



## Semi-Finalists Announced in 14th Annual Sphinx Competition Presented by DTE Energy Foundation

Entries for the 14th annual Sphinx Competition presented by DTE Energy Foundation streamed into the Sphinx offices in early November. From all the applicants in the preliminary round, 18 young musicians have been named semi-finalists, and invited to travel to Ann Arbor and Detroit to participate in the Competition, which begins on February 2, 2011.

The semi-finalists are divided into two divisions based on age. The junior division of the Competition culminates in the Honors Concert, which will be held on February 4 at the University of Michigan's Rackham Auditorium. The senior division ends with the Finals Concert, to be held at the Max M. Fisher Music Center on February 6.

For those not able to attend the concerts in person, the Honors Concert will be streamed live via the Sphinx website, and the Finals Concert will be recorded for national broadcast on PBS stations, including Detroit Public Television.

This year, semi-finalists range in age from 13 to 24, and hail from nine

states. Nine are violinists, four are violists, four are cellists, and one is a double bassist.

The junior division semi-finalists are: Caitlin Adamson of Evanston, IL; Juan-Salvador Carrasco of Santa Monica, CA; Brendon Elliott of Newport News, VA; Xavier Foley of Marietta, GA; Annelle Gregory of San Diego, CA; Alexandra Switala of Grapevine, TX; Ray Trujillo of Elk Grove, CA; and Ade Williams of Chicago, IL.

The senior division semi-finalists are: Maia Cabeza of Philadelphia, PA; Michael Casimir of Philadelphia, PA; Mariana Cottier-Bucco of Norristown, PA; Alexander Cox of Cleveland, OH; Josue Gonzalez of Cleveland, OH; Andrew Griffin of Houston, TX; Sheena Gutierrez of Miami, FL; Scott Jackson of Cincinnati, OH; Paul Laraja of Boston, MA; and Erica Snowden-Rodriguez of Cleveland, OH.

At stake in the Sphinx Competition are scholarships, cash prizes of more than \$25,000, and opportunities to perform with major orchestras around the country. Outside of

the competitive aspects of the Competition, participants will have the opportunity to work with members of the Sphinx Symphony Orchestra and the jury panel during masterclasses and an evening of chamber music.

The Sphinx Symphony Orchestra, an ensemble of professional musicians from around the country will come together during the Competition,

and will be featured on both the Honors and Finals Concerts. In addition to the selection of the senior division winner, the Finals Concert will feature a performance of Roberto Sierra's *Sinfonia No. 4*, a piece commissioned by the Sphinx Commissioning Consortium, a group of orchestras who share the Sphinx Organization's commitment to diversity.

### Sphinx Students Need You!



Photo: Glenn Triest

By donating to Sphinx, you will help us to provide lessons, instruments, and incredible opportunities for young people.

Please consider a gift to help further our mission.

Inside, you can read more about our successes from this past fall, and about the support we need for the upcoming year.

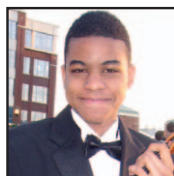
### ◆◆◆ 2011 Sphinx Competition Semi-Finalists ◆◆◆



Caitlin Adamson



Juan-Salvador Carrasco



Brendon Elliott



Xavier Foley



Annelle Gregory



Alexandra Switala



Ray Trujillo



Ade Williams



Maia Cabeza



Michael Casimir



Mariana Cottier-Bucco



Alexander Cox



Josue Gonzalez



Andrew Griffin



Sheena Gutierrez



Scott Jackson



Paul Laraja



Erica Snowden-Rodriguez

Editor: Stephan Bobalik  
 Contributors: Caitlin Ilich, Alison Piech, Stephan Bobalik, Aaron Dworkin  
 Design & Layout: Julie Renfro

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 400 Renaissance Center, Ste 2550  
 Detroit, MI 48243 313-877-9100  
 www.sphinxmusic.org info@sphinxmusic.org

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# SCO becomes *Sphinx Virtuosi*

This year marked the Sphinx Chamber Orchestra's third national tour and sixth performance at Carnegie Hall. Since the inaugural tour in 2008, it has gone from a longtime dream fulfilled, to an annual event. A major grant approved this year by The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation will support the orchestra's tours through 2013.

