope.

The above summarizes our 24/25 season. We hope you're as excited about it as we are. Be sure to spread the word, we couldn't do what we do without all of you.

## **Talcott Mountain Music Festival 2024: A Spectacular Lineup Unveiled by HSO**

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The Hartford Symphony Orchestra (HSO) is proud to announce an extraordinary lineup for the Talcott Mountain Music Festival 2024, set to enchant audiences at the Simsbury Meadows Performing Arts Center.

### **June 28, 2024: Aretha: A Tribute**

The festival commences with a dazzling tribute to the Queen of Soul, Aretha Franklin, on June 28. Starring vocal powerhouses Capathia Jenkins and Ryan Shaw, the performance celebrates Aretha Franklin's illustrious career with renditions of iconic hits including "Respect," "Think," and "A Natural Woman." The program also features a heartfelt Salute to Ray Charles, capturing the essence of the 1960s golden age of soul music.

### **July 5, 2024: Celebrate America!**

On July 5 (rain date July 6), the HSO presents its annual "Celebrate America!" concert, led by the esteemed Hartford Symphony Orchestra music director Carolyn Kuan. This patriotic extravaganza, accompanied by a spectacular fireworks display, will feature a guest artist to be announced, promising an unforgettable evening of music and celebration.

### **July 12, 2024: The Music of the Rolling Stones**

Experience the timeless classics of the Rolling Stones on July 12, as the Hartford Symphony brings Brent Havens arrangements of the legendary band's greatest hits to life. With sensational performers delivering stunning renditions of Mick Jagger's vocals, audiences will be treated to symphonic arrangements of iconic songs such as "Satisfaction," "Paint It Black," and "Angie."

### **July 19, 2024: Country Hits: Songs from Nashville**

Dive into the heart of country music on July 19 with "Country Hits: Songs from Nashville." Featuring brand-new symphonic arrangements by Grammy-winner Jeff Tyzik, this concert celebrates the rich tapestry of country music past and present. From timeless classics by Patsy Cline and Willie Nelson to chart-topping hits from contemporary stars like Dolly Parton and Kacey Musgraves, this performance promises a toe-tapping celebration of Nashville's finest.

### **July 26, 2024: Hotel California**

Closing out the summer series on July 26 (rain date July 27) is "Hotel California," a much-anticipated tribute to the Eagles. Join the Hartford Symphony Orchestra as they collaborate with the acclaimed performers of Hotel California for an unforgettable evening of Grammy award-winning sounds. Experience faithful renditions of classics like "Take It Easy" and "Hotel California," transporting audiences to a beloved era of American rock music.

The Hartford Symphony Orchestra is committed to enriching lives and communities through great music. As Connecticut's premier musical organization, the HSO presents over 100 concerts annually, captivating audiences of all ages and backgrounds across the region.

### **HSO Joins Forces with Albert Schweitzer Organ Festival for a Special Musical Collaboration**

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The Hartford Symphony Orchestra (HSO) is thrilled to announce its collaboration with the prestigious Albert Schweitzer Organ Festival for an extraordinary musical event set to impress audiences this fall. The collaboration will take place at the Trinity College Chapel on Saturday, September 21, 2024, at 8:00 p.m. and Sunday, September 22 at 3:00 p.m.

The program will feature orchestral works performed by the Hartford Symphony Orchestra, complemented by an organ solo by the distinguished competition winner. This collaboration has been a significant and rewarding endeavor blending the talents of accomplished musicians of the HSO and festival organists.

At the core of the Albert Schweitzer Organ Festival Hartford lies a noble mission – to nurture and empower young organists in the early stages of their education and careers, while fostering a deeper appreciation for organ music among the general public. Anchored by an annual national competition, the festival provides a platform for budding organists to showcase their skills and compete for substantial cash prizes to support their artistic endeavors.

The Trinity College organ, a magnificent instrument installed in 1971 by Austin Organs, Inc. of Hartford, Connecticut, will serve as the centerpiece of this collaborative performance. Built upon the rich traditions of organ building spanning three centuries, the Trinity College organ boasts a unique blend of historical significance and contemporary craftsmanship. Designed by Charles Nazarian, '73, the organ's casework draws inspiration from classical French organ cases, adding to its allure and grandeur.

