Announcing the 2020 Sphinx Competition Semi-Finalists!

The Sphinx Organization in partnership with the DTE Energy Foundation will welcome 18 of the nation’s top young Black and Latinx string musicians to Detroit for the 23rd Annual Sphinx Competition from February 5 - February 8, 2020. Congratulations to the Junior Division (ages 17 and under) and Senior Division (ages 18-30) semi-finalists!

**JUNIOR DIVISION**

- **Esme Arias-Kim**, violin
  Plum Grove Jr. High School
  Teacher: Almita Vamos

- **Sophia Ayer**, violin
  Univ. of Texas at Austin High School
  Teacher: Dr. Pasha Sabouri

- **Vincent Garcia-Hettinger**, cello
  Louis D Brandeis High School
  Teacher: Ken Friedgman

- **Phillip Hammond**, violin
  String Academy, Indiana University
  Teacher: Mimi Zweig

- **Ethan Murphy**, cello
  Home School
  Teacher: Susan Moses

- **Zehavi Rodriguez**, cello
  Home School
  Teacher: Andrew Mark

- **Jordan Bak**, viola
  The Juilliard School
  Teacher: Samuel Rhodes

- **Ismael Guerrero Bombut**, cello
  Peabody Conservatory
  Teacher: Amit Peled

- **Caleb Georges**, viola
  University of Michigan
  Teacher: Caroline Coade

- **Andrew Gonzalez**, viola
  The Juilliard School
  Teacher: Michael Tree (2014-2016)

**SENIOR DIVISION**

- **Paul Aguilar**, violin
  Rice University
  Teacher: Paul Cantor

- **George T.A. Wolfe-McGuire**, cello
  Davidson Academy (Reno, NV)
  Teacher: Fred Sherry

- **George Luengo**, cello
  Manhattan School of Music
  Teacher: Philippe Muller

- **Gabriel Martin**, cello
  New England Conservatory of Music
  Teacher: Laurence Lesser

- **Aaron Olguin**, bass
  University of North Texas
  Teacher: Jeff Bradetich

- **Alexandra Alvarado Switala**, violin
  Cleveland Institute of Music
  Teacher: Ilya Kaler

- **Zehavi Rodriguez**, cello
  Home School
  Teacher: Andrew Mark

- **Phillip Hammond**, violin
  String Academy, Indiana University
  Teacher: Mimi Zweig

- **Caleb Georges**, viola
  University of Michigan
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For more information on tickets to the Finals or Honors Concerts, please visit: [www.SphinxMusic.org/sphinx-competition-concerts](http://www.SphinxMusic.org/sphinx-competition-concerts).

Can't make it to Detroit? Be part of the celebration from anywhere! The Finals Concert will be streamed live via the Sphinx website and recorded for national broadcast on PBS Stations, including Detroit Public Television.
A NOTE FROM OUR PRESIDENT

Dear Friends,

As I reflect on 2019, I am filled with gratitude for what you have done for Sphinx this year. You have helped us meet our challenges head-on, shared in our triumphs, and empowered our growth.

With each passing year, our mission and work increases in urgency and resonance, and we look to our Sphinx family for support in sustaining our programs and meeting the evolving needs of our constituents. We cannot thank you enough for your generous donations, engagement, and advocacy. Together, we had a truly historic year! From the largest ever SphinxConnect convening to record participation in our education programs, from a sold-out concert and successful fundraising gala at Carnegie Hall to a featured performance at the World Economic Forum in Davos, we all have much to celebrate.

I am eager and inspired to carry this momentum into 2020 – I know that with your help, we will continue to innovate, break down barriers, and transform countless lives. Next year will see the inaugural Sphinx Venture Fund grants, designed to catalyze initiatives addressing diversity, equity, and inclusion in the performing arts; a Sphinx Virtuosi tour program featuring multiple new commissions by Sphinx alumni; and many other exciting developments. Stay tuned!

Thank you again for all that you do. Wishing each of you a joyous season and a happy New Year!

Warmly,

Afa

Afa Dworkin, Sphinx President & Artistic Director

FUNDER HIGHLIGHT

The DTE Energy Foundation has been a longtime champion of the Sphinx Competition, first presenting our flagship program in 2010. Since becoming the presenting sponsor of the Sphinx Competition, the DTE Energy Foundation has helped Sphinx to provide educational development and performance platforms to over 200 Black and Latinx classical musicians, disburse nearly $1M in awards and scholarships, develop new and diverse classical music audiences through live and broadcast performances, and connect with thousands more through social engagement and outreach activities. We are deeply grateful to the DTE Energy Foundation for this transformative partnership. This collaboration, thanks in large part to the advocacy and leadership efforts of Sphinx board member, Lynette Dowler, is celebrating its first-ever multi-year partnership guaranteeing support of the Sphinx Competition in the coming years.
**Give the Gift of Music - Name an Orchestra Chair!**

Are you looking for a unique way to honor a music lover in your life or to personally give back this holiday season? Transform lives by becoming a Musical Chairs sponsor!

