Chamber Music Amici News

Creating Community Through Great Music

Fall 2020

REINVENTING AMICI DURING PANDEMIC

With the pandemic changing the rules of live music, performing arts organizations have begun planning for a different kind of existence. What is typically a time when we would be making final preparations for the coming season, has been for Amici an adventure in canceling current plans, making new plans, brainstorming for an existence away from the Wildish Theater, and applying for grants to help ease the financial impact as we move into this new—we hope temporary—way of operating.

Chamber Music Amici Board Meeting via Zoom, Summer 2020

Musicians, staff and board, have worked closely via Zoom to create a new way to bring our concerts to you and to help youth continue to experience music and music lessons during a time when it is greatly needed more than ever.

Here are a few ways Amici has adapted over the last several months.

Rory with the viola, 5th grade

Education Enrichment Online

by Jessica Lambert

Last Spring, as schools began arranging for teachers and students to continue their schooling in new ways, Amici was among the first organizations in our area to offer an exciting new possibility for students' continued development on their instruments.

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Summer cello lessons: Ashton Corkery and Kathryn Brunhaver

Art: Detail of *The Dawning* by Chris Pontrelli

Chamber Music Amici

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Jessica Lambert
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Reinventing Amici, *continued*

Amici set up a pilot program in early April offering free weekly 30 minute lessons to any string players who lacked private teachers. I myself had the pleasure of giving viola lessons to Rory Longanbach every week for the remainder of the school year. In fact, we enjoyed working together and continued our lessons via Zoom throughout the summer.

I met Rory's parents and little brother over Zoom; Rory also introduced me to her cats and the family's adorable new dog, Cricket! During our lessons we studied several new pieces and completed the packet of music her school teacher, Amy Danziger, had prepared for the Spring semester, helping Rory feel very well prepared for her middle school orchestra classes.

From my perspective, it was a marvelous experience. I enjoyed guiding Rory's musical development and explorations, even for so short a time. She had a great attitude and enthusiasm for learning and an excellent memory for melodies so it was quite fun playing music games with her!

Our public school music programs are incredibly important to hundreds of children in our communities. Their teachers do an amazing job of nurturing and inspiring the musical lives of the students. It felt great to be a part of that world!

Also this summer, Amici guest musician, Kathryn Brunhaver (cello), had time and was willing to provide summer lessons to Ashton Corkery, a young autistic student who was just beginning to learn cello. Kathryn worked with Ashton over the summer and hopes to continue her relationship with Ashton in the coming year.

Dear Chamber Music Amici,

My special thanks for providing continued musical instruction for my son Ashton during this profoundly difficult time. Being in the spectrum, it is difficult to find ways for him to connect with the world in a meaningful way. Last school year we discovered that he has a gift for music. Upon the sudden closure we were deeply concerned about the effect of the abrupt cessation on his development.

I am pleased to report that he has prospered under Kathryn's expert direction. Her kind and patient manner has helped him ascend to a markedly higher skill level. It is my fondest hope that someday he will find he can take a seat in an orchestra somewhere, and when he does, it will be because Kathryn was able to share her gift with him.

With gratitude,

Kathryn Brunhaver:

Ashton Corkery is a bright and pleasant student who is eager to learn and clearly loves the cello. He has a natural curiosity and open-mindedness that always leads to interesting discussions. Although he sometimes communicates unconventionally, I can always tell that Ashton is absorbing and incorporating the things we talk about in lessons. He has made great progress during our time together and we are working on finding a way to continue lessons throughout the school year.

CARPORT CONCERTS

by Sharon Schuman

Sharon Schuman warming up for a carport concert in July.

When the pandemic hit, my classical music life was suddenly suspended. Like other musicians, I got the news piecemeal, as one performance after another was cancelled. It eventually dawned on me that it could be more than a year before it was once again safe to perform in person.