"We are honored to partner with the Albert Schweitzer Organ Festival for this important occasion," said Steve Collins, President and CEO of the Hartford Symphony Orchestra. "This collaboration not only celebrates the exceptional talents of young organists but also highlights the beauty and versatility of the organ as an instrument. Together, we look forward to delivering a performance that will resonate throughout the beauty of the Trinity College Chapel."

This collaboration between the Hartford Symphony Orchestra and the Albert Schweitzer Organ Festival promises to be an extraordinary celebration of musical excellence. Don't miss the opportunity experience this beautiful event at Trinity College Chapel on Saturday, September 21, 2024, at 8:00 p.m. and Sunday, September 22 at 3:00 p.m.

## **Hartford Symphony Orchestra Announces Thrilling Lineup for FY25 POPS! Series**

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The Hartford Symphony Orchestra (HSO) is delighted to unveil its FY25 POPS! lineup, with a fourth concert soon to be announced, all promising audiences an unforgettable journey through the realms of music and magic. From spine-tingling tales of Halloween to the enchanting world of Harry Potter, the series offers something for everyone, blending captivating performances with visual spectacle.

### **Tales of Halloween**

**October 26, 2024, 3 p.m.**

This Halloween, brace yourselves for an immersive experience like no other as the Hartford Symphony Orchestra takes you on a journey through the eerie world of spooky folklore. Led by Conductor John Jesensky, the HSO will perform thrilling musical favorites from the concert hall and silver screen, including a reworking of Jesensky's own composition, "Tales of Halloween." This spine-chilling performance will be accompanied by interactive illustrations and text by Connecticut visual artists. The Bushnell transforms into a spooktacular theater with spellbinding decorations, festive activities, and tons of tricks and treats! Don't miss this frightfully fun event... if you dare!

### **Holiday Cirque Nutcracker**

**December 21, 2024, 3:00 p.m.**

All new for 2024, the Hartford Symphony's traditional Holiday Cirque concert is reimagined as Holiday Cirque Nutcracker. Holiday favorites and classic music from the Nutcracker will be set against the breathtaking feats of astonishing aerialists, contortionists, and gymnasts as they tumble, soar, and dance on and above the stage to tell the timeless Nutcracker tale. Again this year, it's a holiday extravaganza you won't want to miss – with a Nutcracker twist!

### **Harry Potter 7: Deathly Hallows Part 1**

**March 29, 2025 at 1 p.m. and 7 p.m.**

Embark on a thrilling adventure as the Hartford Symphony Orchestra presents Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows Part 1 in Concert. Experience Alexandre Desplat's epic score performed live by the HSO, synchronized with the projection of the seventh film in the beloved Harry Potter franchise. Join Harry, Ron, Hermione, and a host of familiar characters as they face new dangers and powerful friendships in this magical cinematic event. Wands at the ready for an unforgettable journey into the Wizarding World!

## **Great Plans for Hartford Symphony Orchestra's Bravo! Gala on April 24, 2024**

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We're excited about what's being planned for our upcoming Bravo! Gala, a dazzling celebration taking place on Saturday, April 27, 2024, from 6 to 11 p.m. at the Exhibition Hall in the Connecticut Convention Center. Our guests are in for an extraordinary evening in support of the HSO, featuring an immersive experience for the senses curated by our gala committee--Andrea Hawkins and Mark Christopher, co-chairs—and we extend our gratitude to our Music Director Carolyn Kuan and the entire HSO team for their dedication to creating an event worthy of your applause.

It will be a night filled with music, community, and philanthropy as we honor the memory of Joyce C. Willis, a distinguished Hartford native and passionate supporter of the arts. Her legacy of philanthropy and commitment to diversity in the arts will be celebrated throughout the evening.

This year's gala promises to be a highlight of our 80th Anniversary season, featuring a cocktail reception, a sumptuous 5-star dinner, a lively auction, and the hallmark of the HSO—a performance by the full orchestra with our signature audience participation element, all set in a sensational atmosphere. Kosher for Passover meals will be available upon request, ensuring that everyone can fully enjoy this remarkable celebration.

