Sphinx Organization

Year in Review
2020 - 2021
Dear Sphinx La Familia,

As I reflect on our year together, I am filled with a sense of admiration and gratitude toward our artists and the greater community. We are humbled to witness a moment in history when our vision is being realized through collaboration with more than 20 music schools, over 100 orchestras, and nearly 200 partner organizations worldwide.

Despite a year of challenges brought on by the dual pandemic of COVID-19 and racial injustice, record high participation in programming reflect that our collective voice continues to gain momentum. We expanded our online learning opportunities for our youngest artists through our education programs while launching new groundbreaking initiatives such as the first-ever national Sphinx Orchestral Partnership Excerpt Competition, which provided a platform for nearly 100 orchestral musicians, generating an unprecedented number of 75 weeks of paid work. Our five professional touring ensembles took to the digital stage with new performance packages, and our global convening, SphinxConnect: UNITY, welcomed 2,200 participants. All the while, our digital imprint grew by 1000%, reaching a total of 66 million people.

We have witnessed the ripple effect of centering our artists’ voices and empowering them to narrate our history. Generations of our alumni are actively building their own ventures and networks, which propel our shared dream of artistic excellence through inclusion. They continue to break down barriers and stereotypes while actively leading the way toward a more reflective and vibrant industry landscape.

Together with our far-reaching community, we are proud to lead the movement that is changing the face of our field and society while building upon social impact for generations to come. We hope that you will join us in the charge to champion a more just and equitable future as we look ahead.

Afa S. Dworkin
President & Artistic Director
Through SUPPORT, ADVOCACY, and RESILIENCE, Sphinx has been able to further our mission of transforming lives through the power of diversity in the arts during these unprecedented times. Communities of color have been affected in a disturbingly disproportionate manner and countless artists have been silenced due to loss of work. In response, Sphinx mobilized immediately to use our creativity, adaptability, and passion to pivot quickly from in-person to virtual programming in the areas of Education & Access, Artist Development, Performing Artists, and Arts Leadership.

**Sphinx quadrupled the reach** of DEI focused artist development programming

**462% increase** in direct digital engagement

To date **400+ auditions** have been taken by NAAS/SOPA musicians

Sphinx featured in **4 New York Times articles** highlighting Sphinx’s DEI leadership & impact; **10+ total feature articles** in national and trade publications

**1,000% increase** in digital engagement via Sphinx online media partners

**66+ Million people** reached via media coverage

**70+ Sphinx alumni** received funding as part of Sphinx Artist Fund, Match Project, and MPower

**$120,000** Awarded through the Sphinx Artist Fund, Match Project, and MPower

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**Sphinx Match Project**. Sphinx’s earliest response to the global health pandemic, awarded 7 artists with matching grants to support their online concert initiatives.

**Sphinx Artist Fund** provided financial support to our Sphinx community members most in need. Through the fund we’ve been able to support over 60 Sphinx alumni.

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“I am so incredibly grateful to receive support from The Sphinx Artist Fund – this help in the time of COVID-19 is so incredibly appreciated, and also necessary for artists, especially artists of color. This summer was supposed to be the first where my quartet was going to travel overseas for a European tour, and all of that was (rightfully) canceled due to the pandemic. Of course, the money lost was a huge dig into our lives, as I know myself, and so many of my musical colleagues are feeling. This fund is allowing me to continue to be able to create music and provide online education in a safe way by having a space for it in my own living quarters. Thank you so much for providing this help; words cannot express how grateful I am to be able to continue creating music right now!”

– Marza Wilks, cellist
The Sphinx Organization has given to me something that each and every artist of color needs as much as air: encouragement.”
– Davóne Tines, 2020 Sphinx Medal of Excellence recipient

“I’m deeply honored and grateful to the Sphinx Organization for being the lighthouse for many young artists like me...By winning the 24th Annual Sphinx Competition, I have been able to increase my impact and to continue with my artistic purpose of educating and sharing with the young generations the art of violin playing.”
– Samuel Vargas, violin, 1st Place Sr. Laureate of the 2021 Sphinx Competition

The help of Sphinx has directly impacted the progress that I have been able to make in the last couple of years, getting closer and closer to my career goals.”
– Levi Jones, bass, NAAS Grantee

The LEAD program positively changed me in ways I could never have planned for or imagined. It provided tools and opportunities for me to realize the leader I am and the career I aim to achieve.”
– Yvette Loynaz, Sphinx LEAD Cohort 2