This year's tour began at Carnegie Hall garnering the orchestra and conductor Damon Gupton a rave review in *The New York Times*. Allan Kozinn wrote that Sphinx performances are, "illuminating, not only because they are the fruits of an inspiring program, but also because the performances are invariably energetic and finely burnished." His praise of the orchestra was effusive; he wrote, "its tone was warm and varied, it moved with unity and fluidity, and its textures were appealingly transparent."

In their Carnegie Hall debut, the Catalyst Quartet received a very favorable review and left Kozinn wanting to hear more from them.

Following the Carnegie Hall performance, the orchestra played concerts at Mount Holyoke College, Western Michigan University, the University of Michigan, Andrews University, Kutztown University, Mercyhurst College, Harris Theatre in Chicago, Central Michigan University, Macomb Center for the Performing Arts, and the Kansas City Conservatory of Music reaching thousands along the way.

Beginning in 2011, the orchestra will be known as the Sphinx Virtuosi. Vice president of programming and artistic director Afa Sadykhly says the name better captures the spirit of the orchestra. "More than just a traditional chamber orchestra, the Sphinx Virtuosi is an ensemble of accomplished soloists—each a virtuoso in his or her own right. The new name reflects the masterful level of performance and accomplishment the orchestra has achieved in the past three years." The ensemble will perform without a conductor under the leadership of the principal musician of each section.

Aaron Dworkin added, "We're incredibly proud of the success of the Sphinx Chamber Orchestra's annual tours, and we're excited to launch the Sphinx Virtuosi brand moving forward."

The Sphinx Virtuosi is a unique ensemble offering audiences and presenters a unique concert experience that embraces diversity and artistic excellence. The ensemble's repertoire will feature rare gems by composers of color, such as George Walker, Coleridge-Taylor Perkinson, and Gabriela Lena Frank, along with timeless masterpieces by Mozart, Mendelssohn, and others. In conjunction with each performance, members of the ensemble conduct free educational and community engagement programs that bring new audiences closer to classical music.

*The Sphinx Chamber Orchestra annual tour is made possible by The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation. Community engagement and outreach programs during the tour are supported by Target. For information about booking the Sphinx Virtuosi, contact Andre Dowell at Andre@sphinxmusic.org.*



The Catalyst Quartet performs at Carnegie Hall.  
 Photo: Nan Melville

# I am SPHINX



*"Without Sphinx my dreams would have remained my dreams...my dreams are now my goals!"*  
 - Myles Amir Harlan, Sphinx Prep student

## PRESIDENT'S NOTE



Dear Friends,

I hope you have been joyfully anticipating the holiday season. Recently, I found myself reflecting on the many aspects of Sphinx's work that I find inspirational. In particular, one very special experience stands out in my mind—the journey I made to Milwaukee in October. I had the honor of giving a talk at the National Symposium on Collaboration in Youth Arts Education, held at the magnificent Milwaukee Youth Arts Center. There, I came to learn more of this amazing institution, which stood out to me as one of the most profound examples of collaboration, commitment, and excellence I have encountered. The center is home to the Milwaukee Youth Symphony, First Stage Children's Theater, Milwaukee Children's Choir, Festival City Symphony, African American Children's Theatre, and Danceworks.

As I toured the space, I experienced a deep and sincere sense of commitment and collaboration in order to achieve a greater good in serving young people. In addition to the amazing creativity and hard work that went into making such a project a reality, I was most inspired by the quality of the programming. While I only caught a glimpse of the rich variety offered by their vast array of programs, I did have the pleasure of hearing a terrific performance by the young people who gathered to perform prior to my presentation, the flatteringly-named Dworkin Honors Orchestra—a humbling experience, to say the least! These young people played at a fantastic level, exhibiting true pride in what they do—music. In some ways, the simplicity of that very premise is what filled me with awe and the deepest respect toward everyone who made these programs a reality. As I looked at the incredible impact on the diversity of the partnering institutions that this collaboration has brought to bear, as well as the unique impact this facility has on all the students who benefit from this unique space, I was struck by how much all our peers can learn from the Milwaukee Youth Arts Center's successful model.

And from an individual perspective, as you journey through life this holiday season, take a minute (or better yet, a couple hours!) to learn about ways you can get involved in your local arts and music organizations and make a difference in your hometown.

With warmest wishes,

*Aaron Dworkin*  
Founder and President

## *I support Sphinx because...*

During this season of giving, honor a music lover or musician in your life by making a gift to Sphinx!

When you make a gift, Sphinx will send a personalized card letting them know a gift has been made in his or her honor.

