Sphinx Organization Announces 2021 Sphinx Venture Fund Recipients

Sphinx Venture Fund empowers the next generation of academic leaders, composers and orchestral audiences with $300k in project grants

The Sphinx Organization, the social justice organization dedicated to transforming lives through the power of diversity in the arts, has announced the 2021 recipients of the Sphinx Venture Fund: Scoring for Equity in Opera, The Institute for Composer Diversity Expansion and Community Impact Initiative, Celebrate Diversity in String Music: A Graded Anthology of Works for Solo and Ensemble by Black and Latinx Composers, and Rising Sun Recordings.

The Sphinx Venture Fund (SVF) aims to fund highly impactful programs affecting extensive and measurable positive change. Through competitive grants, SVF will catalyze initiatives designed to solve a challenge or an issue related to DE&I in the sphere of the performing arts, with an emphasis on classical music.

“During this transformative time, the voices of our artists and partners will propel the change that will empower our field to build a more just and equitable future. We are excited and energized by the energy and leadership of this year's recipients!” says Afa S. Dworkin, Sphinx President and Artistic Director.

Scoring for Equity in Opera

The Black Opera Alliance (BOA) creates an accountability framework for the opera field as it moves towards truer equity, inclusion, and racial justice. Project Director Dr. Derrell Acon spearheads this work around establishing community and accountability mechanisms within the opera field as relates to equity, diversity, inclusion, and access by establishing verifiable metrics for determining industry progress and providing resources where necessary to supplement organizational efforts. The Black Opera Alliance is the lead organizer for the venture and has strategically partnered with convening, analytical, and research colleagues to effectively execute the project. Scoring for Equity in Opera is poised to mightily advance the opera art form’s understanding and approach to this work, as well as position BOA as a leader in the broader performing arts sector vis-à-vis substantive change and accountability in the spheres of racial equity and social justice.

The Institute for Composer Diversity Database Expansion and Community Impact Initiative
The Institute for Composer Diversity Database Expansion and Community Impact Initiative is dedicated to creating a more diverse and inclusive musical landscape. Through an expansion of the current ICD databases to include more works by Black and Latinx composers, ICD will work with partner organizations worldwide to create more diverse and inclusive musical experiences.

**Celebrate Diversity in String Music: A Graded Anthology of Works for Solo and Ensemble by Black and Latinx Composers**

The University of Tennessee School of Music seeks to address the significant disparities of representation in the pedagogical repertoire of Western Classical Music by creating and distributing graded anthologies of string repertoire for solo and ensemble settings. These volumes will celebrate Black and Latinx composers with the aim of inspiring young musicians who might not currently see a place for themselves in classical music.

**Rising Sun Recordings**

Curated by renowned pianist and producer Lara Downes in collaboration with a roster of leading American artists, Rising Sun Recordings will release more than 200 years of never-before-recorded music by Black composers. This extensive series will radically reframe the history of classical music by embracing the true diversity of its origins and expanding the inclusivity of its future, “facing the rising sun of our new day begun”.

**About the Sphinx Organization**

The Sphinx Organization is the social justice organization dedicated to transforming lives through the power of diversity in the arts. Sphinx’s four program areas – Education & Access, Artist Development, Performing Artists, and Arts Leadership – form a pipeline that develops and supports diversity and inclusion in classical music at every level: music education, artists performing on stage, the repertoire and programing being performed, the communities represented in audiences, and the artistic and administrative leadership within the field.

Sphinx programs reach more than 100,000 students and artists, as well as live and broadcast audiences of more than two million annually. Read more about Sphinx’s programs at [www.SphinxMusic.org](http://www.SphinxMusic.org).