A Sphinx Story: Xavier Foley
Double bassist & composer

2020: Featured composer during Sphinx Virtual Gala
2019: Featured performer at SphinxConnect
2019: Featured soloist and composer with Sphinx Virtuosi at Carnegie Hall
2018: Recipient of the prestigious Avery Fisher Career Grant
2016: First Prize, Young Concert Artists International Auditions
2014: Featured soloist with Sphinx Virtuosi
2014: Senior Division 1st Place Laureate of the Sphinx Competition
2011: Junior Division 2nd Place Laureate of the Sphinx Competition
2010: Member of Sphinx Chamber Orchestra
EDUCATION & ACCESS
Making classical music accessible to communities historically underrepresented in the field through education initiatives and community engagement.

The Sphinx Performance Academy is an opportunity for me to be fully immersed in classical music each summer. Each year I learn from both the faculty and other students, and look forward to seeing my Sphinx Family.

– Kendall Gonzales
Cellist, age 14

**SPA** is a full-scholarship intensive summer performance program with a focus on cultural diversity for string musicians ages 11-17.

The 2020 Sphinx Performance Academy welcomed 84 musicians for virtual sessions in partnership with the Curtis Institute of Music, The Juilliard School, and the Cleveland Institute of Music. During each session, students participate in lessons, studio and guest artist masterclasses, collaborative digital projects, and a range of enrichment activities.

Sphinx Overture provides free access to music education in elementary schools in Detroit and Flint, Michigan through beginning violin group classes and lessons.

In 2020 Overture consisted of over 200 students, 17 faculty members, and took place in 10 different locations. In response to schools closing in March, Overture transitioned to a virtual format and though we were not able to host our annual summer camp, students continued with private lessons online.

**84** Sphinx Performance Academy students served at top music schools across the country

**370+** Full scholarships to Sphinx education programs

**10+** School/community sites in Detroit and Flint area served by Sphinx Overture programs

**A Sphinx Story: Zephaniah Pharr**
Zephaniah Pharr is a student at Gompers Elementary in Detroit, MI and has participated in the Sphinx Overture program since 2018. This past year, Zephaniah continued his lessons via Zoom with Overture instructor Pia Bucco.
ARTIST DEVELOPMENT
Empowering emerging musicians by encouraging, developing, and recognizing classical music talent in the Black and Latinx communities.

2021 Sphinx Competition
Sphinx’s flagship program, the Sphinx Competition brings young Black and Latinx string players to Detroit, MI to compete for prizes ranging from $3,000 to $50,000 and to receive guidance & mentorship from established musicians.

SAMUEL VARGAS
VIOLIN
1st Place Sr. Division
Robert Frederick Smith Prize

AMARYN OLMEDA
VIOLIN
1st Place Jr. Division
Audience Choice Jr. Division
Bauder Fellow

LUIZ FERNANDO VENTURELLI
CELLO
3rd Place Sr. Division

JONATHAN OKSENIUK
VIOLIN
2nd Place Jr. Division

DILLON P. SCOTT
VIOLA
3rd Place Jr. Division

CHRISTIAN GRAY
BASS
2nd Place Sr. Division
Audience Choice Sr. Division

SAMUEL VARGAS
VIOLIN
1st Place Sr. Division
Robert Frederick Smith Prize

AMARYN OLMEDA
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LUIZ FERNANDO VENTURELLI
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VIOLIN
2nd Place Jr. Division

DILLON P. SCOTT
VIOLA
3rd Place Jr. Division

CHRISTIAN GRAY
BASS
2nd Place Sr. Division
Audience Choice Sr. Division

$103,000 Awarded to Competition Finalists annually

National Alliance for Audition Support (NAAS) and Sphinx Orchestral Partner Auditions (SOPA)
The National Alliance for Audition Support (NAAS) and Sphinx Orchestral Partner Auditions (SOPA) programs actively work to advance the careers and placement of Black and Latinx orchestral musicians so that American orchestras reflect the cultural diversity that exists within our communities. NAAS provides artists with mentoring, audition preparation, financial support, and audition previews (SOPA program).