As part of our fundraising efforts, we are offering a chance to win a stunning pendant designed by Bill Selig Jewelers, valued at \$10,000. Each \$100 entry includes a gift certificate to Bill Selig Jewelers and two tickets to the HSO's Talcott Mountain Music Festival. Limited to 100 chances, this is an opportunity no one will want to miss.

Table Hosts play a crucial role in the success of our gala. Whether hosts are first-timers or have hosted before, they create an unforgettable experience for themselves and friends and family alike. Host responsibilities include inviting and confirming the attendance of 10 people whose values and motivations reflect the hosts and who are open to give, including themselves, and providing us with a guest list. Send questions to Deb Shulansky at [dshulansky@hartfordsymphony.org](mailto:dshulansky@hartfordsymphony.org). The deadline to register as a table host is March 1, 2024.

Sponsorships at various levels, ranging from \$2,500 to \$50,000, are currently being accepted. Sponsors showcase their commitment to community enrichment by having their logo featured on our invitations, website, and across our robust social media platforms, reaching over 17,800 users on Facebook, Instagram, and LinkedIn. Last year, HSO's website received over 160,000 views and over 425 local community and business leaders were in attendance. More information can be obtained by contacting Rob Beasley, Corporate & Foundation Relations Manager, at 860-760-7329 or [rbeasley@hartfordsymphony.org](mailto:rbeasley@hartfordsymphony.org). The sponsorship deadline is March 15, 2024.

Don't miss this chance to be part of a spectacular evening that supports the Hartford Symphony Orchestra and celebrates 80 years of musical excellence. Mark your calendars for April 24, 2024—let's make Bravo! Gala an event to remember!



## Introducing New HSO Staff Members

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The Hartford Symphony Orchestra is delighted to announce that Second Violinist Nathan Lowman has graciously assumed the pivotal role of orchestra librarian. Tasked with the meticulous organization of musical scores and parts, Nathan will provide all music needed for performances and maintain the orchestra's library of parts and scores. Simultaneously, we extend a warm welcome to Daniel Larkin, our newly appointed staff accountant. Charged with overseeing the daily financial operations, Daniel will play a key role in managing banking, cash disbursements, receipts, and General Ledger reconciliation. Together, Nathan and Daniel embody a commitment to excellence and a promising future for our organization.



**Nathan Lowman**, a versatile and accomplished musician, currently graces the Hartford Symphony Orchestra (HSO) stage as a Second Violinist. Residing in West Hartford, CT, Nathan's musical journey has been marked by a passion for excellence and an unwavering commitment to the orchestral arts.

Beyond his performing with the HSO, Nathan is set to embark on a new chapter as our Music Librarian. Drawing from his rich professional experience, which includes a significant stint with the Oregon Mozart Players in Eugene, OR, Nathan has honed the skills necessary for this dual role. As a Librarian, he has experience with sourcing and ordering music, meticulously organizing and distributing materials—not to mention ingeniously navigating challenges posed by the pandemic—all while fostering effective communication with conductors and fellow musicians.

Nathan's educational journey, culminating in a Master of Music from the University of Oregon and a Bachelor of Music from Vanderbilt University, underpins his technical prowess. Nathan's technical acumen and musical talents will undoubtedly come together in a masterful performance in this role. His dedication to the craft is further attested by his ongoing collaboration with esteemed organizations and conductors, showcasing his ability to harmonize technical proficiency with artistic expression.



**Daniel Larkin**, a seasoned accounting professional with over 20 years of experience, has recently become the trusted accountant for the Hartford Symphony. Daniel brings extensive expertise in financial management, tax planning, and business administration to his new role. He earned a Certificate in Accounting from Mount Wachusett Community College, Gardner, MA, in 2001.

Daniel's entrepreneurial spirit led to the establishment of Larkin Accounting Inc. in Worcester, MA, in November 2015. As President, he successfully managed a team overseeing 175 individual and 25 corporate clients until the firm's transition in April 2020. As Vice President at Paul D. McHugh & Company, Inc., Daniel played a pivotal role in day-to-day operations, handling tax returns, payroll, and bookkeeping. Previously, at

Alfonso P. Puccio PC, he honed skills in bookkeeping, payroll, and tax returns. From the start of his accounting career in 1998 as a Staff Accountant at John E. Larkin, CPA, in North Andover, MA, Daniel consistently demonstrated a commitment to excellence that will make him a valuable addition to the Hartford Symphony Orchestra's financial team, ensuring its financial success and stability. Daniel lives in Middletown and collects vinyl.