We all retreated behind our masks and cultivated the new art of social distancing. Yet it seemed more than a little odd that day after day, even as invisible danger lurked, Summer should unfold with a series of inviting, near-perfect pre-fire days. The blue sky made us all want to go outside. That was when I got the idea for carport concerts. Why not move my cars out of the way, sweep out the carport, and invite another violinist to play duos with me six feet apart, before a very small audience? The wooden beams, concrete floor, and partial walls created surprisingly decent acoustics—with lots of fresh air—and my friends and neighbors were starved for live music, so we gave it a go.

Above and below: carport/yard concert by Sharon Schuman and Sophie Therrell in July. Bottom: Below: Jessica Lambert and Grace Choi performing a carport concert on August 8.

I invited first Lisa McWhorter, Assistant Concertmaster of the Eugene Symphony, then Sophie Therrell, violinist with ESO, OMP, and Eugene Opera, to perform duo concerts with me, featuring Baroque bows and music by Bach, Telemann, and Leclair. The concerts were free and short—about half an hour. The audience was limited to a dozen masked and distanced people who had brought their own chairs, or just sat on my neighbor's grass.

Everyone seemed to love it, so Eunhye Grace Choi brought over her electronic keyboard, and we performed a Mozart sonata for piano and violin. We began to repeat these concerts, first at Lynn Frohnmayer's courtyard, then at Mary Ann Moore's garden. They each invited a handful of friends to share the experience, and suddenly Chamber Music Amici's audience was growing again, in spite of everything. We discovered that although the pandemic had closed some doors, it opened others. The love of live music, shared among friends, is impossible to suppress.

2020/2021 SEASON

We just recorded our first of three concerts at the Wildish Theater and look forward to sharing them with our patrons beginning November 2nd. While creating concerts in this way has been a challenge, it has also been exciting knowing we will still be able to share our music with you!

Once our musicians have recorded and aired the first three concerts of the season we will turn our focus to our spring concerts. We plan to perform the final two concerts of our 2020-2021 season at the White Oak Pavilion at Mt. Pisgah Arboretum. What started as a wild idea this summer quickly turned into an excellent plan. The covered but open-to-the-outdoors nature of the Pavilion, plus the surrounding lawn area, allows for adequate social distancing and "ventilation," should that still be necessary this spring, while providing a gorgeous environment for enjoying chamber music. When trying the space out earlier this past summer, the musicians were so pleasantly surprised by the quality of the experience that you can expect us to add an outdoor summer series of concerts to our usual indoor season at the Wildish in the future.

We will get back to you in February with the details for the second part of the season and an opportunity to subscribe to those two concerts. At that time we might even have details about a summer series.

How to Watch Amici Concerts This Season

If you purchased tickets to any or all of our concert in November, December and February, look for instructions via email on how to access our concerts online; pre-concert talks are included. Look for details in your inbox.

If you have questions email, info@chambermusicamici.org, or call, 541.953.9204

TICKETS: CHAMBERMUSICAMICI.ORG, 541.953.9204

Spring • Summer

Concert I ***Once Upon a Time***

Colin Pip Dixon
The Rooster and the Fox

Ernst von Dohnanyi
Piano Quintet No. 2

Concert II ***Chamber Voices***

Guillaume Lekeu
Pleinte d'Andromeda

Ernest Chausson
Chanson Perpetuelle, Op. 37

Virgil Thompson Stabat Mater

John Corigliano Snapshot, Circa 1909

Ildobrando Pizzetti Tre Canzone

Part One — Nov. 2 • Dec. 14 • Feb. 8

Online viewing for each concert will be available starting on each concert date.
Ticket holders will receive online access to recorded concerts and pre-concert talks.