35+ artists have won 45+ auditions and/or placement with orchestras across the country

100+ NAAS/SOPA partner orchestras

250+ NAAS/SOPA artists

SOPA Program Updates
This year, Sphinx launched the SOPA Excerpt Competition which provides Black and Latinx orchestral musicians the unique opportunity to audition for a panel representing several orchestras seeking to identify musicians for invitation to auditions, pre-advancement at auditions and/or placement on substitute player lists. As a result,

• Over 100 artists and 75+ orchestras participated in SOPA Excerpt Competition
• 15 SOPA artists received a total of $17,000+ in SOPA awards
• At minimum 75+ weeks of contract work will be awarded to SOPA artists by SOPA orchestra partners

“Having the NAAS [program] available during the pandemic has been very encouraging and had a huge impact on my mental health during the pandemic (professionally speaking). It was powerful to have this cohort of like-minded people to help me keep perspective on the process and on the future.
– Francesca Mcneeley, cello
**Performing Artists**

Sphinx professional ensembles and soloists bring dynamic programming to diverse audiences. Empowering emerging musicians by encouraging, developing, and recognizing classical music talent in the Black and Latinx communities.

- $250,000+ raised in support of Sphinx’s programs at the intersection of the arts and social justice
- 15,000 viewers worldwide
- 58 featured Sphinx Artists and Students
- 1 New Commission and Premiere

**Inspirational Virtual Performances**

Visit the Sphinx Organization's YouTube channel to experience inspiring performances by Sphinx artists.

- **“Glory” from Selma**
  Performed by EXIGENCE Vocal Ensemble and the Sphinx Virtuosi

- **Bachianas Brasileiras No. 5**
  Performed by Sphinx Virtuosi

- **Lift Every Voice and Sing**
  Arranged by Joel Thompson
  Performed by EXIGENCE Vocal Ensemble

- **Seven Last Words of the Unarmed**
  Performed by Sphinx Symphony Orchestra and University of Michigan Men’s Glee Club

- **Othello Suite**
  Samuel Coleridge-Taylor
  Collaborative performance with musicians from Sphinx and the Chineke! Foundation

- **Elegy: In memoriam - Stephen Lawrence**
  Performed by the Sphinx Virtuosi

**EXIGENCE Vocal Ensemble and the Sphinx Virtuosi** participated in a combined 20+ virtual residencies which included a concert package along with curated panel discussions and educational activities.
ARTS LEADERSHIP
Supporting musicians, leaders, and entrepreneurs of color through career development and professional empowerment.

2,141
2020 SphinxConnect registrants

SphinxConnect is the annual conference serving as the epicenter for artists and leaders in diversity.

MPower Artist Grants are competitive scholarships designed to empower Sphinx alumni to achieve their career objectives in classical music.

Sphinx LEAD empowers arts leaders and entrepreneurs of color through a year-round curriculum including mentorship, networking, and leadership retreats at top institutions nationwide. Through a virtual pivot in 2020, LEADers had the opportunity to learn from 150+ guest speakers from leading arts institutions around the country.

Sphinx Medals of Excellence
An award and $50,000 career grant bestowed upon three extraordinary Black and Latinx classical artists annually.

Sphinx Venture Fund
Provides competitive grants for initiatives designed to solve a challenge or an issue related to Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion in the performing arts.

SPHINX TANK
(for Arts & Cultural Entrepreneurs)
4 GRANTS
$32,500

NATIONAL ALLIANCE FOR AUDITION SUPPORT
40 GRANTS
$49,638

SPHINX MPower & ARTIST RELIEF
72 GRANTS
$120,000

SPHINX MEDALS OF EXCELLENCE
3 GRANTS
$150,000

SPHINX VENTURE FUND
4 GRANTS
$300,000

ANNUAL GRANT TOTAL
123 GRANTS
$652,138

TOTAL GRANTS IN THE PAST 5 YEARS
540+ GRANTS
$2,600,000

SPHINX ORGANIZATION GRANTS 2020/2021

2021 Sphinx Medals of Excellence

Lina González-Granados
Conductor
Carlos Simon
Composer
Titus Underwood
Oboe

2021 Sphinx Venture Fund

More than 150 organizations, 2,000 students, 5,000 audience members, and hundreds of millions of music listeners will be impacted by these Sphinx-funded ventures.

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.

The Institute for Composer Diversity Database Expansion and Community Impact Initiative
The Institute for Composer Diversity Database Expansion and Community Impact Initiative is a project that will work to create a more diverse and inclusive musical landscape.

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.

