



EMBARGOED UNTIL MARCH 26, 2024 at 10AM

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Announcing the 2024 Newport Classical Music Festival 27 Concerts from July 4-21, 2024

Celebrating its 55th Anniversary



Performances by Anne Akiko Meyers, Laura Benanti, Lara Downes, Joyce Yang, Chanticleer, Canadian Brass, Handel and Haydn Society, A Far Cry, Sphinx Virtuosi, PUBLIQuartet, Isidore String Quartet, Sō Percussion with Caroline Shaw, and many more

Opera Night at The Breakers featuring *La tragédie de Carmen*

**World Premiere of a New Work by Clarice Assad
Commissioned by Newport Classical**

**Historic Venues include The Breakers, The Elms, Castle Hill Inn,
Chinese Tea House, and more**

Tickets on Sale April 10: www.newportclassical.org/music-festival

Newport, RI – The 2024 **Newport Classical Music Festival** will present 27 concerts this summer between **July 4-21, 2024**, bringing timeless music for today to Newport's stunning historic mansions and venues including **The Breakers, Blithewold Mansion in Bristol, The Elms, Castle Hill Inn, Chinese Tea House, King Park, Newport Art Museum, Norman Bird Sanctuary, Redwood Library & Athenæum**, and more. **Tickets will go on sale to the general public on April 10.**

The Newport Classical Music Festival celebrates its 55th anniversary in 2024. For 55 years, Newport Classical has been a beacon for artistry, drawing in countless concertgoers to revel in exceptional performances within unique and intimate settings. Each July, against the picturesque backdrop of the City by the Sea, the Newport Classical Music Festival stands out as an unparalleled experience. With 27 concerts held in 11 historic venues over 18 days featuring 120 artists, patrons can craft a Festival itinerary tailored to their preferences. Be it the discovery of a new composer, the rhythm of percussion, or revisiting a beloved work with a fresh perspective, audiences are invited to broaden their musical horizons.

Highlights of the 2024 Newport Classical Music Festival include Opening Night with the dynamic and inspiring **Sphinx Virtuosi** and cello soloist **Thomas Mesa**; a sensational recital by acclaimed violinist **Anne Akiko Meyers**; the return to Newport of **Chanticleer, Canadian Brass**, and **A Far Cry** with special guests **Kinan Azmeh** and **Dinuk Wijeratne**; the Music Festival debut of the storied, Boston-based **Handel and Haydn Society**; two enchanting evenings with Tony Award-winning Broadway star **Laura Benanti**, recently a featured guest on HBO's *The Gilded Age*; plus performances by star pianists **Lara Downes, Joyce Yang, Llewellyn Sánchez-Werner, Drew Petersen**, and **Daniel del Pino**; and appearances by numerous celebrated chamber ensembles including the **Isidore String Quartet; PUBLIQuartet; Duo Kayo; Lincoln Trio; Fenway Quintet; Poulenc Trio** with accordionist **Hanzhi Wang**; and **Sō Percussion** with vocalist and Pulitzer Prize-winning composer **Caroline Shaw**.

For the fourth year in a row, Newport Classical has commissioned a brand new work to be premiered at the Music Festival. This year's Composer-in-Residence is GRAMMY®-nominated Brazilian-American musician **Clarice Assad**, who is writing a new piece for mezzo-soprano **Renée Rapier** and **PUBLIQuartet** titled *Whispers from the Pirate Queen*, inspired by the unbreakable spirit of women who dare to challenge societal norms and fight for their convictions – including one of the earliest American feminists and famous Rhode Islander Anne Hutchinson. Other highlights include the festival's popular **Opera Night** at The Breakers which this year features Peter Brook's production of **Bizet's *La tragédie de Carmen***, directed by **Tara Barnham**; **Sunrise Meditations** concerts; a concert inspired by nature at **Norman Bird Sanctuary**; a **free Fourth of July concert** at King Park; and this year's young professional **Newport Classical Festival Artists** in eight performances throughout the festival.

