

JANUARY 2021



KEYNOTES

Letter from the President

Dear Friends,

Happy New Year – hope you all enjoyed healthy and peaceful holidays.

The story *A Tale of Two Cities* begins, “It was the best of times, it was the worst of times ... it was the season of Darkness, it was the spring of hope ...” This first sentence of Dickens’ classic novel is a study of many contrasts and in some ways, it’s a fitting description of life in our world today. Rather than dwelling on the distress of the pandemic or continuing political discord in our country, “the spring of hope” of 2021 is an opportunity to both celebrate the good things going on in our lives (vaccines!) and welcome the challenges of the new year ahead.

The banner photo above is of Santa (Bob Gebhardt) and Yuriy Bekker merrily displaying a check for \$75,000. The check was presented to the CSO by the CSOL at the Holiday Pops concerts in December and represents a donation from our 2 successful fundraisers in the fall of 2020, a time when many orchestras and leagues were shuttered due to Covid.

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THE BMW X3 sDRIVE 30i CSOL CAR SPONSORSHIP

Let the
Centrifugal Force
be with you

Buy 3 Tickets, Get the 4th for Free
Only 1200 \$125.00 sponsorships available
Buying 3 increases your chances to win!

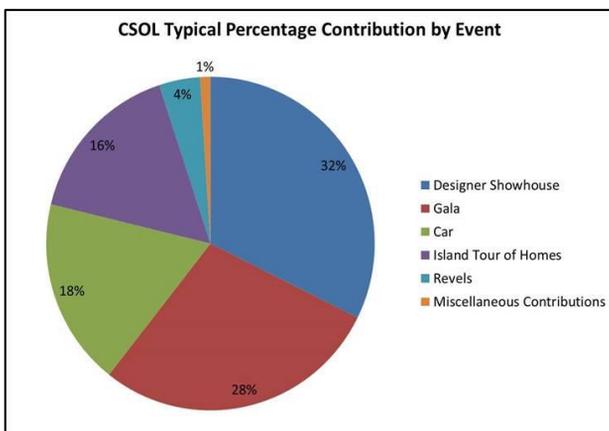
The check is symbolic of what careful planning and the unswerving resolve of dedicated volunteers can do, even in the worst of times.

In photo below, David Savard and Yuriy ham it up, highlighting the beautiful Brackish bow tie included in our **first-ever** Valentine's Day Raffle Package. Check out the next page for more information on that raffle and how you can purchase your tickets. The raffle totally exemplifies what imaginative brainpower can dream up.



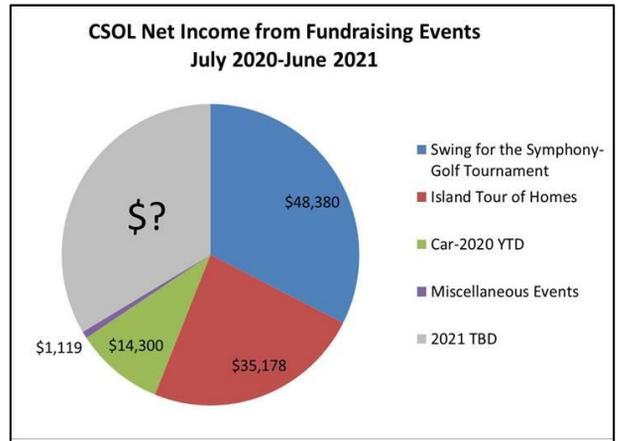
Another example of the intrepid nature of the CSOL is illustrated in the photo on page 6, showing attendees at the REVELS Hobcaw Barony tour held in December. This REVELS event had been postponed since last March when Covid shut down most public venues. Although the Hobcaw boat and house tour began under cloudy skies, the sun (eventually) shone on the 10 attendees, who had a great time at this historic Georgetown plantation. We had some fun amidst our fundraising!

The time has never been more urgent for us, the CSOL, to ramp up our energies and creative thinking to support our beloved Symphony and the student/musician recipients of our scholarship programs. The pie chart below illustrates the relationships among our fundraising efforts to each other.



The Designer Showhouse clearly leads the pack, followed closely by the Gala and then the Car Sponsorship and Tour of Homes – was it as you surmised?

This next chart illustrates what we're facing in this totally atypical year. The gray part of the pie for 2020-2021 is the big question mark: How will we continue to work toward our financial goals while in the throes of continuing uncertainty in our lives and in our world?