This is a unique way to give the gift of music while supporting Sphinx as we continue to build diversity in classical music.



"Music education should be a part of every child's life."

- Sheila C. Johnson, Entrepreneur  
Presenting Supporter, Sphinx Laureates at Carnegie Hall

"Sphinx musicians play so fiercely, and with so much energy and intelligence, that it is extremely powerful."

- Roberta Flack, Songstress  
Sphinx Lifetime Achievement  
Award Recipient



"As the daughter of music teachers - music education played a major role in becoming the person I am today. I believe every young student should be afforded the same opportunities that I had in school. I applaud the vision of the Sphinx Organization, and I am pleased to help them ensure that classical music not only reflects cultural diversity, but is a part of the daily lives of our young people."

- Vanessa Williams, Actress / Recording Artist  
Honorary Chair, 2011 Sphinx Laureates at Carnegie Hall

## In Memoriam...

### Shirley Verrett (1931-2010)

Shirley Verrett's Italian fans called her "La Nera Callas" (the Black Callas), and flocked to her performances at La Scala in Milan. Her 1973 Metropolitan Opera performance in Berlioz's *Les Troyens*, in which she sang two roles—filling in for an ailing colleague in addition to her own role—is the stuff of opera legend. She is remembered for her powerful voice, musicality, and grace. In her 2003 memoir *I Never Walked Alone*, she recounted the racism she encountered early in her career. She passed away in Ann Arbor, where she had taught at the University of Michigan since 1996.



## Announcing the Sphinx Parent Committee

Sphinx is proud to announce the formation of the Sphinx Parent Committee, a group of parents of Sphinx alumni working to create a national network of Sphinx program alumni and parents. Focused on supporting Sphinx's mission and expanding the opportunities provided to all of our program participants, the Committee is working to share alumni news, and encouraging Sphinx parents and alumni to reconnect.

The Committee members include: Barbara Barefield, Alma Coefman, Shelagh Johnston, Mary Luetkemeyer, Lisette Reid, and Dominique van de Stadt.

Dedicated to encouraging Sphinx parents and alumni to support other young musicians, the Sphinx Parent Committee will help welcome parents of participants at the 14th annual Sphinx Competition in February.

For more information about the Sphinx Parent Committee—and to find out how you can get involved—please contact Alison Piech at [Alison@SphinxMusic.org](mailto:Alison@SphinxMusic.org) or (313) 877-9100, ext. 709.

## Shop for Sphinx

Thanks to our friends at Borders and Waldenbooks, when you present the coupon below with your purchase on Saturday, December 18 and Sunday, December 19, a portion of the sale will be donated to Sphinx! Be sure to visit your local Borders or Waldenbooks for your holiday gift needs and THANK YOU for supporting our mission!

## SPHINX NEWS

### 14th Annual Sphinx Competition for young Black & Latino String Players

presented by

**DTE Energy  
Foundation**



## Finals Concert February 6, 2011 SAVE THE DATE!

**Kaila Potts**, Laureate of the 2004 Sphinx Competition, has been selected to perform as part of the **Association of Performing Arts Presenters' Young Performance Career Advancement** recital on January 10 at Weill Hall in New York.

**Roberto Sierra's Sinfonia No. 4**, commissioned by the Sphinx Commissioning Consortium, will be performed by the **Sphinx Symphony Orchestra** in February during the 14th annual Sphinx Competition.

Conductor **Michael Morgan** will return to Detroit to conduct the **Sphinx Symphony Orchestra** in February.

The **Catalyst Quartet** will perform at **Ithaca College** during the college's Black History Month celebration on February 25.

**Linda Trotter**, a violinist who has played in the **Sphinx Symphony Orchestra**, was named the **Michigan Schools Band and Orchestra Association 2010 Orchestra Teacher of the year**. She serves as Director of Orchestras at Orchard Lake Middle School and West Bloomfield High School in Michigan.

Violinist **Randall Goosby**, 2010 Laureate, will perform in December with the **New World Symphony Orchestra**. In January, he will perform with the **New York Philharmonic**, **Cleveland Orchestra**, and **South Bend Symphony** in the span of three days. Goosby made his Carnegie Hall debut in October.

**Gareth Johnson**, 2010 Laureate, will perform Barber's Concerto for Violin with the **Florida Orchestra** in December.

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# Sphinx Expands International Programming

Since the official launch of international programming in October 2009, Sphinx artists have been busy traveling abroad to share the organization's mission of diversity and access to the arts with young people around the world.