Musical Chairs donors support the competition by naming a chair in the Sphinx orchestras that mentor and perform with the semifinalists. Donors can sponsor an instrument with special personal meaning and name their chair with their preferred recognition or in honor of a loved one.

These vital sponsorships empower not only the orchestra members but each of the competition participants who benefit from their leadership and guidance. In the words of Robyn Quinnett, a violinist in the Sphinx Symphony Orchestra: “Your contribution and dedication to the symphony are helping to change lives and bring meaningful music-making to fruition.”


Contact Therese@SphinxMusic.org to pledge your support, or contribute today by using the enclosed giving envelope or giving online at donatenow.networkforgood.org/sphinxmusicalchairs.

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 exceed - Name a Chair in Sphinx Honors Orchestra (SHO)

- $1,500 Name a Chair in Sphinx Symphony Orchestra (SSO)
- $2,000 Name a Chair in both SHO and SSO
- $2,300 Name a Principal Chair in SSO
- $3,000 Name a Principal Chair in both SHO and SSO
- $5,000 Name a Section in SSO
- $7,000 Name a Section in both SHO and SSO

**“I have been a member of the Sphinx Symphony Orchestra for over 10 years, and have watched the competition and the organization grow into the world leader for diversity in the arts. Performing with the SSO during the Sphinx Competition is one of the highlights of my year. It has become a family reunion of sorts, and I am grateful for the opportunity to perform, mentor, learn, and network.”**

-- Larry Williams
French Horn

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**A NOTE FROM OUR PRESIDENT**

Adebayo O. Ogunlesi
William H. Carson, M.D.
The Sander & Norma K. Buchman Fund
Anthony C. Spikes
James B. and Ann V. Nicholson

Photos: Kevin Kennedy

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Glenn Triest
What did your support accomplish in 2019?

You helped us transform lives this year in countless ways. Here are just a few of the amazing things we accomplished together.

- 370 full scholarships awarded for Sphinx education programs
- $564K in artist grants awarded to outstanding musicians of color
- 2 million live and broadcast audiences reached by Sphinx musicians and programs
- 800+ artists and leaders in diversity at global SphinxConnect convening
- 138 & 19 auditions & placements for musicians participating in audition support programs
Your gift will transform lives in 2020!

The contribution you make today is vital in helping Sphinx reach these goals for next year.

- Reach 6,000 students and community members through outreach programs
- Provide professional development opportunities to 850 musicians, administrators, & entrepreneurs
- Secure 150 auditions and 25 placements for musicians through audition support programs
- Reach 70 cities with Sphinx artist performances
- Award $850,000 in scholarships and grants

To make a year-end gift, please use the enclosed giving envelope, visit www.SphinxMusic.org/donate, or text GIVE to 734-415-8882.

Please contact Therese Goussy at Therese@SphinxMusic.org with any questions.
Sphinx Performance Academy: Get Ready for Summer 2020

The Sphinx Performance Academy (SPA) is a full-scholarship intensive summer chamber music and solo performance program for string players ages 11-17. As a program with a primary focus on cultural diversity, SPA seeks to actively recruit and engage students from cultural backgrounds that are underrepresented in the field of classical music. The SPA curriculum includes an intensive schedule of lessons and coaching in addition to masterclasses, recitals, career enrichment sessions, and mentorship tailored for each student.

Sphinx is thrilled to collaborate with the Curtis Institute of Music, Cleveland Institute of Music, and The Juilliard School for our summer 2020 programming! To learn more, please visit:


To apply, please visit: app.getacceptd.com/sphinxmusic
Applications due February 11, 2020!

