

SPRING 2026

QUARTER NOTES

The Challenging Search for HSO's Next Music Director

On February 18, 2026, the Hartford Symphony announced the names of the four finalists in the search for the HSO's next Music Director. Each finalist will conduct one of the Masterworks concert series during the 2026-2027 season.

Let's meet the finalists!

Yaniv Dinur

Yaniv Dinur will conduct the HSO's second Masterworks series on **October 23 – 25, 2026**. The program will include *Kauyumari* by Gabriela Ortiz, Liszt's Piano Concerto No. 1 and Symphony No. 4 by Tchaikovsky.

Maestro Dinur is currently the Music Director of the Tallahassee Symphony and the New Bedford Symphony. He made his conducting debut at the age of 19 with the National Symphony of Ireland and is the former resident conductor for the Milwaukee Symphony Orchestra. He has been a guest conductor of multiple orchestras worldwide including the Israel Philharmonic, the Portugal Symphony, the



Utah Symphony, Rochester Philharmonic, Houston Symphony Fort Worth Symphony and many others.

"The HSO has a very special history. It has given many world and U.S. premieres, created historic recordings, impacted generations of children, and one of your music directors was a cousin of Gustav Mahler! The possibility of continuing this incredible legacy is both inspiring and humbling.

This moment is the culmination of lots of complex planning and work but now comes the most fun part—making music. I am really looking forward to discovering what the orchestra and I can do together. During my visit, I am

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also planning to try some authentic Connecticut pizza and settle one of the most important debates of our time: Patriots or Giants." [Yaniv Dinur | Music Director Finalist](#)

Jonathan Taylor Rush



Jonathan Taylor Rush, a Connecticut native whose family is from Windsor, will conduct the HSO's third Masterworks series on **November 20 – 22, 2026**. The program includes *Four Black American Dances* by Carlos Simon, the Cello Concerto No. 1 by Saint-Saëns, and Symphony No. 4 by Johannes Brahms.

Maestro Rush served as guest conductor for the Hartford Symphony on prior occasions and was the Associate Conductor of the Baltimore Symphony, and Artistic Director of the Baltimore Youth Symphony, leading the ensemble through its first international tour through Europe. Maestro Rush has been a guest conductor with the Minnesota Orchestra, the Detroit Symphony, Chicago

Sinfonietta, and the National Symphony Orchestra, just to mention a few.

"I'm truly honored and excited to be named a finalist for Music Director of my hometown orchestra, the Hartford Symphony Orchestra. Growing up in the Hartford region, I dreamed of one day leading our HSO, which gives this city its heartbeat, and it means a great deal to be at this point in the journey.

I'm looking forward to returning to lead the orchestra in a program I care deeply about, reconnecting with the Hartford community, and spending time in the arts culture that helped shape who I am. I'm excited to see family, meet new people, and share music with Hartford as we continue this exciting process together." [Jonathan Taylor Rush | Hartford Symphony Orchestra](#)

Alastair Willis



QUARTER NOTES

Alastair Willis will conduct the HSO's fourth Masterworks series on **December 11 – 13, 2026**. The program will include *Abstractions* by Anna Clyne, Ravel's Piano Concerto in G and the Mussorgsky/Ravel *Pictures at an Exhibition*.

Maestro Willis is in his 9th season as the Music Director of the South Bend Symphony Orchestra, and his 6th season as Principal Conductor of The Symphonia Boca Raton in Florida. He has served as guest conductor of the Chicago Symphony, San Francisco Symphony, Philadelphia Orchestra, New York Philharmonic, Mexico City Philharmonic and many others. Although born in Acton, MA, Maestro Willis was educated in Great Britain and earned his bachelor's degree from England's Bristol University.

"Greetings, Hartford! It's simply thrilling to be a finalist. I'm drawn to the quality of your musicians. To your rich artistic history that's rooted in tradition and open to evolution. Your inspiring values and vision. Your creativity, transparency and identity. The warmth and engagement of your board and staff. Your expansive programming. How your impressive Learning and Social Impact programs are connecting Connecticut communities. You offer the perfect platform to build on — I can't wait for this opportunity to dive into collaboration, make music of the highest quality and engage deeply with your community. See you soon!" [Alastair Willis | Hartford Symphony Orchestra](#)

John Morris Russell

John Morris Russell, the principal conductor of the Cincinnati POPS since 2011, will conduct the HSO's fifth Masterworks series on **February 12 – 14, 2027**. The program includes *Prelude in C* by Eric Whitacre, *Rhapsody on a Theme of Paganini*, by Rachmaninoff and Hector Berlioz's *Symphonie Fantastique*.

A Grammy-nominated artist, Maestro Russell also serves as Music Director of the Hilton Head Symphony Orchestra and conducts the prestigious Hilton Head International Piano Competition. A popular guest conductor, Maestro Russell has appeared with the Cleveland Orchestra, the New York Philharmonic, St.

