



Alana Morrall and Michael Smith, CSO



KEYNOTES

August, 2021 LETTER FROM THE CO-PRESIDENTS

Dear Friends:



Marty & Carol at the June Summer Fête

Michael Smith, CSO Executive Director, expressed amazement and sincere gratitude for the CSOL's 2021 donation of \$209,000.00. The level of support to the CSO during a

very tough year was only possible because of ingenuity and fortitude--from our members, Lyn Magee, Past President and the Committee Chairs of the six fundraising events. Thank you, all.

What do you love about being a member of the CSOL? What would you like to see changed? The CSOL Board tackled these questions at the Board Retreat held earlier this month. Our Board continuously looks for new

ways to engage our members with insider access to CSOL and CSO events. Committees are forming now and volunteers are needed to plan upcoming events. Contact Jaimie Flack at gihooj@comcast.net. We're counting on your activism.



Continued, next page

Letter from the Co-Presidents, continued



Join us at the Harbour Club
October 12 from 6:00-8:00 pm
\$20 pp; \$10 rebated to the CSOL

Don't miss our first member event on October 12 at the Harbour Club, featuring the CSO Brass, Adventure Raffle drawing, and mini SCORE pop-up shop.

With a note of sadness, we will devote the remainder of our letter as a tribute to **Mary Ellen Ondo**, a longtime CSOL member and friend who passed away July 21st. The following are personal memories of Mary Ellen, shared by CSOL members.

Mary Ellen elevated the Boutique from a "home-crafty" shop to one with upscale, juried items and one-of-a-kind-jewelry. She was a master of transforming neglected spaces into lovely shops. People were always curious to see her new and unique finds.

--Gail Maginnis, Past President, CSOL;
Past Boutique Co-Chair

Mary Ellen exemplified the ultimate in volunteerism, chairing the Designer Showhouse Boutique for decades. She traveled throughout the year to find high quality, special and artistic merchandise for the Boutique, making it THE place to shop. Mary Ellen was a creative visionary, a sewing artist, a loving mother and wife, and a dear friend to all who knew her.

--Tacy Edwards, Past President, CSOL

All Mary-Ellen memories are most dear to me, as I loved and admired her positive, smiling and caring ways--always. My condolences to all.

--Hilde Hottendorf, Past President, CSOL

Mary Ellen touched the hearts of all who knew her with her love and joy of life. There will always be reminders of her enthusiasm and grace as we share the many wonderful Mary Ellen stories.

--Bobbie Greenebaum, Past President, CSOL

SCORE, the CSOL's current pop-up shop, was commended by Mary Ellen. That was the highest praise we could receive.

--Anne Warf and Gail Wamboldt, SCORE Co-Chairs



L to R: Gail Maginnis, Roberta Ketchi, Mary Ellen Ondo and Carol Lou Yaeger

SOVA (Southeastern Orchestra Volunteer Association) featured Mary Ellen's creativity, merchandising and marketing talent in SOVA's newsletter. Mary Ellen was happy to share her knowledge so that other leagues and guilds in the Southeast could learn from her experience. She touched our hearts with her joy, humor, unflagging energy and vision.

--Carol Lou Yaeger, Past Designer Showhouse Chair; Past President, SOVA

To make a donation in Mary Ellen's memory to the CSOL, contact Neva Gadsden, CSOL Treasurer, at 843.670.8206 or go to csolinc.org/support.

Warm regards,

Carol Cronk
Carol Cronk and Marty Penkhus,
CSOL Co-Presidents



ENTER TO WIN A BUNDLE OF ADVENTURES SHOWCASING THE BEST OF CHARLESTON AND THE LOWCOUNTRY

HALF-DAY KAYAK TOUR FOR 2 FROM COASTAL EXPEDITIONS: This naturalist-guided tour originates at Coastal Expedition's private waterside location on either Shem Creek or the Isle of Palms and includes exploration of either a saltwater estuary or a blackwater river.

BULLS ISLAND FERRY PASSES FOR 2 FROM COASTAL EXPEDITIONS: Explore this barrier island--dolphins, birds, Boneyard Beach and more. Pack a picnic with the included Picnic Time Cooler, beach blanket and 4-Yeti Cups courtesy of FortyEight Wine Bar & Kitchen. Two specially selected bottles of wine, courtesy of Kitty & Don Reid, along with a jar of Kitty's Famous Peach Bliss--a CSOL favorite.

