Newport Classical Presents Cliburn-Bound Piano Marathon Weekend
April 29-May 1, 2022

Recital Hall at Emmanuel Church
42 Dearborn Street | Newport, RI
Tickets & Information: www.newportclassical.org

Newport, RI – Continuing its new commitment to ongoing year-round programming, Newport Classical presents Cliburn-Bound, a weekend-long marathon of concerts featuring nine exceptional amateur pianists, from Friday, April 29 through Sunday, May 1, 2022, at the Recital Hall at Emmanuel Church (42 Dearborn St.). Four of the performers are on their way to the Eighth Cliburn International Amateur Piano Competition, taking place in Fort Worth, Texas in October 2022. The competition brings together the best amateur pianists from around the world, and is hailed by The Boston Globe as, “a celebration of music, and the people who have to make music no matter what.” The word amateur comes from the Latin word “amare,” which means doing something purely for the love of it. This Newport Classical special event highlights the importance of music making in everyday life.

“Being a part of the amateur pianist community for over 20 years has enriched my life both personally and musically,” says Suzanna Laramee, Newport Classical Board President, who is also performing during Cliburn-Bound. “It has taken me to some of the most prestigious venues of the world. All of these amazing pianists recognize the importance of creativity in their lives, and have never given up on, or lost sight of, their love of music and the piano.”

Newport Classical Executive Director Gillian Friedman Fox adds, “We are so grateful to Board President Suzanna Laramee for inspiring this special weekend, giving Newport Classical the opportunity to host such an exceptional group of musicians and welcome audiences to explore an extensive array of piano repertoire.”

The weekend begins with a masterclass by Michael Lewin, Professor and Head of Piano at the Boston Conservatory at Berklee, on Friday, April 29 from 2-5pm. Pianists Andy Liao and Noah DeGarmo perform at 7:30pm on April 29. Brad Arington, Keng Siong Sim, and Gregory Adams perform at 2pm on April 30. Suzanna Laramee and Ken Iisaka perform at 7:30pm on April 30. Robert Finley and Dale Backus perform at 2pm on May 1. The complete schedule and concert programs are available at www.newportclassical.org.
All of the pianists performing during the Cliburn-Bound Marathon Weekend studied piano extensively but followed different professional career paths:

- **Suzanna Laramee** went on to a 17-year career in the financial industry, culminating in her retirement from Morgan Stanley.
- **Gregory Adams** studied piano from a young age, is a former television celebrity chef, and currently teaches philosophy and economics at the University of Denver, Colorado.
- **Brad Arington** began piano studies at an early age with his grandmother in Virginia, studied through college, and is now a life sciences, healthcare, and privacy attorney in the San Francisco area.
- **Dale Backus** began playing the piano at the age of four, and for 25 years has worked for KBR (formerly Honeywell) in Colorado Springs, CO.
- **Noah DeGarmo** studied both piano and oboe seriously and is now a respected and well-published emergency medicine physician at Arlington Memorial Hospital in Texas.
- **Robert Finley** was born in Hull, England, and is a retired electronics engineer. He began playing the piano at the age of seven and studied at Trinity College of Music.
- **Ken Iisaka** has earned a reputation as being among the finest non-professional pianists, while leading a full-time career as a software engineer in the field of artificial intelligence.
- **Andy Liao** has won numerous awards as a pianist, and is now working as an actuary in Austin, Texas.
- **Keng Siong Sim**, an accomplished pianist, is also a cellist and a retired actuary in the Washington, DC area.

Newport Classical continues its Chamber Series concerts this spring. Up next on February 18, the Poulenc Trio, which has rediscovered and redefined piano-wind chamber music for the 21st century, performs Poulenc’s signature *Trio for Piano, Oboe, and Bassoon* in an exciting evening of exceptional music for the classically curious. On March 11, New Zealand-born violinist **Geneva Lewis**, an Avery Fischer Career Grant recipient, performs music of darkness and light for piano and violin by Janácek, Messiaen, Lera Auerbach, Fauré, and Brahms. The brilliant 29-year-old Italian-born pianist and first-prize winner of the 2017 International Beethoven Piano Competition Vienna **Rodolfo Leone** will present a program of Brahms and Schumann for his debut in Newport on April 22. On May 13, harpist **Bridget Kibbey** and violinist **Alexi Kenney** come together for an evening of intimate and finely tuned musicality, from adaptations of the music of John Dowland and J. S. Bach to masterworks by Camille Saint-Saëns and Sebastian Currier. Finally, on June 3, **pianist Daniel del Pino** performs *Suite Iberia* composed by Isaac Albéniz. The complete spring schedule is available at www.newportclassical.org.

Programming for the upcoming Newport Classical Music Festival, running from July 1-7, 2022 will be announced at the end of March.

Newport Classical has updated its COVID-19 health and safety policy to reflect current circumstances. Beginning with this concert, all audience members must be fully vaccinated and up-to-date on any booster shots for which they are eligible, or must provide a verifiable negative COVID-19 test result, in order to attend. Proof of vaccination or negative test will be required at the door. Ticket sales will be limited to 75% capacity of the hall to allow for increased spacing, and masks will continue to be required. Read Newport Classical’s full Health & Safety Policy.

**About Newport Classical:**
Newport Classical is a premier performing arts organization that welcomes people of every age, culture, and background to intimate, immersive musical experiences. The organization presents world-renowned and up-and-coming artistic talents at stunning, storied venues across Newport – an internationally sought-after cultural and recreational destination.

Originally founded in 1969 as Rhode Island Arts Foundation at Newport, Inc. and previously known as Newport Music Festival (NMF), Newport Classical has a rich legacy of musical curiosity presenting the American debuts of over 130 international artists and rarely heard works and is most well-known for hosting three weeks of concerts in the summer in the historic mansions throughout Newport and Aquidneck Island. The organization has produced more than 2,000 concerts and hosted more than 1,000 musicians and singers. In 2021, the organization launched a new commissioning initiative – each year, Newport Classical will commission a new work by a Black, Indigenous, person of color, or woman composer as a commitment to the future of classical music.

Newport Classical is proud to be an essential pillar of New England’s cultural landscape, and to invest in the future of classical music as a diverse, relevant, and ever-evolving art form. Newport Classical’s four core programming initiatives – the iconic summer Music Festival taking place across Newport; the year-round Chamber Series at the organization’s home base Newport Classical Recital Hall at Emmanuel Church in downtown Newport; the free family-friendly Community Concerts held in green spaces around Aquidneck Island; and its newly expanded Music Education Residency program – illustrate the organization’s ongoing commitment to presenting “timeless music for today.”

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