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AQUIDNECK ISLAND

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Living

GET TO KNOW NEWPORT CLASSICAL



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NEWPORT CLASSICAL WEAVES ITS MAGIC AND INSPIRES AUDIENCES WITH TIMELESS BEAUTY



BY JAMI BROUILLETTE PHOTOS BY LISETTE ROONEY

Newport Classical, a cherished pillar of New England's cultural heritage, has been enriching Aquidneck Island in countless ways for over fifty years. Journey with us as we delve into the captivating story of this non-profit organization that has played a vital role in bringing extraordinary musical experiences to the community. With its innovative approach to making classical music more accessible and enjoyable, Newport Classical has left an indelible mark, forever changing the way we listen to and appreciate this timeless art form.

A RICH HISTORY

Originally established in 1969 as Rhode Island Arts Foundation at Newport, Inc. (formerly known as Newport Music Festival), Newport Classical boasts a remarkable legacy of showcasing international artists and rarely performed works. With Glenn Sauls as its first general manager, the organization embarked on a musical adventure that continues to inspire.

In 1975, Mark Malkovich III became General Director, propelling the Festival to global acclaim. The stage showcased emerging American artists, introduced young international talents, and explored rare repertoire. In 2008, Mark Malkovich IV became General Manager, infusing passion and vision into the organization, and leading the Festival after his father's passing in 2010. While devoted to the Romantic era, the Festival expanded its repertoire to include diverse musical periods - from Bach to Bernstein - rediscovering forgotten masterpieces.

A NEW ERA

In 2021, a new era dawned upon Newport Classical with the appointment of Gillian Friedman Fox as the Executive Director. Her inaugural summer music festival programming was hailed by The New York Times as a "rich tapestry of works," showcasing her visionary approach to curating extraordinary musical experiences. The organization changed its name from



Newport Music Festival to Newport Classical in 2021 to better reflect its mission of presenting exceptional classical music in Newport on a year-round basis. The name is directly related to what they do - investing in the future of classical music as a diverse, relevant, and ever-evolving art form, and bringing world-class musicians to Newport audiences all year round.

In the past year, Newport Classical

welcomed five new members to their Board of Directors. Terry Morgenthaler and Joan M. Sweeney joined in September 2022, while Barry M. Berger, MD FCAP; John T. Boxer; and Maria Elena Vergara joined in August 2023. With diverse backgrounds in medicine, law, finance, and the performing arts, these new board members bring extensive experience and leadership to the organization. Their responsibilities include setting the strategic direction, upholding the mission, providing governance and oversight, and maintaining financial stability. They join an esteemed existing board of members, including Suzanna Laramee, Stephen B. Huttler Esq., Melanie Mason Niemiec, Leslie Mathieu Hogan, Randolph R. Johnson, Stephen D. Johnson, Alys D. Krichavsky, Donald W. Osborne, and Diana Pearson.

A TIMELESS MISSION

A beacon of classical music and cultural diversity, the organization's mission is to celebrate classical music through captivating concerts in historic venues. They embody "Timeless Music for Today" by delivering exceptional presentations and prioritizing education and engagement. These endeavors inspire, foster civic pride, and embrace diverse expressions.

The musical haven has four key programs: the breathtaking summer Music Festival held in Newport's historic venues; the year-round Chamber Series at the Newport Classical Recital Hall; the family-friendly Community Concerts held across Aquidneck Island; and the expanding Music Education and Engagement Initiative. Notably, Newport Classical is dedicated to annually commissioning new works by a Black, Indigenous, person of color, or woman composer as a commitment to nurturing the future of classical music.

COMMUNITY COLLABORATIONS

The organization brings music to life in unique and intimate spaces thanks to long-standing collaborations with local organizations like the Preservation Society, Blithewold Mansion, Gardens & Arboretum, Newport Historical Society,, and more. These partnerships allow unforgettable concerts to resonate through iconic locations like The Breakers, The Elms, and Rosecliff Mansions.

Beyond concerts, Newport Classical actively engages the community through its Music Education and Engagement Initiative. This program collaborates with local schools and community

centers, vastly increasing its reach and impact. In fact, during the 2022-2023 season, they served 763 students in the Newport area, marking a 70% increase from the previous year.

SUCCESS STORY

The Music Education and Engagement Initiative invites world-class musicians of diverse backgrounds to interact with students through performance workshops, creating an enduring impact in the community. Research supports the benefits of this initiative, showing that engagement with classical music can enhance study skills, memory retention, and overall mental health. Since its inception during the 2021-22 season, the Music Education and Engagement Initiative has served over 1,200 students in Newport County.

SUPPORT

Despite its success, Newport Classical relies on charitable support. Newport Classical was awarded grant funding from the National Endowment of the Arts in 2022 and 2023. As a registered 501c3 non-profit, every donation, big or small, contributes to sustaining their mission of providing high-quality classical music education, free community engagements, and memorable concert experiences. They also welcome the invaluable gift of time and are quick to point out how volunteers play a critical role in realizing the organization's mission.

JOIN IN THE JOURNEY

If you haven't had the opportunity to take in one of the many concerts presented by Newport Classical, there is still time! Experience Newport Classical's Chamber Series featuring violinist Chad Hoopes and pianist Anne-Marie McDermott on Oct 6, 2023. Don't miss this rare opportunity to hear these internationally renowned artists in the intimate setting of the Newport Classical Recital Hall. For more information about this event, refer to the article on page 8, written by the executive director herself. Get ready for an evening of deep artistry, supreme lyricism, and warm memories. See you there!

Join the dedicated community of over 50 volunteers to make a difference in the world of classical music. To support or volunteer with Newport Classical, email info@newportclassical.org.

Facebook: www.facebook.com/NewportClassical

Instagram: www.instagram.com/newportclassical



NEWPORT CLASSICAL CALENDAR OF EVENTS

OCTOBER 8

Free Community Concert featuring Kinan Azmeh's CityBand at Newport Craft Brewing.

NOVEMBER 3

Chamber Series with violinist William Hagen and pianist Orion Weiss at Newport Classical Recital Hall.

JANUARY 26

Newport Classical debut of pianist Eric Lu, featuring music by Schubert, Mendelssohn, Bach, and Chopin.

FEBRUARY 23

Performance by the Galvin Cello Quartet.

MARCH 22

Bassoonist Eleni Katz and pianist Evren Ozel present a program celebrating the bassoon.

APRIL 26

Award-winning Balourdet Quartet performs music by Hadyn, Kurtág, and Schubert.

MAY 17

Soprano Magdalena Kuźma performs a program spanning Chopin to Rachmaninoff to Rodgers and Hammerstein.

JUNE 7

Pianist Asiya Korepanova closes the Chamber Series with music by Rachmaninoff, Mussorgsky, Beach, Chopin, and more.

THE 2024 NEWPORT CLASSICAL MUSIC FESTIVAL WILL TAKE PLACE FROM JULY 4-21, 2024.

Stay tuned for two upcoming holiday programs, including the much-anticipated return of Messiah at the Mansion, to be announced soon!