Kimberlee Uwate

November 2nd La Voce Nuova

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart
String Quintet No. 2 in C Minor, K406/516b
Piano Quartet in E-flat Major, K493

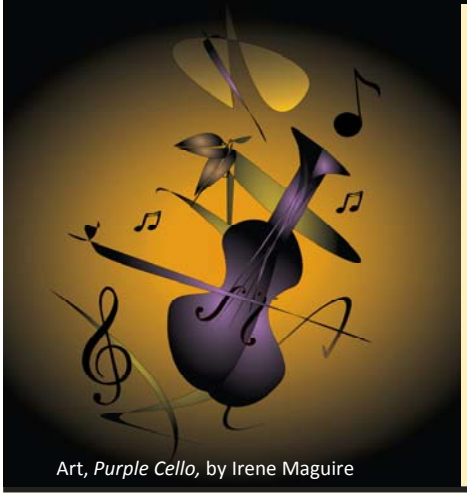
Amici

Eunhye Grace Choi ***piano***
Jessica Lambert ***violin***
Lillie Manis ***viola***
Sharon Schuman ***violin***

Guests

Kimberlee Uwate ***viola***

Anne Ridlington


Art, *Purple Cello,* by Irene Maguire

December 14th Fairy Tales

Milhaud Suite Op. 157b
Schumann Fairy Tales
Beethoven Clarinet Trio, Op. 1
Steinhardt Running Blue

Amici

Eunhye Grace Choi ***piano***
Jessica Lambert ***viola***
Lillie Manis ***violin***
Steven Pologe ***cello***

Guest

Wonkak Kim

Art, *The Dawning,* by Chris Pontrelli

February 7th French Masters

Gabriel Fauré Piano Trio in D Minor **César Franck** Piano Quintet in F Minor

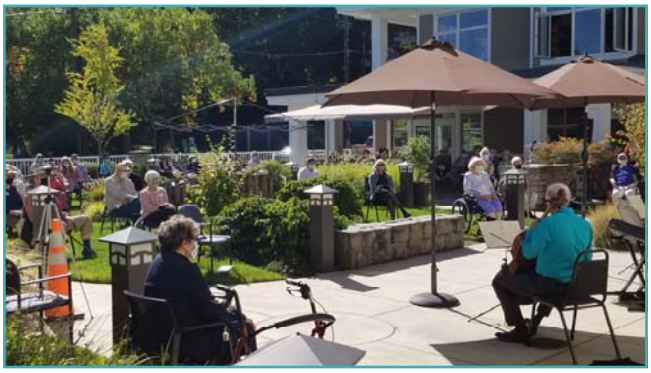
Amici

Steven Pologe ***cello***
Eunhye Grace Choi ***piano***
Sharon Schuman ***violin***
Lillie Manis ***violin***
Jessica Lambert ***viola***

INAUGURAL OUTDOOR CONCERT REVIEW

by Nonna Haydock, Cascade Manor Resident

Chamber Music Amici showed its resilience and determination to entertain Cascade Manor's residents by putting on a wonderful concert in the Bistro courtyard on Sunday, September 27th. All credit to Artistic Director Grace Choi who managed to get the musicians together for a second attempt after rain postponed the planned Friday 25th concert.



The weather on Sunday was obligingly sunny, and the Cascade Manor team provided patio umbrellas to shade the musicians and a choice of shade or sunshine for the audience, with a surprising number of well-separated chairs. We think there were about 70 people in the audience. Many thanks to Brian Young, Diane Chavez, Peter Marquardt and Dick Jordan for the setup, and to Loi Heldt for general organization and an excellent program featuring a painting by Cliff Klinkhammer, which complemented the concert theme of 'Hope and Jubilation'.

The concert was delightful. There's nothing as satisfying as listening to live music really well-played in a sunny garden setting, with the gentle murmur of a water feature in the background. People on deck chairs in the surrounding balconies lent an intimacy to the atmosphere.

The musical program was two trios: Beethoven Clarinet Trio in B-flat major, Op.11, and Schumann Fairy Tales, Op.132. Both featured piano and clarinet, played by Grace and her husband Wonkak Kim, who is a UO Assistant Professor and Naxos recording artist. Amici core musicians completed the trios: Steven Pologe on cello in the Beethoven, and Jessica Lambert on viola in the Schumann.

