Lessons finally resumed at Music Haven on September 20 after more than 18 months of virtual and outdoor programming. For the safety of our students, families, and staff—especially the medically vulnerable and those not yet old enough to be vaccinated—we’re requiring all staff, students 12 and over, and visitors to be vaccinated, limiting daily student attendance to 25, keeping our students in cohorts, planning more structured and supervised activities before and after lessons, and providing hand sanitizing stations, requiring masks, and limiting entry into our space to only students, staff and vaccinated people with appointments. In lieu of our large ensembles, all students are in small chamber groups—something we’ve wanted to do for many years. Who doesn’t want to play in a quartet??! Although it doesn’t look exactly like we planned, it’s wonderful to be back making music together, and we hope to be able to welcome audiences to live student performances soon.

FROM OUR NEW CO-EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR--MILDA MCCLAIN:

I knew I was in a special place when I first walked through the doors of Music Haven seven years ago. As we finally welcome all of our students back, I’m excited to take on the role of Co-Executive Director of Administration & Finance. I was born in Puerto Rico. My family moved to New Haven when I was a baby. Growing up in the Hill, and now living in Fair Haven, I have always valued community and family, and that is exactly what I found when I came to Music Haven. Before that, I spent two decades in the federal government, and then owning my own business. These experiences, combined with my time as Director of Operations & Outreach, enables me to hit the ground running. This is a difficult moment, and we have a lot of work to do. I’m proud that Music Haven takes on the job of truly being the change we want to see in the world—through our commitment to relationships, equity, access, and to creating a space of love and support for all of our students and their families through a community of music-making. I feel honored to be surrounded by such beauty each day.

Para leer NOTEWORTHY en español, visite www.musichavenct.org/mh-newsletters
A Summer to Remember

This summer, Music Haven students finally had the chance to come back together to play music. More than 40 students attended week-long camps, either those run by their teachers at Music Haven or our collaboration with St. Luke’s Steel Band—a “Steel and Strings” camp. By wearing masks and taking classes outside or limiting numbers and distancing inside, we were able to make music, sharpen our skills, have lots of fun, and stay safe. Music Haven high school students worked as counselors at all of the camps, assisting their teachers in helping younger students. Everyone enjoyed playing music together, as well as healthy snacks, end-of-camp performances for each other, and even a game of “throw water balloons at the teacher” (after instruments were packed up, of course!).

New This Year at Music Haven!

Student Quartets
This year, ALL returning Music Haven students have the opportunity to play in a quartet. Through our Student Quartet Program, they play in concerts throughout the year, rehearse weekly, and are coached by members of our Teaching Faculty. Student quartets have the opportunity to perform at our HSQ Chamber Series, “opening” for their teachers/mentors in front of not only friends and family, but also hundreds of other chamber music fans (as pictured here, when Reign, Jane, Giavonda, and Olivia—ages 12-15—played before a performance by their teachers in the HSQ.) They also play throughout the community, with a focus on playing in their own neighborhoods.

Music Technology & Composition
Through our Music Technology & Composition classes, our students have the opportunity to learn how to use Digital Audio Workstations such as Soundtrap to create their own recordings using digital instruments and recording themselves with microphones. They are able to compose, improvise, and create in a digital format utilizing not only samples and found audio, but also sounds they can make on their instruments or create with their own voices.

H.E.R.E. to Play (Health & Emotional Recovery Education)
Our “HERE to Play” Initiative recognizes that our students deal with traumas and stresses that can significantly impact their physical and mental health, and we understand they need the space, tools, and supports to respond, recover, and build the skills to do that every day. Our students tell us that playing music helps them calm down when they’re stressed. But we know they need help to deal with the tolls that stress and trauma take on their minds and bodies. HERE to Play includes access to healthy snacks, physical activities, and meditation, as well as access to trauma-informed mental health supports.