The CSOL is nothing if not steadfast. **We will find a way.** Our biggest project of the year is the Designer Showhouse and while it will be delayed this spring (as of this writing, we are planning for a May opening), we will still make it part of our annual suite of fundraising events. We believe that, like the Golf Tournament and Tour of Homes, we can pull a Showhouse off safely and successfully.

More than ever, the League needs your continued support – your time, talent and optimism. We value YOU and all that you do. Here's to a great year ahead.

Lyn
Lyn Magee, CSOL President



Cheers to a new year and another chance for us to get it right.

-- Oprah Winfrey



Lydia Pless



Hello CSOL Members:

So far this semester, I've kept up with my musical studies and I'm currently working on Shostakovich's *Cello Concerto*, the 4th Suite of Bach, *Franchomme Caprices*, *Popper Etudes* and more with my cello professor, Claire Bryant. Things at USC have been a bit different this semester due to COVID, but thankfully, I've met plenty of new friends through the Top Scholars community and the Asian-interest sorority, Alpha Sigma Rho. Though school takes up a large amount of my time, I've enjoyed exploring Soda City and quaint coffee shops during the weekends. Thank you CSOL, for helping make this possible.

Yours,
Lydia

BUY YOUR TICKETS TODAY

Valentine's Day Raffle

The prize package includes fabulous 5-inch David Yurman diamond earrings valued at \$1300, donated by Reeds Jewelers.

And for the dapper gentleman, a distinctive Brackish bow tie. Make this a celebration to remember as you sip on a bottle of Veuve Clicquot Champagne, while indulging in chocolates by Christophe Artisan Chocolatier-Pâtissier. Say it with roses and a serenade by a CSO musician.

Purchase raffle tickets at \$25 each, or get 5 tickets for the price of 4
Go to csolinc.org to make your purchase



The winner will be selected at the concert on February 6, 2021 by Maestro Ken Lam. Winner need not be present. All proceeds support the Charleston Symphony and CSOL Music Scholarships.



Dear CSOL Members,

I'm happy to say that my first semester at Juilliard has been fun and incredibly invigorating. I recently moved to the dorms in NYC; from here, you can see Lincoln Center, the Hudson River, New Jersey and into Central Park. The city is always bustling - I love it here!

The majority of my academic classes are still online, but I'm enjoying some in-person (socially-distanced) collaborations such as lessons, quartet/piano rehearsals and sometimes chamber orchestra.

I had my first piano rehearsal on Tchaikovsky's *Violin Concerto* yesterday. My favorite class is called "String Quartet Survey." It's a required course for all freshmen string players. As a quartet, we explore works by Mozart, Haydn and Beethoven with 3 coaches. This class sets up our foundations of quartet-style and playing. We usually rehearse for 5 hours a week, with weekly coaching.

Very honestly, the school's workload is quite demanding and it caught me by surprise. But my peers' intense passion and understanding of the arts inspires me to work harder every day. Being in the Juilliard building alone is enough to motivate me!

We're beginning to conclude the end of the first semester during this strange time, but I'm so grateful to be making music in this moment.

Thank you so much for your support in my musical journey -- from the past to the present. I hope you and your families are safe and well.

Warmest regards,

Ashley

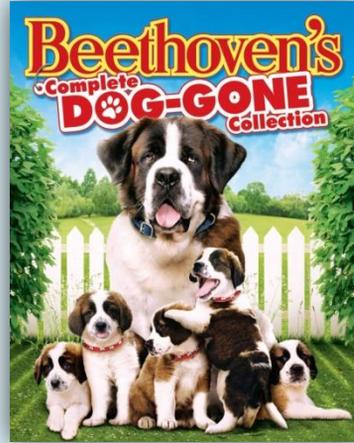
Ashley Yoon



SAVE THE DATE

Biscuit WINE with the Maestro

January 25, 2021 at 5:30



KEN LAM HAS NOTHING AGAINST DOGS

But he won't be talking about *canis familiaris* at the **Wine with the Maestro**

Instead, he will talk about yaks and his love-hate relationship with Beethoven *Symphony No. 7*.



Listen for Ken's tips for housebreaking a yak

BRING YOUR YAK AND LIBATION
over to your computer screen
AND ENJOY BEING
A CSOL INSIDER



spotlight on Robert Siedell

A native of Dallas, Texas, Robert Siedell received Bachelor's and Master's degrees from Mississippi State University and a MBA from Harvard University. Robert spent the majority of his career in Asia with American Express International. His last role, prior to retiring at the end of 2014 after 30 years with the company, was as President, American Express Japan and Head of the Japan/Australia/New Zealand region. He and his wife, Helen, moved to Charleston in 2014. In addition to being the President of the Board for the Charleston Symphony, Robert is a Director of Keep Wadmalaw Beautiful, a member of the Wadmalaw Island Land Planning Committee and a member of Holy Spirit Catholic Church.