From May 23-31, 2010, the Harlem Quartet, sponsored by the United States embassy, visited Venezuela to perform in a series of international music festivals and give masterclasses for students in the renowned El Sistema, Venezuela's state-sponsored music education program for youth. The Quartet also appeared in local newspapers, on the radio, and on a popular late-night television program, Buenas Noches. The group was very well received, both by students and the general public who attended their formal performances.

The Sphinx Organization's newest chamber ensemble, the Catalyst Quartet, has also been taking their talents abroad. In late July, the group traveled to London in partnership with In Harmony England, a music education program focused on increasing access to the arts for underserved youth. In addition to outreach at local schools, the Quartet was the featured ensemble in a documentary focused on the most effective ways to conduct educational outreach and engage new audiences. The Quartet will return to the UK in July 2011, with support from the U.S. embassy in London, for

both formal performances and work with UK-based partners including Southbank Centre, In Harmony England, London Music Masters, and others.

The next frontier for Sphinx in the coming year is South Africa. The Catalyst Quartet has been invited to perform at the University of South Africa on June 4, 2011. During this time, the Quartet will also work with the Wits School of the Arts at the University of Witwatersrand for workshops with student composers and a formal performance at the school. Also in South Africa, Sphinx has formalized a partnership with the Eastern Cape Philharmonic Orchestra's Music Investment Project, wherein a Sphinx artist serves as program faculty from February to November 2011, in addition to performing with the orchestra and giving private lessons.

South Africa is also home to a new partner in the Sphinx Professional Development Program. The KwaZulu-Natal Philharmonic Orchestra will present the senior division first-place Laureate each year, beginning with 2010 Sphinx Competition winner Gareth Johnson.

To learn more about about supporting international opportunities for Sphinx artists to study, perform, and conduct residencies, please contact Caitlin Ilich at (313) 877-9100, ext. 710, or via e-mail at [Caitlin@SphinxMusic.org](mailto:Caitlin@SphinxMusic.org).



The Catalyst Quartet in residency at Wyvil Primary School, London, July 2010



The Harlem Quartet masterclass in Venezuela May 24, 2010



Education is a key component of the KwaZulu-Natal Philharmonic Orchestra's programming. This South African orchestra is a new partner in the Sphinx Professional Development Program



**Something to Ponder:**

“Human diversity makes tolerance more than a virtue; it makes it a requirement for survival.”

-Rene Dubos

## James Lee III: 2010 Sphinx Commissioning Consortium Composer



The Sphinx Commissioning Consortium has selected James Lee III for its third annual commission. The new work will be scored for orchestra, and will be premiered by members of the consortium during the 2011-2012 season.

A native of St. Joseph, Michigan, Lee studied piano and composition at the University of

Michigan, earning his doctorate in composition there in 2005. At Michigan he studied with such noted composers as Michael Daugherty, William Bolcom, Bright Sheng, and Betsy Jolas. In 2002, he was the Seiji Ozawa Composition Fellow at Tanglewood Music Center, where his Psalm 61 was premiered by members of the Tanglewood Festival Chorus. Lee's work was recently featured on the *Sphinx Journeys* radio program episode entitled “Composers of Tomorrow,” which featured works by up and coming composers.

In recent years, Lee has written extensively for chorus, solo voice, orchestra and organ. He has received numerous commissions and had works premiered by Leonard Slatkin and the Detroit

Symphony Orchestra, Baltimore Choral Arts Society, and Ritz Chamber Players. Several of his songs have been included in volumes of African American art songs and spirituals.

On his artistic philosophy, Lee writes, “I want to compose music to reach to the inner soul of the listener that elevates them regardless of race and religious affiliation.” It is a sentiment that resonates with Sphinx founder and president Aaron Dworkin. “We’re proud to commission this work from James not only because he writes terrific music, but because his music really does reach people in a special way,” says Dworkin.

In addition to composing, Lee is on the faculty of Morgan State University in Baltimore,

where he teaches music theory and composition.

The Sphinx Commissioning Consortium brings together orchestras around the country that share the Sphinx Organization's commitment to showcasing the works of Black and Latino composers, by commissioning a new work each year. Current members of the consortium include the Detroit, Grand Rapids, Cincinnati, Akron, New World, Nashville, and Chautauqua Symphonies.

*Listen to James Lee III and other “Composers of Tomorrow” online at [www.bit.ly/goPJte](http://www.bit.ly/goPJte)*