Executive Director **Gillian Friedman Fox**, says, "Every summer Director of Artistic Planning and Engagement Trevor Neal and I aspire to curate a festival that celebrates the legacy of Newport Classical and introduces our audience to the musicians who are shaping the future of classical music. This year, for our 55th anniversary, we continue to honor music executed at the highest level and performed in magical settings. We are proud to offer an experience unlike any other."

Now in its third year, **Newport Classical's Festival Artists Residency Program** brings together five professional musicians at the early stages of their careers for an intense period of rehearsal and music making during the festival. This diverse group of emerging talents live, work, and play together, becoming engaged members of the community during their extended time in Newport. Each of these exceptionally gifted musicians are selected for their experience working in fast-paced chamber music settings and comfort tackling a wide range of repertoire. This summer, Newport Classical welcomes back returning artists **Ariel Horowitz** (violin), **Jordan Bak** (viola), and **Llewellyn Sánchez-Werner** (piano) alongside first-time artists **SooBean Lee** (violin) and **Jonathan Swenson** (cello). In varying configurations, the Festival Artists will perform in eight concerts as well as free community events.



2024 Newport Classical Music Festival Concerts:

The 2024 Newport Classical Music Festival kicks off on Thursday, **July 4** at 7:30pm with a free, outdoor **Fourth of July Patriotic Pops** concert preceding the fireworks at King Park featuring **Fenway Quintet**, one of Boston's most esteemed professional brass quintets, in a joyous program complete with percussion, celebrating America's birthday. This concert is part of the 2024 BankNewport Community Concerts Series, with additional support from a Rhode Island Foundation Community Grant.

Newport Classical Music Festival's **Opening Night** concert on Friday, **July 5** at 8pm at The Breakers features **Sphinx Virtuosi**, one of the nation's most dynamic professional chamber orchestras, comprised of 18 of the nation's top Black and Latinx classical soloists. Set against the opulent backdrop of The Breakers, the self-conducted chamber orchestra will deliver a pioneering program spotlighting historically marginalized composers including Quenton Blache, Javier Farias, Andrea Casarrubios, Adolphus Hailstork, and Coleridge-Taylor Perkinson. With cellist **Thomas Mesa** joining their ranks as soloist for GRAMMY®-winning composer Jessie Montgomery's *Divided*, the brilliance and passion of this self-conducted ensemble promises to deliver an unforgettable performance.

On Saturday, **July 6** at 8pm, GRAMMY®-nominated pianist **Joyce Yang**, who captivates audiences with her virtuosity and interpretive sensitivity, brings her tactile, expressive playing to The Breakers. Acclaimed by *The New York Times* for her "vivid and beautiful playing," Yang promises a passionate evening featuring music by the legendary Russian composers of the Romantic and Classical eras including Tchaikovsky, Rachmaninoff, Stravinsky, and Mussorgsky.

On Sunday, **July 7** at 9am, surrounded by the serene beauty of the Norman Bird Sanctuary, Newport Classical's Festival Artists will present **Italian Strings in Nature**, a delightful program of Italian chamber music, including an arrangement of Rossini's beloved *William Tell* Overture along with works by Boccherini, Cherubini, and Puccini.

In the evening on **July 7**, at 8pm at The Breakers, the GRAMMY® Award-winning male-voiced "orchestra of voices" **Chanticleer** makes their much-anticipated return to Newport after a sold-out concert during the 2021 Festival. Titled *Music of a silent world*, Chanticleer's program features songs of the natural world and gives a voice to the rocks, stones, trees, and rivers that share the planet with us. Their performance will include music by Stephen Sondheim, Heinrich Isaac, and Joni Mitchell, and a new commission from Chanticleer's composer-in-residence, Ayanna Woods.

On Tuesday, **July 9**, the day begins with an 11am concert at The Elms featuring the Festival Artists in an extraordinary program of **Piano Trios**. Delve into the rich tapestry of classical repertoire, beginning with Beethoven's lively and nimble Piano Trio in B-flat Major, journeying through Elfrida Andrée's evocative and dramatic Piano Trio in G minor, and culminating in the sublime beauty of Schumann's revered Piano Trio No. 1.

