

February
2021

Chewie and Yuriy



KEYNOTES

LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

Dear Friends:

I'm amazed by the activity levels of the Charleston Symphony and the CSOL in our current Covid world. We track the undertakings of other orchestras and their support organizations. Many have been inactive during the last year or are just getting started planning spring 2021 activities.

The good news is vaccines are now available, the kinks in the delivery systems are being worked out and the age threshold for vaccine-eligible individuals is going down. These important steps mean that arts organizations will be able to plan their events with more certainty and optimism.

Finally, it's the proverbial light at the end of the tunnel.

The League has been forging ahead with our fundraising events. Naturally, we've *pivoted* (Who knew that word would become such a part of our everyday vernacular?) in our event planning, execution and in some cases, the entire format. One prime example is our annual Designer Showhouse which usually runs from mid-March through mid-April. With Covid uncertainties swirling, we decided in December to postpone the DSH date until May of 2021. A group of volunteers has been diligently

researching potential locations and there's a new reality: There are very few homes available for our use as a DSH. Even in recent, non-Covid years, it was increasingly difficult to find an historic home in downtown Charleston for the DSH.

This year is harder than ever. The Charleston for-sale housing market, that in the past was a fertile source for a DSH, is turning over in record time. The lack of housing inventory coupled with the very real concerns of volunteers about working a 30+ day event has caused us

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CAUTION:  **STUDENT DRIVERS**

BMW X3 sDRIVE 30i
CSOL CAR SPONSORSHIP

Only 1200 \$125.00 sponsorships available

BUY 3 TICKETS GET THE 4TH FREE

Go to www.csolinc.org to buy your tickets

While the House Tour may be missing some elements of past DSHs, it will offer exciting new features and fundraising possibilities. We've learned from the last year, it's possible to do traditional things in fresh, new ways. Stay tuned for more details on this reimagined event.

February 15-19 is SC Arts Advocacy Week. Please ask your legislator to support the arts in South Carolina—there's critical information on page 4 about the pending state budget. Also, the *Post & Courier* printed my Letter to the Editor, seeking to galvanize our lawmakers in funding arts nonprofit organizations like the CSO.

Looking for a fun and safe party? See the REVELS invitation on page 9 for our March 14 St. Patrick's Day celebration. Attendance for this event is extremely limited so purchase your tickets before they sell out.

Finally, we're pleased to announce our new CSOL officer slate for 2021-2022 on page 3. This is a well-qualified group and we look forward to their leadership in the year ahead. Please attend the *Wine with the Maestro* on March 3 so that there's a quorum to ratify the slate.

As always, thank you all so very much for all that you do for the CSOL and CSO. You've demonstrated over and over again--especially during this last year--what determined people, working together, can accomplish.

Stay healthy, get vaccinated and we'll see each other soon.



Lyn

Lyn Magee, CSOL President

President's Letter, continued

to rethink our approach to this fundraiser. Our fall Island Tour of Homes has always been successful, and this past November's event on Kiawah was no exception. Borrowing a page from that playbook, the League hopes to hold a 2-day tour of several premiere Charleston homes; it's tentatively scheduled for May 22-23. We're also seeking a storefront to house our SCORE pop-up shop. It can serve as tour central, where wristbands and tour maps will be provided to visitors. We'd like to park our beautiful Car of the Year, a BMW x3, at that location and sell raffle tickets as well.



KEN LAM, MUSIC DIRECTOR

All you need is love. But a little chocolate now and then doesn't hurt.

-- Charles M. Schulz

YOUR VOTE IS NEEDED ON MARCH 3 **for the 2021-22**

CSOL Officers for the Executive Committee

Pursuant to Article VIII of the CSOL By Laws, *Officers & Executive Committee*, the Nominating Committee presented the following slate of officer candidates to the CSOL Board of Directors at the February 3, 2021 meeting for their approval. By inclusion in *Keynotes*, the approved slate is being distributed to the membership prior to the March general meeting.

**The slate will be voted on by the membership,
if a quorum is present, at the virtual
Wine with the Maestro on March 3, 2021.**

Once the slate is approved by vote of the membership, the new officers will be installed at the Annual Meeting of the membership in May 2021 and will begin their term of office at that time.

Co-Presidents: Carol Cronk, Marty Penkhus

VP Projects: Karen Ruef

VP Education: Susan Leggett

VP Long Range Planning: Stuart Hotchkiss

VP Membership: Gail Corvette

Corresponding Secretary: Beth Connelly

Recording Secretary: Barbara Fitzgerald

Treasurer: Neva Gadsen

Respectfully submitted,

Becky Hilstad, Nominating Committee Chair

Faye Griffin, Kitty Reid, Caroline Thibault, Karen Ruef, Susan Leggett, Celia Hansult, Claudia Porter, Joyce Stifel, Parliamentarian (non-voting)



The Charleston Symphony

PLAY YOUR PART

Make some noise for the arts! Arts Advocacy Week, February 15-19, needs your virtual voice to keep the Charleston Symphony and South Carolina arts alive.