Louis Symphony, Detroit Symphony, Houston Symphony, Utah Symphony, Minnesota Symphony and many others.

"The HSO is remarkably special. It possesses all the finesse of the foremost ensembles in nearby metropolises, a brilliant spirit of innovation, and a soul steeped in the deep history and cultural mosaic of the Capitol Region. Music-making, whether classical or pops, creates emotional connection and relevance. Beginning with extraordinary works from every genre curated specifically to share nuanced stories, it is energized by embracing and celebrating the incredible artists, filmmakers, performers of all kinds, and musical styles of THIS place. It is sustained by nurturing the next generation of musicians and music lovers. Such musical experiences have the power to bring people together and change hearts. I look forward to this journey together." [John Morris Russell | Hartford Symphony Orchestra](#)



The Search for the Candidates

Announcing the final candidates is exciting and many have asked about the process by which the four finalists were determined. This edition of *Quarter Notes* takes you behind the scenes to the journey that began more than a year ago, immediately following the announcement of the planned departure of HSO's much-admired music director, Carolyn Kuan. The HSO leadership quickly recognized the necessary next steps to ensure that a new music director would be in place to begin immediately after Maestro Kuan's departure following the 2026-27 season.

With a seamless transition in mind, HSO leadership formed a 15-member Search Committee to begin the search for the next Music Director of the Hartford Symphony. The

Committee, chaired by Board of Directors Vice Chair Diane Whitney, was populated with representation from four specific constituent groups: musicians, Board members, staff and community members.¹

When the open position was announced to the public, experts in the field advised that we could expect 200 applications. They weren't wrong: we received 196 applicants, an overwhelming number. The Committee insisted on complete confidentiality to ensure that none of the applicant names were revealed. All discussions about the applicants were held in strict confidence by the Search Committee.

The Committee's first task was to create a matrix and point system to narrow down the initial group of applicants, all of whom had

submitted resumes and videos. The six musicians of the Committee (3 veterans and 3 newcomers to the orchestra) carefully examined all 196 submissions and eliminated those who were not sufficiently qualified for the position. After considerable effort by the six musicians, the original 196 were reduced to a pool of 36, which was then further reduced to a group of 24 quarter-finalists.

At that point, the non-musician members of the Committee became more heavily involved. The 15 Committee members were divided into four sub-groups, with care to make sure that musicians were included in each of the four sub-groups. Each candidate was asked to submit a written letter of interest, videos, and to create sample orchestral programs for masterworks concerts. Each committee sub-group was then given the job of analyzing six



¹ The musicians self-selected all committee members to include three veterans of the orchestra, Concertmaster Leonid Sigal, Violist Arthur Masi (chair of the Orchestra Committee) and Jeanne Wilson (flute/piccolo), and three newer orchestra members: Robert Hoveland (bass trombone), Jarrod Briley (principal tuba) and Simon Bilyk (violin.) Board members included Chairperson Diane Whitney, Kristen Phillips, David Roth and June Archer. Staff included Steve Collins (HSO's President and CEO) and Eric Hutchinson (Director of Development), both musicians who had extensive careers in the field before their positions with the HSO. Community members included Amanda Roy (CEO of the Greater Hartford Arts Council), Tom Scavone (Director of The Hart School Community Division at the University of Hartford), and Jared Chase (long time symphony attendee and Chair of *Forte*, HSO's affinity group for those under 45.)

of the 24 submissions, thus ensuring that all 24 would be given thorough consideration. Comprehensive and common criteria were utilized by each sub-group, with emphasis on artistic excellence, collaborative leadership, community engagement, years of relevant experience, and vision for the HSO's future.

The Committee's goal was to narrow the search to three or four finalists, placing a considerable workload on each committee member. The Committee met regularly from July of 2025 through January of 2026. Each watched the videos submitted by the candidates and thoroughly reviewed the programming assignments submitted by the 24 candidates.

The criteria used by the Search Committee were based on the multiple skills required of a music director. The ideal candidate is one who will appeal to the musicians as well as the public, collaborate well with HSO staff and Board of Directors, and with sufficient expertise to negotiate the complex administrative role of the Music Director. Chair Diane Whitney stressed the importance of adequate experience in multiple areas:

"While everyone expects a high level of musical excellence, there are aspects that only musicians can judge, such as baton technique. But the role of a music director involves much more than music. That person must interact well with audiences, with donors, and with the broader community. Artistic excellence is a given, but a music director must create meaningful and relevant programs for far-ranging purposes and simultaneously juggle all the



complex administrative and personnel issues involved in managing an orchestra. Experience in all those areas is critical."