On Tuesday, **July 9** and Wednesday, **July 10** at 8pm at The Breakers, Newport Classical welcomes Broadway's legendary **Laura Benanti**, celebrated for her Tony Award-winning performances and captivating presence on stage and screen, including her memorable role in HBO's *The Gilded Age*. Known for her iconic portrayals in *Gypsy*, *Into the Woods*, *Nine*, and *My Fair Lady*, Benanti will dazzle audiences with her unparalleled talent, extraordinary voice, and undeniable star power in these intimate,

not-to-be-missed performances with pianist **Billy Stritch**, music director for stars including Tony Bennett and Liza Minnelli.

Two of last year's Festival Artists, violist Edwin Kaplan and cellist Titilayo Ayangade, return to Newport as the innovative **Duo Kayo** for a performance on Wednesday, **July 10** at 4pm at Newport Art Museum. Making bold statements in the classical music world, Duo Kayo challenges traditional thinking about the genre, serving as a vessel for new and exciting music. Surrounded by the Museum's beautiful art collection, audiences can enjoy an interdisciplinary afternoon featuring a diverse program, from Vivaldi's Double Cello Concerto, to Leonard Bernstein's "Cool" from *West Side Story*, to the world premiere of a new piece by Newport Classical's 2023 Composer-in-Residence Curtis Stewart. 2024 Festival Artists Jordan Bak and Jonathan Swenson join Kaplan and Ayangade for the final work by Paul Wiancko, *Vox Petra*.

On Thursday, **July 11** at 11am, the Festival Artists present **French Musings** at The Elms. Inspired by the 18th-century French chateau d'Asnieres outside Paris, The Elms is the perfect place for a morning concert of delightful French repertoire ranging from Baroque elegance to neoclassical charm, including works by Marais, Leclair, Tailleferre, and Saint-Saëns.

That evening, Thursday, **July 11** at 8pm, **Opera Night** brings director Peter Brook's captivating reimagining of Bizet's timeless masterpiece *Carmen* to the festival, delving deep into the intricate relationships of the four lead characters. This semi-staged production of ***La tragédie de Carmen*** is directed by **Tara Branham**, and features the same beloved arias and musical moments, infused with renewed vitality and intensity, all set against the breathtaking backdrop of The Breakers. The cast includes **Dane Suarez** as Don José, **Stephanie Sanchez** as Carmen, **Maria Brea** as Micaëla, and **Jeffrey Hoos** as Escamillo, with music direction by **Charles Kim**.

Friday, **July 12** begins with a 5:15am **Sunrise Meditations** concert at the Chinese Tea House. Witness the dawn of a new day with the Newport Classical Festival Artists as they enchant audiences with a program of meditative musical selections, immersing listeners in a journey curated to instill a sense of positivity and buoyancy, featuring music by Telemann, Glière, Sibelius, Haydn, and Elgar.

That evening, Friday, **July 12** at 8pm at The Breakers, the GRAMMY®-nominated chamber orchestra **A Far Cry** returns to Newport, joined by Canadian pianist **Dinuk Wijeratne** and acclaimed Syrian clarinetist **Kinan Azmeh**, for an unforgettable evening of musical storytelling and global connection. This deeply personal and reflective program explores themes of emigration, travel, and home, featuring original compositions by Wijeratne and Azmeh in the first half. Following intermission, revel in the enchanting melodies of a young Janáček as he draws inspiration from Czech folk traditions, a lush showcase for the ensemble.

Hailed as the epitome of brass excellence, **Canadian Brass** treats Newport to an extensive program of compositions ranging from Bach's Brandenburg Concerto No. 3 to the heartfelt melodies of the classic folk song "Danny Boy" on Saturday, **July 13** at 8pm. Renowned for their captivating concert presentations that seamlessly blend virtuosity with charm, Canadian Brass promises to ignite The Breakers with their genre-transcending talents.