Grace chose the program to lift our spirits in confusing and disturbing times, and, thanks to the quality of the music and the beauty of the setting, our Amici d'Amici committee concluded that she succeeded.

Call to Artists

Help Amici *capture the beauty and excitement of chamber music.* Winning art will be displayed on Amici posters and programs for the 2021-2022 Season.

- Six Awards
- Over $1,000 in Prizes
- Youth Category

Applications at: http://bit.ly/AmiciArtContestRulesForm
Submissions Due Friday, January 15

AMICI FINANCES REMAIN STRONG BUT CONTINUED DONOR SUPPORT IS CRITICAL

Bruce Heldt, Donor Relations

One of Chamber Music Amici's core values is to be a fiscally responsible organization. Budgets carefully planned and executed in accordance with that core value over Amici's first eleven seasons have resulted in a fiscally healthy organization. Recently that fiscal strength was increased by the receipt of an unexpected bequest from a former patron.

Amici's fiscal strength left us favorably placed to deal with the unexpected cancellation of the final two concerts of last season. In addition, our loyal subscribers stepped up to minimize the financial impact of those two cancelled concerts. Over 90% of them donated their unused tickets back to Amici rather than ask for a refund. That allowed Amici to finish the year without having to consume any of our carefully built up working capital or any of the bequest.

In June Amici received a small grant from the Small Business Administration that allowed Amici to replace some of the wages lost by the musicians who had been scheduled to perform those two cancelled concerts. This grant allowed Amici to pay those musicians to perform small outdoor concerts, provide online lessons to students, and produce a short video clip from "The Rooster and the Fox" by Colin Pip Dixon. This composition had previously been commissioned by Amici and was to have been performed at the cancelled April concert, it has now been rescheduled for next spring. (To view this clip, visit our Facebook page or YouTube channel.)

This season, Amici will be receiving a grant pursuant to the federal CARES act to cover some of our overhead during this period of business interruption. However, as with all non-profit arts organizations, Amici relies on more than ticket sales to fund operations. A significant portion of our operations are dependent on donations. In addition, planning for and fulfilling Amici's mission has become more complicated and expensive in the current environment of constantly changing challenges. Therefore the federal aid received will help, but significant continued donor support will still be needed.

Fortunately, Amici's financial strength allows us to think beyond mere survival, to instead focus on how best to fulfill our mission "to produce excellent affordable chamber music concerts that appeal to all ages" and to live up to our motto of "creating community through great music," even in a time of pandemic. But the continued support of our donors is still critical.

In fact, our financial strength may be one of the best reasons to continue your support at this time, or even to increase it, to help us fulfill our mission. We have been good stewards of your donations in the past and will continue to be so in the future.

Season Supporters

Season-long recognition goes to firms that sign on as Season Supporter. When you visit them, please let them know you appreciate their support of chamber music! There are still a few opportunities available for your business or a business you patronize to be a sponsor this season. For details contact Bruce Heldt at *bajheldt@chambermusicamici.org*.

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WILDISH COMMUNITY THEATER

New Season, New Look

Part I • Online Access

November 2
December 14
February 8

Virtual Tickets:
chambermusicamici.org

Creating Community Through Great Music

October 4, Recording November 2 concert

La Voce Nuova

After canceling two concerts last season, reimagining this season, and then planning and recording the music, we are now set to begin a new season with a new look and feel.

Join Amici musicians, Grace Choi, Jessica Lambert, Lillie Manis, and Sharon Schuman, along with guest artists Anne Ridlington (cello) and Kimberlee Uwate (viola) for an all-Mozart concert on Monday, November 2.

$60 All three concerts; $25 separately.

Access to watch online is available by purchasing your ticket from our website, **chambermusicamici.org,** or calling our office, **541.953.9204.**