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.
FINANCIAL HEALTH & SUSTAINABILITY

TOTAL NET ASSETS: $13,782,710
TOTAL NET ASSETS & LIABILITIES: $14,092,106

INVESTMENT & PARTNERSHIPS

SUPPORTING SPHINX’S FUTURE

$7.05M secured in multi-year grants to fund Sphinx programming through 2028
THANK YOU TO OUR SUPPORTERS,
PARTNERS & COLLABORATORS
Fiscal Year 2020
January 1, 2020 – December 31, 2020

$1,000,000+

Robert F. Smith

$100,000 - $999,999

Lillian & Don Bauder
The Bauder Commissioning Fund
The Bauder Conducting Fellowship
The Bauder Fellow Program

ENDOWMENT

Anonymous

$50,000 - $99,999

Samsung

$25,000 - $49,999

The Sander & Norma K. Buchman Fund
William H. Carson, M.D.
Ertech Foundation
The Turrell Fund

$10,000 - $14,999

The Aronson Family Foundation
William D. & Dr. Sally C. Johnson Family Foundation
Brenard L. Mann Foundation
Tennetta McColloch

MOORE FAMILY FOUNDATION

$5,000 - $9,999

Katherine Balch
Dwight & William Bounds
The Choaney Foundation, in honor of Cozy Wasserman
The Clinton Family Fund
Leo, Eleanor & Ronald Cossey Fund
Dev. Ronald A. & Betty Neal Crainch, in memory of Professor Elizabeth Patnerage
Richard & Barbara Debs
Lynette Donker
Ken & Penny Fischer

$2,500 - $4,999

Anonymous
Cynthia Bowman
David J. Brown, MD
Clifford Chu, in honor of Robert F. Smith
Martha Eagling & Gilbert S. Ommen
Ala S. & Aaron F. Dworkin
Mike Fiers & Tom Lockhart, Brainstorm LLC
David & Debbie Foster
Sandra L. Gibson & Associates, in memory of Thelma Gibson
Howard & Wendy Hertz

$1,500 - $2,499

Anonymous
C. Gloria Albers
Rachel Barton Pine & Gregory Pine
Chacona & Harold Bough
Alex Charleston
Joseph Cooper
Feder Gordon Family Fund
Gary Gardening
Carol & Tom Goss
Sarah Harding, in honor of Kenneth C. Fischer

$500 - $1,499

Anonymous
Actus
William Adams
Jeffrey S. Alkon, MD
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Cheryl Alexander
Terry Allen
Eric Ayers, in honor of Arva Ayers
Alexis Behling Vitruswring
Carl Berdahl
Jerry & Helga Blicht
Ann Kelly Bolten
Loretta Britton
Joan Campbell
Deborah Carmichael
Zachary Carter
Stephanie & Dennis Cohen Charitable Fund
Mary Sue & Kenneth M. Coleman
Ethan & Gretchen Daraboin
Trevor Davis
Anna & Peter David
Anthony Elliott

$500 - $1,499

Emily Engel
Fish Family Charitable Fund
Dr. Alfred and Susan Freidig
Filipowski-Havey Family Foundation
Rose & Robert W. Gerpott
Rosie Gonzalez
Greg Hammond
Wendy Hutter & Jack Hill
Dr. Melissa Krask
Ignite Social Media
Robert Lynch
Donnie Marlan
Robert Naegel
Patricia G. Conner
Daisy Neiderberger
Matt Pickert
David & Judith Polkhet
Vivian Pickard
Dr. Melissa Sickler
Michael Biner
Chelie Rodgers
Eugene Rogers
Joseph & Christina Rosien, in honor of Ricardo Morales

$15,000 - $24,999

Ann & Gordon Getty Foundation
Anthony & Adela Glover
McGregor Fund
James B. & Ann V. Nicholson
Ralph L. & Winifred E. Polk Foundation
Tukowa Foundation

$10,000 - $14,999

Terry Woodard
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Mary Beth Halperin
Melanie K. Johnson
Olive Dewey Marreroes Foundation
Marchell Matthews Foundation
David Lowensfield & Sally Mendelsohn
Kathy Nuth
Faye Alexander Nelson
Spectraformica, Inc.
Margaret V.B. Wurtzel

$2,500 - $4,999

Anonymous
ICESOM
MAP Fund
Karen J. Morrison
John Morning
Michael Stanfield & Jennifer Poteat
Frank Preston
Dr. Anne L. Taylor
Errol & Paula Taylor
Mark Wallace

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