AN EVENING IN CHARLESTON FOR 2: Includes a 1-night Suite Package at the Embassy Suites in the Historic District with a 2-room suite, manager's reception and breakfast. Then enjoy 2-tickets to a Charleston Symphony concert at the Charleston Gaillard Center.

CHARLESTON HARBOR ADVENTURE: Discover Charleston's famous harbor aboard the Carolina Belle with a relaxing guided tour for 2, courtesy of Charleston Tours & Events.

Buy your raffle tickets today at csolinc.org
\$25.00 each or 5 for \$100.00

Package Value: \$1400

Winner announced October 12 at Cocktails for a Cause

Thank You to Our Participating Sponsors



Kitty & Don Reid



Proceeds benefit the CSO and CSOL Music Scholarships

CSO PLANTS FLAG FOR DIVERSITY INITIATIVES

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

AT THE CSO

Priorities for Initiatives:

- Become more diverse on stage and in the office.
- Set an artistic direction that is representative of and inviting to a broader audience.
- Have aspects identity that are uniquely Charleston.
- Make statements with action; not vice versa.

When talking about the Charleston Symphony's diversity, equity and inclusion initiatives, Kellen Gray, the CSO's Assistant Conductor and the Co-chair (along with Edward Hart) of the CSO's DEI Committee, references "intentional" actions. "We want to represent *all* of Charleston. We're not an organization that merely hopes something happens; we're going to make it happen."

Michael Smith, CSO Executive Director, knew Gray's background of working with orchestras seeking to change the white and male normative view of symphonic music. Smith has given his full support to Gray's creation of a DEI Committee which includes representation from the Charleston community. That community outreach is key. Gray notes, "Classical music's exclusion problems are a product of society's exclusion problems. The reason women composers and ethnic minority composers didn't receive the stage time they deserved had nothing to do with the quality of their writing."

As an example, he mentions Joseph Bologne, Chevalier de Saint-Georges. Bologne was known as the *Black Mozart*, a



misnomer since Bologne was one of Mozart's mentors. In 1799, Napoleon actively suppressed Bologne's works. For more information, go to https://www.berlinerfestspiele.de/en/berliner-festspiele/programm/bfs-kuenstler/bfs_kuenstler_detail_3013_35.html

Gray suggests concrete actions to break down *otherness* barriers: "Blind auditions were a helpful step to negate gender-bias, but we need to diversify the candidate pool further." Gray cites diversity inhibitors at an early age: Access to community concerts and music lessons, early hands-on experiences and too few classical musicians who look like them.



This recognizes the importance of the CSO's Instrument Petting Zoo, an early childhood music appreciation and education-intervention effort.

Later, as students begin auditioning, music organizations need to be cognizant of audition location and travel costs, as diversity and inclusion barriers aren't only functions of race and gender, but financial bandwidth.

To ensure the audition candidate pool is as diverse as possible, Gray recommends advertising auditions in a broader range of schools, publications and music festivals. "Just because we place an ad in the union paper or with the League of American Orchestra doesn't mean that everyone will see it," he notes.

"It's hard to be what you cannot see."

When asked how to make the front door of the Gaillard open wider, Gray reframes: "What if we bring the music to the communities of the people we want to see in the hall?"

He cites his own background: "There was no orchestra near where I lived when I was growing up. I didn't start to play violin until I was a junior in high school. There were no classical musicians around for me to see, especially any who looked like me. It took an orchestra coming to my community and a musician putting an instrument in my hands. **The onus is on us.**"

Please follow this multi-part DEI series to read more about intentional events designed to positively impact our orchestra and community. Next month: The founding of the Charleston Symphony Inclusion Fellowship.

THE JOYCE FAMILY

Dear Members of the CSOL,

Thank you for awarding our daughter, Emma, the David and Karen Stahl Scholarship. This award not only helps us afford Emma's college, but is doubly meaningful: We both played for and loved David. We remember how important orchestra children were to David--this would have made him happy. Since Emma will be going to the Cincinnati Conservatory to study with Tim Fells, our former concertmaster, we've come full circle.

We also wanted to thank the CSOL for the support you've given us individually and the orchestra these many years. The orchestra wouldn't be here today without the countless hours of dedicated work that the CSOL has put forth on our behalf. We count ourselves very fortunate to have landed in Charleston and made our life in a community, making so many good and long-lasting friendships with people who enjoy our music.

Jan-Marie and Thomas Joyce

WHERE ARE THEY NOW?

Update on Lily Lassiter

"Her academic achievement is only one piece of her multi-faceted accomplishments in arts, service and leadership."