Robert Hoveland, one of the newer musician members of the Committee, had been involved in a Music Director search for the Cape Symphony. The Hartford Symphony Orchestra, he explained, did an excellent job of constructing the parameters and timing of the search, with care to solicit input from all relevant constituent groups. Because we had sufficient notice of Maestro Kuan's planned departure, the HSO had the ability to properly plan and organize the search in a timely manner. Searches, Robert noted, should properly take two full years, and that is precisely the amount of time the HSO planned to conduct the search. The first year (the 2025-26 season) was consumed with the initial search, with the goal of naming finalists who would be included in public programming during the second year, the 2026-27 season.

Robert observed:

"Ideally, every member of the orchestra, as well as the public, should have the chance

to interact with each of the four finalists, so starting the search early is key. Then, all finalists can be presented to the public in the same season. We watched videos, but there is no replacement for experiencing a conductor live on the podium. The HSO's methodology and timing of the search was the best way to ensure it is fair and balanced."

From the outset, the critical value of the musicians on the Committee was clear, according to President and CEO Steve Collins:

"Beyond their incredible insight and understanding of the role of the Music Director, what was invaluable about the contributions of the six musician members was that many of them had worked with one or more of the applicants, which brought vital information into the discussions."

Robert Hoveland also commented on the commitment of each Committee member, each of whom put their full weight behind the task:

"The HSO is a serious and important regional orchestra."

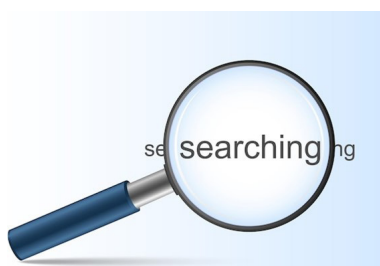
Every committee member recognized the importance of what we were asked to do. Each of us reviewed every aspect of the candidates' application materials and examined the role that each candidate held with every organization listed on their resume. It was a lot of work. We are no longer in the era of the "Toscanini-tyrant" on the podium who demands complete obedience from the musicians and the public. We wanted someone that the musicians could trust, and who could build a social relationship with audiences, making each audience member and donor feel personally connected."

Jared Chase, one of the community members on the Search Committee, commented on the seriousness of the undertaking and the time invested by each member of the Committee:

"This process required care, commensurate with the quality of candidates and thoughtfulness of their submissions. We each spent over a hundred hours listening to recordings, analyzing assignments, grading those against the rubric, interviewing candidates, and discussing everything together. This was time well spent: it will help shape the future of this amazing orchestra and community."

Eventually, the committee reduced the 24 quarter-finalists to a group of ten semi-finalists. Extensive zoom interviews were conducted by the Committee with each semi-finalist, and each was asked to fulfill two programming assignments: create a masterworks "mini-series" of four

concert programs, and a community concert program in partnership with a local art organization of their choice. Each candidate was provided with a list of selected cultural organizations in our community and chose one for collaboration. The candidates who could clearly articulate their vision behind the masterworks and community concerts were the ones who "stood out" from the crowd. The high degree of confidentiality maintained within the committee meant that no one could solicit input from any individual outside the Committee. In naming the four finalists, the Committee had to rely exclusively on one another, the strength of their communal knowledge and opinions, and the thoroughness of their analysis of each candidate.




After seven months of painstaking work, HSO's Search Committee was able to select the four finalists who will conduct the Hartford Symphony Orchestra during the 2026-27 season. Each finalist will spend a residency week in Hartford that includes rehearsals, performances, and opportunities to engage with musicians, staff, board members, and members of the broader community. Following each residency, feedback will be gathered from all stakeholders, including our audiences, as part of the final evaluation process.

Diane Whitney, Chair of the committee, summed it up as follows:

"The search committee has undertaken a comprehensive and collaborative review process. We are now eager for Connecticut audiences to experience these four outstanding artists and to take part in this important moment for the Orchestra."

This is an exciting moment for the Hartford Symphony Orchestra, our audience and our entire community. The HSO is so proud of our history, including Carolyn Kuan's groundbreaking 16-year tenure, which reflects the strong and positive trajectory of women on the podium. We also recognize the broader conversation about the importance of representation, and the well-documented and disappointing reality (as confirmed in studies by the League of American Orchestras) that nationwide gender parity in orchestra music directors is far from realized at present. Regardless of which finalist becomes the next Music Director, audiences will continue to see HSO's unwavering commitment to diverse artistry on our stage. Bob Bausmith, Chair of the Board of Directors, summarized it best:

"The Hartford Symphony Orchestra has benefited tremendously from Carolyn's artistry and leadership. As we look to the future, we are excited to introduce four exceptional Music Director candidates who will each bring their unique musical voices to Hartford next season."

We hope all of you will be with us next season, to share in the excitement of the music – and the thrill of meeting and experiencing the artistry of our four finalists.. 