### **An Interview with David Roth as He Rejoins LAO Board of Directors**

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Hartford Symphony Board of Directors member David Roth was recently elected to rejoin the board of the League of American Orchestras (LAO). David has earned a degree in history from Lafayette College, a master's degree from the University of Virginia, and a law degree from the University of Connecticut. He is a veteran of the U.S. Army, having served as a captain in the military police. He practiced law as a partner in Levy and Droney, which is now merged into Hinckley Allen.

David currently serves as Senior Managing Director for South Ocean Capital Partners, a boutique real estate private equity firm which primarily invests alongside operating partners (i.e. developers) in opportunistic real estate assets, which was spun out from the family firm WLD Enterprise, still operating to provide investment information and advice to members of the family. The family business, originally a road building company in Cleveland, grew to encompass ownership of newspapers, cable TV networks, and real estate. Having started within the family firm, South Ocean now runs its real estate development operations for the benefit of outside investors, as well, including several Hartford area families.

In the nonprofit sector, David is involved with several endeavors in addition to the LAO. His term as chair of the Connecticut Children's Medical Center and Hospitals System board is coming to an end, but he will stay on as an ex officio director, and he serves on board of the Hartford Foundation for Public Giving as well as the Bushnell Center. He has been involved with the Federation of Greater Hartford and has served on multitude of committees and as a college trustee for Lafayette College, his alma mater.

David has served on several for-profit boards, as well, including startup private companies. In public service, he has served on the Investment Advisory Committee of the State Treasurer for managing pension funds and was involved in the West Hartford Zoning and Inland Water Commission—an influencer in the development of Blueback Square—at one point serving as its chair. At the national level, David has served on the National Democratic Leadership Council and was invited to be engaged—mostly in Romania—under the SEED Act (Support for Eastern European Democracy) with the transition of Eastern European Socialist Communist economies to capitalist economies under the Clinton administration.

*David was recently reelected to the board of the League of American Orchestras, and we caught up with him to ask about the League's activities and his experience with the Hartford Symphony.*

**You have been involved with the League of American Orchestras (LAO) for some time. Are there particular projects or League efforts you think are especially important to organizations like the Hartford Symphony Orchestra (HSO)?**

The League essentially serves as a platform for orchestras of all sizes across the country to communicate, learn, and address common issues. HSO President & CEO Steve Collins heads Group 3 and 4, as determined by budget size. The League also engages in national advocacy for orchestras, particularly active during COVID, securing funding and providing support. They also offer guidance to local orchestras on improving their advocacy efforts at the state or local level. Moreover, they analyze current trends in the orchestra world, identifying both challenges and opportunities. These include disruptions in audience behavior and preferences, which intersect with diversity and inclusion initiatives. The League aims to help orchestras attract and retain new audiences, moving away from traditional symphony audiences toward broader demographic groups. This involves programming and outreach efforts to engage a wider range of communities.

The legacy of arts organizations, including orchestras, is undergoing scrutiny and transformation. Organizations like The Hartford Foundation aim to have arts organizations broaden their impact beyond traditional audiences, fostering community inclusion and social awareness. This presents both challenges and opportunities, as it allows for reframing the role and identity of orchestras to appeal to a broader audience base. Ultimately, this shift can lead to increased support, both in terms of ticket sales and donor contributions, contributing to the long-term sustainability and mission impact of orchestras.

**Can you share a bit about your personal involvement and how you became involved with the League? Have there been any projects you've been particularly proud of?**

I initially got involved through a connection with an individual by the name of Dan Lewis, a long time and very important member of the Cleveland Orchestra who also helped establish the Symphony of Southern Florida. After meeting me and learning about my activity with the Hartford Symphony, he suggested I join the League. That was around ten years ago. During my tenure, I actively participated in discussions at board meetings and webinars, particularly focusing on issues such as financial stability and audience growth, including outreach to non-traditional audiences. This work predated the formal emphasis on diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI). Additionally, I engaged in efforts to secure government support and expand our financial base, given the absence of a significant endowment. These challenges remain relevant today, albeit with evolving dynamics.