The Governor's Budget Proposal requests no increase in funding for the arts, and the \$123 million COVID Relief Fund for Small Businesses excludes nonprofit entities.

Nonprofit organizations, like the Charleston Symphony, have been hit just as hard as for-profits in South Carolina due to COVID.

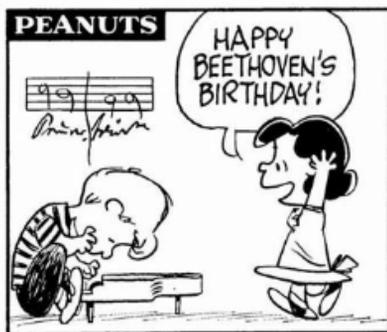
Please play your part. Contact your legislator, using the link below, so that during their budget deliberations they know, *we need to increase arts funding and add nonprofits to the Small Business Relief program.*

Click here:

www.scartsalliance.net/action



Go to www.CSOLinc.org to learn more about our arts advocacy initiatives. The CSOL is the largest institutional donor to the Charleston Symphony.



KEN LAM WON'T **Kiss Dogs on the Nose**

On March 3 at 5:30, at the **Wine with the Maestro**,

Ken will discuss Brahms *Symphony No. 4* and the art of concealing art.

Bring your libation over to your computer and enjoy being a **CSOL Insider**.

Where Are They Now?

WARM CSOL WISHES TO CALEB BORICK

Caleb Borick, CSOL scholarship winner, is very grateful for the opportunities extended by the League. As an exceptional performer, exceptions were made for him early on: Caleb played at a Symphony Designer Showhouse before he reached the qualifying age to receive a CSOL scholarship.

Last fall, Caleb began his freshman year at the Eastman School of Music and the University of Rochester.

When Caleb's mother began to fight an autoimmune disease 2 years ago, Caleb became interested in the research on the condition that causes small fiber neuropathy. With an interest in neuroscience, Caleb chose a double major in Piano Performance and Premed.

In his first semester at Eastman, Caleb placed first in 3 competitions: The MTNA (Music Teachers National Association) Senior Division for South Carolina, the Eastman School of Music Concerto competition and the Arthur Fraser International Piano Competition.

The prize for the Eastman Concerto Competition included playing Mozart's Piano Concerto No. 9 with the Eastman orchestra.

Although the Festival was cancelled, the competition took place live and socially distanced in November, 2020.

In addition to the monetary prize, Caleb will play at the Koger Center for the Arts with the SC Philharmonic in 2022.

These competition achievements validate the months of intensive preparation; Caleb is gratified and exhilarated to receive these prizes.



Go to Caleb's YouTube channel

www.youtube.com/channel/UC5VcUAEchMfQYdpzuj8294A/videos

Q & A

Spotlight on Alexander Agrest

Alexander Agrest has appeared for 30 seasons as violist and served as a conductor with the Charleston Symphony. He entered a program for musically gifted children at the Leningrad State Conservatory and continued his studies earning a Master's Degree in Viola with minor concentration in Conducting and pursued postgraduate work in Symphonic Conducting at the Leningrad State Conservatory.

Alexander has performed in numerous music festivals throughout the United States and Europe, and is widely respected as a teacher, performer, guest artist and conductor. In the recent past, he served as the Music Director of the Summerville Community Orchestra.

Question: How did you begin as a musician?

Answer: I grew up in Sukhumi, a small city on the Black Sea. We had a piano and my older siblings played. At age 4, my parents realized I was playing the piano by ear.

When I was 7, I took an entrance exam at the local music conservatory. Although I took the exam for piano, about a month before classes started, we attended a string ensemble concert. I couldn't sleep all night replaying the sound in my head. I told my parents that I wanted to switch from piano to violin. Their response? "No way. We have a piano."

But at the conservatory, when they tested me, playing notes that I could readily replicate, they realized I had perfect pitch. So when I told the school I wanted to play violin, not piano, and piano was a more crowded field, my parents gave way and purchased a violin for me.

When I was 13, I took an exam to attend the music conservatory in what is now called St. Petersburg but was then called Leningrad.

This was a big step for me--talented children from all over Russia competed for admission. It was very clear to me that I needed to work hard if I wanted to catch up.

While I still loved playing violin, I also became captivated by conducting. In order to make time to do both, I switched to viola. It reduced my workload and I loved the sound--like velvet. It's the difference between a deep, mellow alto and a soprano. I was also fortunate to study under 2 very different conducting teachers who broadened my perspective and enabled me to combine the best of both as well as introducing my thinking into the mix.

But the big change happened when I met my wife, Rosa, a gifted violinist. We've recorded excellent CDs together. She has a special touch. I needed to earn enough to support a family, so for 10 years, I worked with a pops orchestra that traveled extensively and paid well.