MUSICIAN SPOTLIGHT

MEET SARAH NG, One of HSO's Newest Fellows

In the Autumn 2025 Quarter Notes, we introduced audiences to Josué Alfaro Mora (double bass), one of our two new fellows who began in the 25/26 season. Regular readers of *Quarter Notes* know that last season the HSO launched a program that was years in planning: a fellowship program specifically created for string musicians from historically underrepresented racial and ethnic groups.

Fellowship programs such as ours are becoming more common in symphonies across the country, as they are designed to welcome musicians whose racial and ethnic identities reflect the communities served by orchestra. The inclusion of fellows makes our performances, educational and social impact programs more meaningful for the audiences and community members we strive to reach. The HSO program offers a two-year fellowship to each selected string musician and is structured so that two new musicians join each year as the two longest-standing fellows complete their terms, resulting in a class of four fellows at any given time.

Being chosen as a fellow involves a competitive audition process and last season, we welcomed two gifted musicians to the HSO: cellist Esther Benjamin and bassist Samantha Donato. Esther and Samantha are now in the final year of their two-year fellowship, and this season are joined by our newest fellows, Josué Alfaro Mora (double bass) and Sarah Ng (violin).

This issue of *Quarter Notes* introduces you to Sarah, who was born in Singapore and came to the United States on her own at the age of 16 to study at Eastman Conservatory in Rochester, NY. Her mother is an accountant and her father worked in and taught

computer engineering. Thanks to her older sister who loved music and a mom who wanted her to learn an instrument, Sarah began violin lessons at age five, following in her sister's footsteps. She admits that for a long time, she didn't love the rigors of practice, but as she grew older, and found friendships within the youth orchestra, she began to appreciate the community she was gaining through music. Her commitment changed when she was accepted to the Singapore National Youth Symphony. The group toured internationally, including Berlin (Germany) and Aberdeen (Scotland), and because of music Sarah found a new world. As music began to open doors to friendships and opportunities, Sarah found a community in which she was welcomed and valued. As friendships expanded, it brought a deeper appreciation for the many ways in which music had become an integral part of her life. She saw her future as a musician and with her sister as a role model, she was determined to succeed. Having an older sister who pursued music was an important part of her journey. Sarah knew that the path to becoming a professional musician would not be easy, and she observed:



"Being a musician is a lonely path, involving hours of practice. But one of the best ways to raise a good violinist is to have another one nearby, to push, encourage and create a healthy competition and role model to follow."

Sarah was accepted at Eastman as an international student in 2012 at the age of 16. While at Eastman, she met her husband, Justin, who was then a composition student. Before the pandemic, Sarah had moved to Montreal to pursue her master's degree at McGill University's Schulich School of Music and upon graduation, found work in Canada. But as it did for so many, the 2020 pandemic upended the plans she had made. Rather than remain in Canada, Sarah returned to the United States, and married Justin. They initially lived with Justin's parents in upstate New York, but moved to New Jersey, when Justin began law school at Rutgers University.

In addition to performing, Sarah teaches music because "every aspect of teaching reveals



something about yourself and connecting with others through music creates a bond through our shared humanity." While she notes that it is fun teaching a smart and talented teenager, Sarah loves the fact that she has students of all ages. She recalls one 80-year-old student who opted to resume lessons on the instrument he played as a child: "He was drawn back to the violin – the instrument he played as a child - as he became more aware of his own mortality and wanted to resume something that had given



him immense joy." Sarah has now begun teaching at a performing arts school in New Jersey, with students that span the age from children to adults.

At home, Sarah is the cook and enjoys the food, culture and traditions of Singapore. She favors hearty and savory influences in her cooking, and two favorite dishes are kimchi stew and beef bolognaise. She loves travel (and recalled wonderful trips through the Mui Ne desert in Vietnam, snorkeling the Great Barrier Reef, plus Australia, Malaysia, and Bryce Canyon in Utah). About four years ago, Sarah began weightlifting, which she now views as a relaxing yet disciplined hobby that requires

attention to focus and breath. Similarly, swimming requires focus on breath and Sarah points out that "just listening to the sound of your own breathing is like meditation." She has deliberately chosen to diversify her musical interests, expanding far beyond the classical music she performs and teaches. Her interests include English artist Sade (pronounced Sha-day), and she is impressed by the talent of a trumpeter known as Christian Scott aTunde Adjuah. See: [Christian Scott aTunde Adjuah 'West of the West' | Live Studio Session](#)

We hope all of you will have the chance to meet Sarah and we are so lucky and honored to have her with us.