On Sunday, **July 14** at 3pm, the **Poulenc Trio** with virtuoso accordionist **Hanzhi Wang** will present a spellbinding performance highlighting the accordion's versatility and charm at the historic Redwood Library & Athenæum. Their program spans genres and eras and includes music by Vivaldi, Poulenc, Rossini, plus emerging star composers Juri Seo and Viet Cuong, creating an engaging musical dialogue.

That evening, Sunday, **July 14** at 8pm, Newport Classical presents **An Evening with Violinist Anne Akiko Meyers**. The GRAMMY®-nominated trailblazing violinist, joined by the virtuosic pianist Max Levinson, graces the illustrious halls of The Breakers in her Newport debut with an exquisite program that includes a new piece specifically commissioned for her by the legendary Philip Glass. Meyers' concert also includes music by Corelli, Beethoven, Márquez, and Morten Lauridsen.

Newport Classical presents **Classical Music Movie** performed by the Festival Artists on Tuesday, **July 16** at 11am at Blithewold Mansion, bringing together the magic of film with the beauty of chamber music. Experience John Williams' haunting *Schindler's List* and the nostalgic charm of *E.T.* alongside the adventurous spirit of *Indiana Jones* and the fantasy of *Harry Potter*, *Pirates of the Caribbean*, *The Lion King*, *Lord of the Rings*, and more. Enjoy a boxed lunch on the grounds following the performance by pre-ordering from Blithewold in advance.

That evening, Tuesday, **July 16** at 7:30pm, **Two Pianos are Better than One** unites the dynamic talents of **Drew Petersen** and **Llewellyn Sánchez-Werner** at the picturesque Castle Hill Inn, for a thoughtfully curated program of works for two pianos that includes music by Mozart, Wagner, Beach, Rachmaninoff, and Chaminade.

On Wednesday, **July 17** at 11am, the **Lincoln Trio** performs a morning concert at The Elms that marks their 20th anniversary as an ensemble. Revered for their pioneering spirit and innovative contemporary repertoire, the Trio will perform the iconic Brahms C Major Piano Trio which catapulted them to acclaim alongside a curated selection of works by trailblazing female composers, including the visionary Stacy Garrop, whose groundbreaking composition left a lasting impression as the inaugural Composer-in-Residence for Newport Classical in 2021.

That evening, Wednesday **July 17** at 8pm at The Breakers, Newport Classical presents the **Isidore String Quartet**. This red-hot young quartet was founded in 2019 at the Juilliard School and launched their career by winning one of the most prestigious awards in chamber music at the 2022 Banff Competition. Their artistry and potential were further recognized when they were awarded a 2023 Avery Fisher Career Grant. Hailed for their “blazing virtuosity” by *Violinist.com*, the Isidore Quartet aims to revisit, rediscover, and reinvigorate the string quartet repertoire. They perform music by Haydn, Mendelssohn, and Billy Childs at The Breakers.

At The Breakers on Thursday, **July 18** at 8pm, Spanish pianist and beloved past Festival Artist **Daniel del Pino**, accompanied by the talented violist **Marian Herrero** and the 2024 Festival Artists, unveils a treasure trove of rarely performed masterpieces by Spanish composers. Experience the richness and diversity of Spanish musical heritage in pieces by J.S. Bach, Bowen, De Falla, Del Campo, culminating with Joaquín Turina's celebratory masterpiece, *Escena Andaluza* for viola, piano, and string quartet.

Friday, **July 19** begins with a 5:15am concert at Chinese Tea House, **Melodic Introspections at Sunrise**, performed by the Festival Artists. Experience the stunning sunrise over Newport's iconic Cliff Walk during this inspiring and introspective concert which features works by Lei Liang, Dobrinka Tabakova, Wei-Chieh Lin, Florence Price, and Beethoven.

The **Handel and Haydn Society**, established in 1815 and acclaimed for its performances of Baroque and Classical music for 209 seasons, performs at The Breakers on Friday, **July 19** at 8pm. The ensemble brings classical music to life with the same immediacy it had the day it was composed. Their joyful programming features acclaimed soloists soprano Joëlle Harvey, violinist Aisslinn Nosky, and oboist Debra Nagy in a series of concerti and works for chamber orchestra from the Baroque period by Corelli, Handel, and J.S. Bach.