**How do you recommend that board members, staff, and musicians engage with the League? What are the points of engagement?**

Well, starting off, they can subscribe to [symphony.org](https://www.symphony.org) and gain access to basic data, webinars, and strategic planning papers. It's a good starting point with a wealth of valuable information. As they become more involved, they can connect with people from orchestras facing similar challenges.

You can discuss everything from union contracts to learning from strategies implemented by orchestras across the country. Essentially, it's like having access to free outside consultancy to help address specific problems. At a minimum, board members should sign up for the League's newsletter and get added to their email list.

**Talking specifically about the HSO, now, you've been with us for years, since the late 1990s. You served as board chairman from 2004 to 2007 and again from 2010 to 2011. Of the projects in which we were involved, which do you think had the most positive impact?**

I believe the most important project was enhancing our relationship with The Bushnell. Coordinating with them and becoming more efficient by sharing resources was crucial. I current serve on both boards—The Bushnell's and the HSO's.

Another significant project was our last capital campaign, where we raised around \$10 million to address structural deficits. Unfortunately, our plans were disrupted by COVID-19. However, the overarching goal of growing audiences, donations, and endowment remains central to our vision. We constantly strive to expand our community and address issues like diversity and inclusion, ensuring everyone feels welcome at our concerts. This includes initiatives like revising audition processes to create a more diverse talent pipeline. It's essential to acknowledge and address disparities in audience demographics. This is an ongoing focus for us and aligns with the League's efforts to foster inclusivity and engagement within orchestral music. Personally, I'd be content if we solely played classical compositions like Mozart, Haydn, and Beethoven, but I recognize the need to appeal to a broader audience interested in diverse compositions, supporting living composers, and showcasing a more diverse set of musicians.

Years ago, a board member suggested creating a program where minority musicians could play alongside the orchestra to gain experience. This eventually led to the creation of our BIPOC musician fellowship.

The key challenges, as we've discussed, include achieving financial sustainability, broadening our audience base, and fostering diversity and inclusivity. We also need to explore avenues for government support. For instance, in Florida, they implemented a hotel room tax to fund the arts, demonstrating a creative approach to supporting the cultural sector without burdening residents.

**Is there anything more you'd like to add, something to which you'd like to add?**

I've had a really interesting journey. It's gone from both ends in terms of background. My father died when I was 6 years old. He was only 45 years old. And my mother brought up my brother, myself, and my sister. On a really good day, maybe once in a while we made it to middle class, but we were low middle after my father died. We bought a house with my aunt and uncle, my mother's sister and brother-in-law. I started working—I think I was 13—delivering newspapers. I was a paperboy all through high school. I worked in supermarkets, you know, bringing in the carts, packing the bags, mopping the floors at night. I worked on construction sites in the summers, or wherever I could get a job when I went to college. My kids, who've grown up in a much wealthier situation, have been

very fortunate. My wife's family business made a fair amount of money anyway, and they've grown tremendously.

My background makes me much more sensitive to an understanding of how many people have to live their lives. And I always tell my kids about the time I came home one day and said, "Mom, I need a baseball glove. I want to play baseball after school. Can I get a glove?" She said, "Okay, we'll talk about it at dinner." So at dinner, it was my brother Sandy, my sister Amy, my grandma, and me. And she said, "David would like a baseball glove. But here's the question and decision we have to make. If we buy that glove, that means we can't get a pizza or go out to dinner for the next week or two." In that way, I learned a lot about the value of money. I posed similar questions to my children and let them decide for themselves.

I've been to wonderful places, I've traveled. My wife is an art historian who works at the Wadsworth. We travel in Europe. She has colleagues all over who have introduced us to beautiful things. One of the reasons I am going back on League of American Orchestra's board—one of the things I'm focused on—is this: How do we improve the quality of life for our community and, connected to that, is my interest in music, the arts. My connection to children's health means a lot to me. I'm a trustee at Lafayette, and I'm happy to do it because I never would have been able to afford to go to a place like that without a scholarship. I'm grateful to have had this incredible arc of a life and to have done incredible things. Expanding quality of life improvements for our community is a significant part of so much of what I do.

It's also the mission of the Hartford Symphony Orchestra: Our mission is to enrich lives and communities through great music.