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Teresa Carreño

From child prodigy to international sensation, Venezuelan-born Teresa Carreño defied 19th century conventions to become one of the most electrifying and influential musicians of her time. Before the age of ten, she had performed at the White House for President Abraham Lincoln, debuted in one of New York's major concert halls and had already impressed composers Gioachino Rossini and Franz Liszt. For all the acclaim she received during her lifetime, Carreño's name gradually receded from the world stage, a disappearance that reveals uncomfortable truths about gender, geography and the politics of legacy. Please meet Teresa Carreño, a virtuoso musician and composer we should all know.

Maria Teresa Carreño García de Sena was born on December 22, 1853, in Caracas, Venezuela to a musical family. Her father, Manuel Antonio Carreño, a Venezuelan politician who served both as Minister of Foreign Affairs and Minister of Finance, was an extremely talented amateur pianist. Her mother, Clorinda García de Sena y Toro, whose father was also a musician, was also related to the country's great national hero, Simon Bolivar. Carreño's paternal grandfather, José Cayetano Carreño, was a recognized Venezuelan composer.

From the age of six, Carreño received piano instruction from her father, and was quickly identified as a child prodigy. Due to political upheavals in Venezuela that resulted in a coup d'état, the family was forced to emigrate to New York in 1862. It is astonishing that within just a few months of their arrival, 8-year-old Carreño gave her first concert in New York's Irving Hall² on November

28, 1862, quickly followed by a performance tour of Cuba. It appears that the child's multiple concerts were an attempt to relieve the family's financial difficulties, as her father was unable to find profitable work to support the family. Teresa's genius was the family's salvation. She gave a solo performance with the Boston Philharmonic in January of 1863, followed by 20 different

concert dates throughout Boston. In that same year, she received an invitation to perform for President Abraham Lincoln at the White House, who asked that she play his favorite piece, "Listen to the Mocking Bird." In 1865, Carreño, not yet 12-years-old, embarked on her second concert tour in Cuba.



Teresa Carreño



Carreño's family

² New York's Irving Hall was built in 1860 but was demolished in 1888 and was replaced by the Irving Place Theater in 1893.

SALA ESPADERO
GALIANO 47
Domingo 18 de Marzo de 1917
a las 9 p. m.

RECITAL DE PIANO
 POR
MME. TERESA CARREÑO

PROGRAMME

I. Sonata Appassionata, op. 57..... BEETHOVEN.
 I. Allegro.
 II. Andante con moto.
 III. Allegro ma non troppo.
 PRESTO

II. a. Preludio en re bemol, op. 28 N^o 15.. }
 b. Nocturno en sol mayor, op. 37 N^o 2.. } CHOPIN.
 c. Polonesa en la bemol mayor, op. 53.. }
 III. Estudios Sinfónicos..... } SCHUMANN.
 IV. a. Sueño de Amor, Nocturno en la bemol }
 b. Rapsodia húngara N^o 6..... } LISZT.

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O'REILLY, 61

Ultimo Concierto de Teresa Carreño



Carreño as a young child

Carreno's teachers are a list of "who's who" in the 19th century world of music. In addition to ongoing lessons from her father, who was her primary instructor until she was 18 years old, the young student took lessons from a variety of celebrity composers and musicians. From the time she arrived in New York at age eight until the family relocated to Paris in 1866, she received

instructions from the acclaimed composer and virtuoso pianist, Louis Moreau Gottschalk. As a tribute to her teacher, in 1862 young Carreño composed *Gottschalk Waltz*, and the cover of the sheet music shows Carreño as small child, sitting at a Chickering piano.

When the great Russian pianist and composer, Anton Rubinstein, gave a series of concerts in the United States, he invited Carreño to play for him. Rubinstein was so impressed that he invited the family to follow him to Europe so Teresa could study with him. The family moved to Paris and while there, in addition to her studies with Rubinstein, Carreño studied with George Matthias, one of

Chopin's most accomplished students. [It should be noted that Carreño had received an earlier offer to study with Franz Liszt, which her father had declined.] In the fall of 1866, Carreño's mother died suddenly of cholera, a heavy blow for any young child. Carreño's father then moved with his daughter to Spain, where she gave concerts in Madrid and Zaragoza, followed by successful concert tours throughout Europe.

In 1872, at the age of eighteen, Carreño was a seasoned performer. In addition to her work as a performing pianist, Carreno was studying composition and voice, having been encouraged to sing

by the famous composer, Gioachino Rossini. She was on a concert tour in England as the piano soloist with James Henry Mapleson's opera company in 1872 when a singer's sudden illness launched her operatic career: Carreño went onstage and sang the role of the queen in *Les Huguenots*, and her well-received performance precipitated a series of singing engagements.

In 1873, Carreño married Emile Sauret, a French violinist. Although their marriage was brief, they had two children whom Carreño was soon supporting on her own. In the following year, 1874, her beloved father died, leaving Carreño bereft. In 1875, she moved to America with her children to study singing and it was there that Carreño met and married her second husband, baritone Giovanni Tagliapietra. The couple had three children (including her daughter Teresita Carreño Tagliapietra who also became a pianist) and the family opted to move to Venezuela to form a new opera company and music conservatory. Unfortunately, their efforts were thwarted by political unrest, and the sojourn in Venezuela lasted only two years. With the end of her second marriage, Carreño, an intense and dynamic woman, was undaunted and on the move, open to new adventures.