On Saturday, **July 20**, at 3pm, Festival Artist **Llewellyn Sánchez-Werner** performs an invigorating afternoon piano recital at historic Emmanuel Church, known for its breathtaking English Gothic Revival architecture that enhances the acoustic ambiance. “A gifted virtuoso” (*San Francisco Chronicle*), Sánchez-Werner quickly became a beloved pillar of the Newport Classical Music Festival last summer, bringing technical prowess and passion to every electrifying chamber performance. In this solo appearance, he performs music by Chopin, Beethoven, Rubio, Velázquez, and Rachmaninoff.

That evening, on Saturday, **July 20** at 8pm at The Breakers, **PUBLIQuartet** and special guest mezzo-soprano **Renée Rapier** perform the world premiere of a new work commissioned by Newport Classical from 2024 Composer-in-Residence **Clarice Assad**. A bold composer, a brilliant pianist, and an inventive vocalist, Assad's haunting composition is her newest chapter in *Chronicles of Ghosts. Whispers from the Pirate Queen* explores the timeless bond between two remarkable women: Grace O'Malley, the legendary 16th-century Irish pirate queen, and Anne Hutchinson, the influential Puritan spiritual leader and pioneer of the 17th century. PUBLIQuartet pairs the new piece with *What is American*, a captivating reimagination of Dvořák's *American Quartet*, blending classical melodies with blues, jazz, and rock influences, as well as music by Vijay Iyer, Duke Ellington, and Julia Perry. At 11am that morning, Assad will give a free Composer Talk at Emmanuel Church Library, discussing her new work.

On Sunday, **July 21** at 11am, **Sō Percussion with vocalist and composer Caroline Shaw** perform at The Colony House. Enjoy this vibrant collaboration between the Pulitzer Prize-winning composer and the innovative ensemble in an electrifying program blending voice and percussion quartet. The concert features Shaw's captivating song cycle *Let the Soil Play Its Simple Part* which fuses chamber music and

singer-songwriter storytelling. This extraordinary performance will showcase vital, expressive, and imaginative music-making at its finest.

That afternoon, Sunday, **July 21** at 2pm, pianist **Lara Downes**, hailed as “a musical ray of hope” by NBC News, gives a free family concert at Temple Shalom, before performing at The Breakers that evening at 8pm in the **Newport Classical Music Festival Closing Night** concert. The American pianist and cultural visionary returns to Newport after a sold-out performance on the 2021 Festival to present **THIS LAND**, a concert that captures 100 years of American transformation, celebrating the spirit of innovation and imagination, resilience and resistance, and reflecting a wide diversity of voices to illustrate the beauty that grows at the crossroads of our American journeys. **THIS LAND** features music by Scott Joplin, Arturo O’Farrill, Florence Price, Kian Ravaei, William Grant Still, Angelica Negrón, Jake Heggie, Margaret Bonds, George Gershwin, and more.

For the full schedule, visit: www.newportclassical.org/music-festival

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, Newport Classical has a rich legacy of musical curiosity having presented the American debuts of hundreds of international artists and is most well-known for hosting three weeks of concerts in the summer in the historic mansions throughout Newport and Aquidneck Island. In the 55 years since, Newport Classical has become the most active year-round presenter of music on Aquidneck Island, and an essential pillar of Rhode Island’s cultural landscape, welcoming thousands of patrons all year long.

Newport Classical invests in the future of classical music as a diverse, relevant, and ever-evolving art form through its four core programs – the one-of-a-kind Music Festival; the Chamber Series in the Newport Classical Recital Hall; the free, family-friendly Community Concerts Series; and the Music Education and Engagement Initiative that inspires students in local schools to become the arts advocates and music lovers of tomorrow. These programs illustrate the organization’s ongoing commitment to presenting “timeless music for today.”

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. To date, Newport Classical has commissioned and presented the world premiere of works by Stacy Garrop, Shawn Okpebholo, Curtis Stewart, and Clarice Assad.

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