Register Now for SPHINX CONNECT 2020:VISION

The epicenter for artists and leaders in diversity, February 6-8 in Detroit, will welcome hundreds of musicians, industry leaders, educators, funders, diversity advocates, and more for a transformative conference filled with sessions, performances, and networking opportunities! Highlights include:

- Over 70 speakers from all areas of our industry
- Sphinx Tank: Identifying the next great cultural entrepreneur, an innovative session showcasing emerging arts & cultural entrepreneurs of color as they “pitch” their projects to a panel of experts
- Plenary speakers Michael Abels and Joseph Conyers
- Sphinx Orchestral Partners Audition (SOPA), where musicians of color audition for a panel representing several orchestras
- Opportunities to connect with new projects and organizations at the Expo Hall
- Masterclasses with Sphinx Competition jury members
- Several networking receptions

Visit www.SphinxConnect.org now to register and learn more about this transformative convening!
Don’t Miss the Sphinx Virtuosi in 2020

Sphinx Virtuosi inspired audiences around the country with the electrifying *For Justice and Peace* program, featuring a world premiere by Bassist and Composer Xavier Foley. The Fall 2019 tour included packed performances at Carnegie Hall and the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum, which earned the following reviews:

“The Sphinx way was to play with a fire lit under every phrase.”
*The Boston Globe*

“The performance of every composition was on the highest level.”
*New York Concert Review*

Sphinx Virtuosi’s 2020 performance dates:

- **February 21**  
  Museum of Fine Arts  
  St. Petersburg, FL
- **February 25-26**  
  (Residency): Arts and Science Council  
  Charlotte, NC
- **February 28**  
  Library of Congress  
  Washington D.C.
- **March 1**  
  The Arts Partnership, Ordway Center for the Performing Arts  
  Saint Paul, MN
- **March 11**  
  Onstage Ogden, Peery’s Egyptian Theater  
  Ogden, UT
- **April 2-4**  
  (Residency): Sphinx Virtuosi join Minnesota Orchestra  
  Minneapolis, MN
- **May 2**  
  Members of Sphinx Virtuosi with Orpheus at Carnegie Hall  
  New York, NY
- **May 19-24**  
  (Artist-in-Residence): Menuhin Competition Richmond  
  Richmond, VA


The 2019/20 Sphinx Virtuosi National Tour is made possible with the generous support of JPMorgan Chase & Co. and Robert F. Smith, with additional support from Aetna and National Endowment for the Arts/Art Works.

“Seeing the Sphinx Virtuosi was an incredible experience. Hearing music written and performed by people of color is unfortunately scarce, but Sphinx is changing that by empowering voices we need to hear.”

-- Margaret Kate Andrejco, high school Junior & audience member at Carnegie Hall

From top: Xavier Foley’s *For Justice and Peace* performed at Carnegie Hall; Concertmaster Patricia Quintero and Sphinx Virtuosi rehearse at Carnegie Hall; outreach at Miami Northwestern High School; rehearsal at New World Center, Miami Beach.
Zachary Earle (SPA CIM 2018, SPA Curtis 2019) was invited to perform The Swan as a soloist with the Grand Rapids Symphony.

Sphinx President & Artistic Director Afa Dworkin joined Cristina Pato and Arturo O’Farrill at the King Juan Carlos I of Spain Center at NYU for a conversation about diversity and inclusivity in jazz and classical music.

Sphinx Founder Aaron Dworkin premiered his new multimedia work, The American Rhapsody, with the Minnesota Orchestra under the direction of Osmo Vänskä. Sphinx Medals of Excellence recipient Jessie Montgomery’s Starburst was also an exciting part of the program!

Sphinx Competition Laureates Rubén Rengel and Nygel Witherspoon performed a series of concerts with the New Jersey Symphony Orchestra, including Peter and the Wolf.

Sphinx Competition Laureate Sterling Elliott was featured as a soloist with the Evansville Philharmonic Orchestra.

The latest album of Sphinx Medal of Excellence recipient Lara Downes, For Love of You, reached #1 on the Billboard classical chart.

In partnership with Venezuelan cellists German Marcano and Horacio Contreras, Sphinx has released a comprehensive catalog of Latin-American Cello Works containing more than 2000 entries. The catalog can be found at www.SphinxMusic.org/the-sphinx-catalog-of-latin-american-cello-works

Send us your news and performance updates: QuarterNote@SphinxMusic.org

#SphinxStories

This Fall, the Sphinx Virtuosi toured the country, bringing their dynamic performances to leading concert venues as well as immersive community outreach and residencies. Concertmaster Patricia Quintero shared the impact that the For Justice and Peace tour has had on her.

Be sure to check this newsletter for Sphinx Virtuosi’s 2020 performance dates!

“I have loved every moment of our tour: the artistic process of making music every day to bring our repertoire to life, the opportunity to teach young students, and last but not least the beautiful relationship we create among the ensemble, which is truly amazing.”

Something to Ponder:
“I have found that among its other benefits, giving liberates the soul of the giver.”
– Maya Angelou