She was the perfect choice to participate in the inaugural Telephone Concert on April 2, 1877 in New York City. The event was the brainchild of Elisha Gray, an inventor who filed a patent on the telephone just hours behind Alexander Graham



Teresa Carreño at the piano

Bell. (Years of legal conflict ensued before Bell was finally awarded the patent.) The concert was designed to demonstrate how music could be transmitted long distance. Carreño and other outstanding artists were invited to take part on the stage at Steinway Hall. Though the music that was produced sounded faint and far away, it was a novel and important step in the blending of art and technology. In 1877, the same year as the Telephone Concert, Thomas Edison filed a patent on a talking machine. Recorded sound was in its infancy and early phonographs were of poor quality, but Carreño's playing has been preserved on some piano rolls.

In 1892, Carreño married for a third time, to German composer and pianist Eugen d'Albert, who was 11 years her junior. Carreño was the second of his six wives, and each spouse occupied a separate wing of a castle in Germany. The union produced two children; while it was

artistically productive, they remained together only three years. They divorced in 1895. Throughout all, Carreño continued to perform, and was the idol of Europe, hailed as "The Walküre of the Piano" for her dual career as composer and pianist, as well as her regular performance of large works.

In 1902, Carreño married for the fourth and last time to Arturo Tagliapietra, the brother of her second husband. It was the longest and happiest of her marriages, and as she had done throughout her life, Carreño continued to travel in performance tours throughout Europe, the Americas and Australia.

Carreño's compositions were largely written before she was 22, and the catalogue of her works include roughly 75 compositions, consisting of piano solos, lieder, choral works, chamber music and orchestral scores. The work *Mi Teresita* or *Kleiner Waltz* is a miniature waltz composed for her daughter, which became one of the most widely disseminated works during her lifetime. Orchestral pieces include *Le Printemps*, *Himno a Bolivar* (dedicated to Simon Bolivar), and *Himno al Ilustre Americano*. Works such as her *Serenade for Strong Orchestra* and her rarely performed *Misa* are evidence of her unfulfilled symphonic potential. Chamber works include her *String Quartet in B minor*.

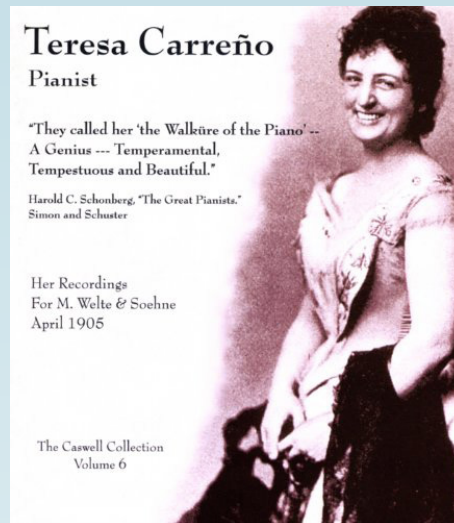
During her life, Carreño performed works by Edward MacDowell (who began as her student when he was just 9 years old) and Edvard

Grieg. She performed Grieg's Piano Concerto in A Minor with Grieg conducting, and because of Carreño, Grieg's works were routinely introduced to international audiences. She gained the admiration of the most prominent musicians of the day including Charles Gounod, Gioachino Rossini, Franz Liszt, Hector Berlioz, Johannes Brahms, Claudio Arrau and a young Sergei Rachmaninoff, just to name a few. Amy Beach and Edward MacDowell dedicated compositions to her. In 1916, nearly fifty years after her performance for President Abraham Lincoln, Carreño was invited to return to the White House, where she performed for President Woodrow Wilson.



Plaque on facade of building at 740 West End Ave, where Carreño died.

Carreño fell ill during a performance tour of Cuba, and although the nature of the illness was not specified, she soon became paralyzed. She passed away in New York City on June 12, 1917, at the age of 63. Her honorary pallbearers included Jan Paderewski, Albert Spalding, Walter Damrosch and Charles Steinway, among others. Her ashes were eventually returned to Venezuela, where a theater



Album cover for Carreño's works.

was founded in her name: the Teresa Carreño Cultural Complex in Caracas is now the home of the Venezuela Symphony Orchestra. The building also houses some of Carreño's personal belongings including photographs, personal correspondence and musical scores. On June 12, 1938, Venezuela issued a postage stamp with her portrait and a crater in the surface of Venus bears her name: Carreño.