Q: How did you end up living in Asia for 26 years?

A: When I completed graduate school, I wanted to go into international business, so I interviewed with organizations that had overseas assignments. I was thinking about Western Europe. When American Express offered me a position in Japan, I had a real 'be careful what you wish for' moment – was it too foreign? But after an initial look/see, Helen and I fell in love with Tokyo – a city that exemplifies everything cosmopolitan and dynamic. We lived there twice with 8 years in Bangkok in between.

**Q: 日本語はどれくらい上手に話せますか？
(Translation: How well do you speak Japanese?)**

A: Initially, not at all. But I took an hour and a half private lesson daily and within 5 years, I could understand and converse with business associates -- if not fluent, then in passable Japanese. It was very important to me that when I walked around the office, I could be part of casual conversation. The irony is, Japanese is anything but a casual language and achieving a satisfactory level of competence took real effort.

Q: What brought you to Charleston?

A: We wanted our children to plug into being Americans, so every summer, my family returned to the U.S. We started to spend our vacations in the Charleston area. Over time, it became clear that we would make Charleston home base. When we retired, moving to Charleston was a given.

Q: You lived in Charleston for 20 years ONLY IN THE SUMMER and you wanted to move here?

A: We'd never experienced spring or fall in Charleston until 2014; imagine just how excited we were.

Q: How did you become involved with the CSO?

A: We became friends with George and Cindy Hartley (Past President of the CSO). Tokyo had 6 symphony orchestras and we were regular concertgoers. After I retired, joining the CSO Board was a natural way for me to make a contribution to my new home city.

Q: The pandemic has been particularly harmful to arts organizations – is there any silver lining?

A: The pandemic has pulled the curtain back and exposed the capacity of every organization's leadership. Michael Smith and Ken Lam are steadfast about continuing to play ... safely.

We've worked closely with the medical community, creating testing protocols and forging a strong partnership with the Gaillard. We also took the temperature (no pun intended) of our patrons who would be willing to attend live performances if they could do so safely. When people enter and leave the Gaillard, there are no lines; about 200 attendees per concert, seating is staggered, social distance is maintained; we play without intermission and the Gaillard cleaning crew is relentless.

We're one of the few orchestras in the U.S., not only of a city our size but of *any* size, to offer a safe, live performance alternative.

But we've also learned things that will be helpful going forward. We're growing our ability to livestream concerts that provide an audience at home with an intimate experience that, in some respects, rivals live attendance. Kyle Lane, the CSO's Operations Manager, has displayed one of the fastest learning curves I've ever witnessed -- we just keep ramping up the professionalism of our virtual product. The ability to effectively record our concerts is going to be useful.

Interview with Robert Siedell, continued

Q: Arts organizations often aren't heralded for their prudent fiscal management; their focus is, after all, elsewhere. How would you characterize the CSO's financial acumen?

A: The Symphony's suspension of operations in 2010 won't ever be a cause for celebration. But, we learned discipline from adversity. We reduced the size of the orchestra, which is still large for a city our size. Most orchestras in similar-sized locales use a service orchestra model. While that makes sense financially, it can't compete artistically. That's why our hybrid model of core and contract musicians produces truly spectacular (and cost-effective) music.

Michael Moody, the CSO Board Treasurer, also deserves credit for decisions that make financial sense. In too many arts organizations, financial pressures cause them to spend money as soon as it comes in. The CSO utilizes an accounting process that requires season subscription revenue be accrued and recognized only when the expenses of the subscribed performances are incurred. That means CSO subscription dollars received in February/March for concerts beginning in the September aren't spent in the previous spring or summer. We're careful; we don't eat the seed corn.

We have an amazing partner in the CSOL. I know there's discussion of re-writing the League's tagline. I have a suggestion: How about, "We'll Make It Happen"? The CSOL's creativity, commitment and dedicated fundraising efforts are your hallmark. The Symphony and the Charleston area owes the League a debt of gratitude.

CSYO PRACTICES **Safety & Artistry**

On Sunday, January 31, 2021, the Charleston Symphony Youth Orchestra and Youth Strings will participate in their first in-person rehearsals since last March. Rehearsals will be conducted in the Sottile Theater – with 2 practice objectives: Safety and artistry. Safety precautions, thoughtfully and carefully created by the staff include limiting the number of students rehearsing at the same time. To keep it creative, however, there also will be virtual meeting times when the youth orchestra will engage together for instruction and discussion. Ideally, a concert will be the culminating activity of the school year. Let the music begin ... once more.