“This year at Music Haven I learned that I am creative. It’s a way for me to let people hear what I can do. Music means a lot to me.”
—5th year violinist, age 15
In 2020, Music Haven signed on to Together New Haven’s Arts for Anti-Racism Pledge, which is an initiative by the City of New Haven’s Department of Arts, Culture, and Tourism to “amplify voices of BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, People of Color) in arts and cultural organizations.” This pledge commits us to changing internal culture to not only include open discourse on race and racism, but also address racism when it happens, to seek out and provide a space for art that is focused on racial justice, to identify and dismantle policies and practices that create barriers for BIPOC leadership, to actively employ, support, and present works by more BIPOC artists, to address issues of accessibility, to offer more participatory programming for the community, and to learn, understand, and acknowledge the history of our organization’s relationship with and impact on BIPOC communities and make sure that knowledge informs our programming decisions going forward. (More information available at togethernewhaven.com/pledge.) We take this commitment to heart. Access and equity have always been at the center of Music Haven’s mission. As a free program, and one that provides the supports necessary for all students to have the chance to not only play music, but also study one-on-one over many years with exceptional teachers, we recognize that simply meeting financial needs doesn’t achieve access or equity. But being an anti-racist arts organization is about pushing beyond access and equity to create a space of liberation for our students, their families, and everyone in our Music Haven community. For more information, visit www.musichavenct.org/arts-for-antiracism. (Pictured Below: Our Music Haven team)

“Arts for Anti-Racism

“We need to let individuals like me know we are welcomed and encouraged to participate in artistic forms that have historically excluded us. We need to recognize artists of color, now and going back generations, for the work they have contributed. We need to acknowledge the voices that have gone silent, and see art as a fully human concept, not one bounded by race.”

—Robert Oakley, Music Haven Communications Assistant and Music Haven Class of ’18

COMPOSER SPOTLIGHT: NICOLAS LELL BENAVIDES

The HSQ is committed to playing works by composers of color, women, and living composers, and this season our musicians are sharing their thoughts on each of the works they’ve selected. On December 11, the HSQ will perform Nicolas Lell Benavides’ El Correcaminos. Here HSQ violinist Gregory Tompkins shares his reflections on Benavides’ work:

Nicolas Lell Benavides’ music is a fresh and exciting take on musical storytelling, frequently drawing on his Nuevomejicano roots and culture. About El Correcaminos (which translates to “The Roadrunner”, he writes: “It’s difficult to capture New Mexico in one symbol. I, like many New Mexicans, am the product of generations of love, conflict, migration, peace, war, spirituality, colonialism, and progressivism… ‘El Correcaminos’, is primarily about the Mexicans who arrived (influenced by the Spanish) from the South (and somewhat the West) in the 18th and 19th centuries. They were looking to settle permanently, and saw el correcaminos as a fertility blessing like a stork. They were elated to see one, as it meant there was a future in this place.” Benavides presents these overlapping influences in the form of a dance for string quartet with swirling melodic fragments that appear only briefly before being absorbed back into the rhythmic texture.
Gael, age 9
4th Year Music Haven violinist
Student of HSQ Violinist Gregory Tompkins

**HSQ CHAMBER SERIES 2021–2022**
The Haven String Quartet serves as Music Haven's permanent quartet-in-residence & teaching faculty.

**UPCOMING EVENTS**

**October 30, 2021**
"Feeling New Strength"
String Quartet in A Minor, Op. 132
Ludwig van Beethoven

**December 11, 2021**
Six Fantasy Pieces
El Correcaminos
Nicolas Lell Benavides
Five Fantasy Pieces, op. 5
Samuel Coleridge-Taylor

**February 12, 2022**
Musical Tapas
Two Pieces for String Quartet
Aaron Copland
Ascending Bird
Colin Jacobsen & Siamak Aghaei
Strum
Jessie Montgomery

Want more HSQ?
Catch us on 11/4 at 5pm at New Haven's Union Station!

WE'RE BACK!

All concerts are at 7:30 pm at the unitarian Society of New Haven
700 Hartford Tpke, Hamden, CT

**OCTOBER 30, 2021**
**DECEMBER 11, 2021**
**FEBRUARY 12, 2022**
**MARCH 19, 2022**
**MAY 14, 2022**