If you're interested in learning more about Teresa Carreño, we suggest the following:

Consider watching this brief video about Carreño, her life and her work: [Open Ears: Teresa Carreño](#).

For your listening pleasure, here are some wonderful recordings of Carreño in performance:

Playing Chopin's Ballade No. 1 - [Teresa Carreño plays Chopin Ballade No. 1 in G minor Op. 23](#).

Performing Chopin's Nocturne No. 1 - [Nocturne No. 13 in C Minor, Op. 48, No. 1 \(Welte-Mignon piano roll recording\)](#).

Performing the Hungarian Rhapsodies, as captured on a piano roll: [19 Hungarian Rhapsodies, S244/R106: No. 6 in D-Flat Major \(Welte-Mignon piano roll recording\)](#).

A piano roll captured Carreño performing her own composition, *Mi Teresita Waltz*: [Teresa Carreño plays her Mi Teresita Waltz on original ca. 1908 piano roll](#).

This recording features the best of Carreño's playing: [Legendary Piano Recital of Teresa Carreño!](#)

Source Materials:

[The Valkyrie Returns: Rediscovering Teresa Carreño, the Venezuelan Pianist, Composer, and Conductor – The Science Survey](#)

[Pianists From The Past: Teresa Carreño written by Clara Rodriguez](#)

[Carreño, Teresa \(1853–1917\) | Encyclopedia.com](#)

[Teresa Carreño - Steinway & Sons](#)

[The Life and Legacy of Teresa Carreño - Observer Voice](#)

[Carreño, Teresa | femalecomposers.org](#)

[Timeline: Teresa Carreño \(1853-1917\) | Vermont Public](#)

[Teresa Carreño \(1853-1917\) - 21 of the greatest women composers in classical music - Classic FM](#)

[The Valkyrie and the Dame: Two Musicians You Should Know About | Classical Music Indy](#)

STAFF SPOTLIGHT

Mariel Christiana

HSO Corporate and Foundation Relations Manager

Mariel began with the HSO in September of 2025 and her excitement about her new role is evident in our recent interview. Everyone at the HSO is delighted to have her on the team, and as she's already out and about in the community, we wanted to be sure to introduce her to each of you!

QN: We hear you are local! Please tell us about your background and your family.

I grew up in Berlin, Connecticut, one of three girls. My fraternal twin sister is Claire, and our older sister (by 6 years) is Maddy. My mom is very musical and in addition to her work as a teacher, she had a teaching studio in our home when I was young. Our house was always filled with music, both live and recorded. All of us took piano lessons (I began on Suzuki piano) and in 4th grade, when I got the chance to explore other instruments, I chose flute. My first private teacher was Barbara Hopkins who plays flute with the Hartford Symphony! I ultimately chose to major in music (and a thank you to all the wonderful teachers who inspired me) and received my undergraduate degree from the Hartt School of Music in flute performance. My twin sister played oboe and our older sister focused on piano and songwriting, so there were many opportunities to play music together in our

home. Although my dad is not a musician, he did play trumpet through high school and certainly shares the same love of music as everyone in the family.

QN: How did you transition from flute performance to arts administration?

My original goal was to be a full-time performer and have a teaching studio as well. However, as I was taking auditions for graduate school, I realized that I wanted to pursue another path, but I still continue to perform for church services and weddings. The more I thought about my future, the more I wanted to learn about arts

administration, and since I always enjoyed writing, I began to explore ways to combine both worlds. In 2022, I met the founder of Primo Artists, a small but well-known agency that represents many composers, conductors and musicians. Primo, which began in 2015, represents a multitude of renowned musicians such as Itzhak Perlman, Joshua Bell and so many others. To my delight, I was offered a job and during my years there I worked closely with so many great artists including Wynton Marsalis (composer/musician), Valerie Coleman (composer/flutist), Nicola Benedetti (violin), Beatrice Rana (piano) and many others. My work at Primo gave me a greater understanding and appreciation of everything that happens "behind the scenes." My work at Primo deepened my understanding



Mariel Christiana

of the contract process and the many steps involved in advancing an engagement from initial agreement to concert day. It also gave me insight into the wide range of people involved in both managing an artist's career and coordinating with the orchestras they perform with.

QN: With such a great job, what made you apply for the position with the HSO?

The more I learned about the world of arts administration, the more I wanted to become involved in the communities and organizations that create spaces for artists to perform. I enjoy the relationship-aspect of the "behind the scenes" work, which drew me more to the development side. As I was looking to find a way to become more deeply connected with my community, I saw the opportunity posted for the position at the HSO. I was already living in CT as the bulk of my work at Primo was remote. I happened to see the job opening at the HSO on a Linked-In post, and I knew this was my path. Growing up in Connecticut with a passion for music, I frequently attended performances by the Hartford Symphony Orchestra. Leaving Primo was certainly bittersweet and it was hard to say goodbye to wonderful colleagues, but I also knew that my future career needed deeper connections to community. I am committed to doing my part to sustain the arts organizations that make music possible! Working at the HSO is the perfect combination of my love of music and my desire for a career in arts administration.