But classical music remained my love; that's who I am. When I wasn't traveling with the pops orchestra, I subbed in with ballet and opera orchestras.

Question: What caused you to emigrate?

Answer: Anti-Semitism. We tried to leave sooner and finally made it out in 1989.

After we arrived in New York City, we were helped by Jewish refugee organizations because we were literally penniless. But we knew that moving here would provide a better and more secure life for our 2 children.

After a while, we were able to find a small apartment in Brooklyn, but we had no furniture. I walked around my neighborhood, seeking items that had been put in the garbage that we could use.

Question: You were a dumpster diver.

Answer: All we owned was packed in a suitcase. I found a bed frame on the street that wasn't too rusty. I was proudly carrying it home so my children would have a bed to sleep on. I was stopped by 2 Italian ladies. While I didn't speak much English, I was able to communicate that I was looking for furniture for my family.

They took me to their church, and the congregation donated 2 brand new folding beds for my children.

Rosa and I were so grateful; we repaid the church by playing a concert for them.

One gig led to another in New York but a big problem was we didn't have money to travel to other cities for auditions.

Then I saw an ad placed by David Stahl: The Charleston Symphony was looking for a violinist and holding auditions in New York City. Rosa won the audition and we were invited to visit Charleston--right after Hurricane Hugo had devastated the city. We loved Charleston and the people we met here right from the start.

Eventually, I was hired by the Symphony as well--which meant that in 2010, when the Symphony went dark, there were 2 paychecks in jeopardy. One of the cancelled concerts, *Starlight Pops*, had been fully subscribed. Working with Tom Joyce, we organized the musicians to play. I conducted the concert. Our message was, nothing could stop our musicians from playing for our city.

While our son's conducting career has taken him to Stuttgart, Germany, our daughter is a pediatrician at MUSC. Charleston is Rosa's and my home.

I want to extend a special thank you to the League. The orchestra is lucky to have a dedicated partner in the CSOL. We could not have survived without you.



CSO & CSOL
2021
CALENDAR

MARCH

- 03 Virtual Wine with the Maestro
5:15 Social Time;
5:30 Presentation
- 05, 06 Footsteps of a Giant
Fri/Sat Evenings 7:30 pm -9:00 pm; Sat Matinee 12:00 pm
- 14 REVELS: St Patrick's Day Party
4:00 pm-6:00 pm
- 24 Virtual Wine with the Maestro
5:15 Social Time;
5:30 Presentation
- 26, 27 Beethoven's 8th
Fri/Sat Evenings 7:30 pm -9:00 pm;
Sat Matinee 12:00 pm

APRIL

- 01 POPS: The Roaring Twenties
Thurs Evening 7:30 pm;
Thurs Matinee 12:00 pm
- 14 Virtual Wine with the Maestro
5:15 Social Time;
5:30 Presentation
- 16,17 Beethoven's 5th
Fri/Sat Evenings 7:30 pm -9:00 pm;
Sat Matinee 12:00 pm

Circuits: Jazzy Brass, Whimsical Percussion and Driving Repetitive String Phrases



As part of the ongoing celebration of 100 Years of Women's Suffrage, the Charleston Symphony is proud to present "Circuits" by Cindy McTee.

Cindy McTee was born in Tacoma, WA in 1953. Her musical parents took her to their dance band rehearsals, where she was influenced by popular music, jazz and bebop from the 1940's and 50's.

McTee has been hailed as a composer whose music reflects a celebration of the musical and cultural energy of modern-day America. Her music is playful and humorous. There are pervasive jazz rhythms, harmonies and melodies in her compositions.

Circuits, written in 1990, characterizes important aspects of the work's musical language: a strong reliance upon circuitous structures such as ostinatos; the use of a formal design incorporating numerous, recurring short sections; and the presence of an unrelenting, kinetic energy achieved through the use of 16th notes at a constant tempo of 152 beats per minute.

McTee received degrees from Pacific Lutheran University, Yale School of Music and University of Iowa. She retired from the University of North Texas as Regents Professor Emerita. McTee is married to Conductor Leonard Slatkin.



CHARLESTON SYMPHONY
ORCHESTRA LEAGUE, INC.

Playing our part

Lucky you!

You're invited to a REVELS

St. Patrick's Day Party

Sunday, March 14, 2021

4:00 pm - 6:00 pm

*At the home of Lorraine Perry
62 Society Street, Charleston*

LIMITED TICKETS AVAILABLE: \$100 pp for Sponsors or \$65 pp

Festive food, wine and beer will be served

Music performed by Tea&Whiskey

CSOL scholarship winners

Karin McQuade & Andrae Raffield

COVID PROTOCOLS WILL BE ENFORCED

Reserve your tickets by
contacting Kathy Pease

at 843.577.7983

Proceeds benefit the Charleston Symphony
and CSOL music scholarships