REVELS:

Finally!

Boat Trip to Hobcaw Barony



On a drizzly, blustery Monday morning, 10 intrepid CSOL members set off from Charleston to visit the Hobcaw Barony. The plantation was owned by Bernard Baruch, New York financier, and his daughter Belle in Winyah Bay, across from Georgetown. In Baruch's era, before modern bridges were built, one accessed the plantation by private launch from Georgetown. The CSOL members followed Baruch's methodology and motored to the Barony by The Carolina Rover.

The estate consisted of 15,000 acres and was purchased by Baruch in 1906 as his winter home. The Barony was used mainly for duck hunting. Prior to that, before the Civil War, the land was used to grow rice, making it ideal for the ducks' last suppers. Belle, the house's last occupant, left all the property to the University of South Carolina and Clemson for environmental research.

Many prominent visitors came to the Barony, including Winston Churchill and President Franklin Roosevelt. The prominent CSOL group made their way from the pier to the 19,000 square foot house built in the 1930's. It has 15 bedrooms, wonderful verandas and public rooms. Furnished as the Baruchs' left it and decorated for Christmas by the Georgetown Garden Club with natural greenery, the house was a delight to visit. As the CSOL group left the property, the sun broke through the clouds. Much gratitude to Caroline Thibault for persevering in arranging this Revels event.

From the Desk of Kitty Reid, President Emerita

Dear *Keynotes* Editor:

I cannot help but notice that this newsletter appears to have a decided partiality for dogs. Barking, smelly, non-self-actualized beasts. I thought *Keynotes* was an ecumenical publication.

How about more features on kitty cats? Loving, curious, playful, cuddly, smart. Petting a cat has a positive, calming effect. Unlike deplorable dog drool.

Please consider adding a regular feature to the newsletter: Kat Kadence. Kat Korus. Kat Koir. It will boost newsletter circulation. Among cats.



2021 Virtual CSOL Scholarship AUDITIONS

March 2020: The Education Committee was ready to conduct auditions for 72 young musicians; they had schedules, judges, volunteers. And then *Covid 19 Lock Down*.

The Committee regrouped and the magnificent judges agreed to judge virtually the 7 college applicants. Their YouTube auditions were assembled and the judges selected 3 winners, 2 of whom accepted the scholarships and enrolled in their freshman years as music majors. Ashley Yoon received the David and Karen Stahl College Scholarship for \$2,500 to attend Julliard where she is majoring in violin. Lydia Pless received a \$2,000 college scholarship for her cello studies at USC.

Good News for 2021. The judges agreed to judge *all* CSOL applicants for college, matching grant and summer study scholarships virtually. The CSOL is so very grateful to the judges for their flexibility and commitment to supporting the talented students in our community.

Applications for 2021 scholarships are due January 19

Find application materials at

<https://csolinc.org/scholarship-information/>

Please share this information with teachers and students.

CSO & CSOL 2021 CALENDAR

January 23	POPS: Music of the Movies	Sat Evening 7:30 pm; Sat Matinee 12:00 pm – 1:30
January 25	Virtual Wine with the Maestro	5:15 Social Time; 5:30 Presentation
January 28-29	Beethoven's 7th	Thurs/Fri Evenings 7:30 pm - 9:00 pm; Fri Matinee 12:00 pm
February 5-6	French Revolutionaries	Fri/Sat Evenings 7:30 pm - 9:00 pm; Sat Matinee 12:00 pm
March 3	Virtual Wine with the Maestro	5:15 Social Time; 5:30 Presentation
March 5-6	Footsteps of a Giant	Fri/Sat Evenings 7:30 pm - 9:00 pm; Sat Matinee 12:00 pm
March 24	Virtual Wine with the Maestro	5:15 Social Time; 5:30 Presentation
March 26-27	Beethoven's 8th	Fri/Sat Evenings 7:30 pm - 9:00 pm; Sat Matinee 12:00 pm
April 1	POPS: The Roaring Twenties	Thurs Evening 7:30 pm; Thurs Matinee 12:00 pm – 1:30
April 14	Virtual Wine with the Maestro	5:15 Social Time; 5:30 Presentation
7 April 16-17	Beethoven's 5th	Fri/Sat Evenings 7:30 pm - 9:00 pm; Sat Matinee 12:00 pm