QN: Tell us a little about your home life now.

I live in West Hartford with Aidan, who is my boyfriend and my best friend. We met in high school and he grew up playing piano and trombone. Although he doesn't work in the performing arts he understands and shares my passion for music and the performing arts. We have a rescue cat named "Hitch" who got her name when, as a kitten, she "hitched" a ride in the wheel well of a car that Aidan's cousin was driving!



QN: What kind of music do you enjoy?

Of course I love classical music, but I like all genres of music from indie groups to Steely Dan. Loving a wide range of music means that I can match musical choices to my moods or activities.

QN: What can you tell us about your hobbies?

I have a few hobbies, but my main interest right now is barre workouts! I started in January of 2025 and I belong to a barre studio in West Hartford. I never danced as a child, but I love doing this, and I'm in the studio about four times a week. I love long walks and hikes, which is something Aidan and I share.

Last year we hiked the White Mountains in the North Conway area of New Hampshire. I love good TV series and have been known to binge-watch some good ones. My other hobbies are cooking and baking! I am Italian and last Christmas I got a pasta attachment, so I've been making fresh pasta. ***Here's my favorite Bolognese recipe, courtesy of Lidia Bastianich!***

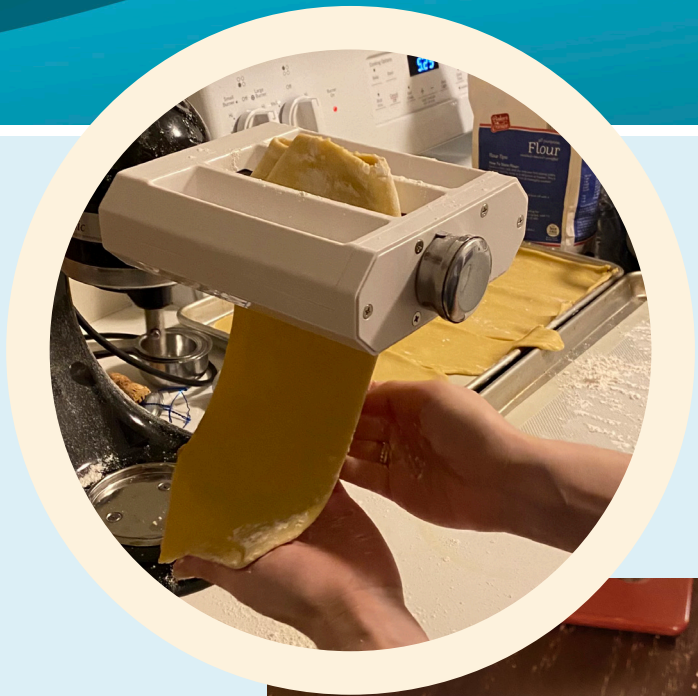


Mariele's cat named Hitch.

Recipe for Meat Sauce Bolognese

- 3 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
- 1 medium yellow onion, minced (about 1 cup)
- 1 medium carrot, peeled and finely shredded (about 1/2 cup)
- 1/2 cup minced celery with leaves
- 2 teaspoons kosher salt
- 1 pound ground beef
- 1 pound ground pork
- 1/2 cup dry red wine
- 1 tablespoon tomato paste
- 3 cups canned Italian plum tomatoes, preferably San Marzano, crushed by hand or passed through a food mill
- 3 fresh or 4 dried bay leaves
- Freshly ground black pepper to taste
- 4 cups hot water, or as needed

Heat the olive oil in a wide, 3 to 4-quart pan or Dutch oven over medium heat. Stir in the onion, carrot and celery, season them lightly with salt and cook, stirring, until the onion is translucent. Crumble in the ground beef and pork and continue cooking, stirring to break up the meat, until the meat is browned and all the liquid has evaporated. Pour in the wine and cook, scraping the bottom of the pan, until the wine is evaporated, 3 to 4 minutes. Stir in the tomato paste and cook for 1-2 minutes, then pour in the tomatoes, toss in the bay leaves, and season lightly with salt and pepper. Bring it to a boil, then lower the heat so the sauce is at a lively simmer. Cook, stirring occasionally, until the sauce is dense but juicy and a rich, dark red color. This will take about 2 to 3 hours. The longer you cook it, the better it will become. While the sauce is cooking, add hot water as necessary to keep the meats and vegetables covered. (Most likely, a noticeable layer of oil will float to the top toward the end of cooking. Once finished, the oil can be removed with a spoon or reincorporated in the sauce, which is what is traditionally done.)



Homemade Meat Sauce Bolognese



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