Lily Lassiter, a CSOL summer study and college scholarship recipient is heading to college at Yale University. She was the Charleston County Academic Magnet High School Valedictorian and one of only two 2021 U.S. Presidential Scholars from South Carolina. Lily will receive recognition by the White House this summer. (Jenny Yao, fellow AMHS graduate and CSOL 2018 scholarship recipient was similarly honored).

Lily's "passion for the piano" began in third grade and has served as her "emotional and creative outlet of expression." CSOL audiences have been treated to listening to Lily during

the virtual scholarship recital in June of this year. (Go to <https://csolinc.org/scholarship-winners>). Lily also played at 108 Murray Boulevard during the Tour of Homes in May.

In 2020, Lily was a semifinalist in the Emory University Young Artist Competition and an alternate in the Ronald Sachs International Piano Competition. She placed first in 2019 in the SC Steinway Junior Piano Competition and second in the East Carolina University Piano Competition.

Lily speaks of turning to the piano "to voice the grief and helplessness" that she felt after a devastating house fire that resulted in the loss of home and



beloved pets. Through MUSC's Arts in Healing Program, Lily engages with the elderly through music, sharing with her own grandmother, who suffers from dementia. Fascinated by the relationship between music and medicine, Lily plans a double major in music and neuroscience at Yale.

Support the next generation of musicians by donating to student music scholarships at csolinc.org



SUMMER FÊTE CAPS OFF REMARKABLE YEAR

The CSOL's final fundraiser, A Summer Fête, held on June 27 at the Charleston Yacht Club raised more than \$50,000, including \$37,000 raised for Fund the Need. A \$58,000 check reflecting ongoing donations provided to the CSO was presented to Michael Smith, the CSO's Executive Director, at the event.

Jaimie Flack, Event Chair, noted, "The CSOL raised \$209,000 in 2020-21, making it one of the best fundraising years in our history. Against a background of Covid, when most orchestras weren't playing and most fundraising events were cancelled, the CSO and the CSOL demonstrated imagination, determination and resilience. The results speak for themselves!" Thank you to special guests Maura Hogan, Yuriy Bekker and the CSO and CSYO student musicians who entertained Fête attendees.



SUMMER FÊTE CAPS REMARKABLE YEAR, continued



Gretchen Roper is the Second Clarinetist with the CSO, joining the orchestra in 2006. She received a Bachelor of Music degree from Duquesne University and a Masters Degree in Music from the University of Minnesota.

Gretchen plays Third Utility Clarinet with the Hilton Head Symphony and has also played with the Savannah Philharmonic, Chamber Music Charleston, the Beaufort Symphony, the Sarasota Orchestra and the Minnesota Orchestra. She has played with the Wintergreen Summer Music Festival and has appeared several times in the Spoleto and Piccolo Spoleto festivals.

Q & A

Spotlight on GRETCHEN ROPER

Q: What was your introduction to making music?

A: My entire family is musical: music teacher parents, twin brothers—one musician, one music degree but now a banker, aunt and uncle who are musicians (and musical cousins, to boot). And, my brothers and I married flutists.

When I was very young, I wanted to play the violin, so I took one of my dolls and tucked her under my chin and found a rod I used as a bow. My parents then got me a violin. I tried it for a few days but decided I liked my doll better.

When I was old enough to join the band, my father suggested I take up the clarinet, saying, “You don’t want to play the violin, it’s too squeaky.” Little did I know the clarinet is a squeak-fest when you start.

Q: What was college like for you?

A: Fun! I was so fortunate that I never struggled with ear training. It’s an important skill for playing Second Clarinet.

Q: Huh?

A: Ear training is learning to see music and hear it in your head before it’s played. Remember in *The Sound of Music*, they learn to sing, “Doe, a deer ...”? *Do, re, mi* is a way of naming notes (called *solfeggio*) to help musicians learn the intervals, enabling them to play (or sing) at first sight. Playing Second Clarinet is a separate skill from playing the Principal line. You need a good ear to tune and blend (thus good ear training skills). From a sound perspective, the Principal Clarinet floats to the top. As the Second, I tune to the middle of the cord--the 3 notes—the root, middle and top. You tune different parts of the chord differently, so you have to know what note you’re on.

When Principal and the Second are put together, they make a color. I believe the role of the Second is to listen and blend seamlessly with the Principal. You know it’s working when you don’t notice the Second--until they’re gone. They’re not invisible; they’re harmonic.

Q: Was your Master’s program as much fun as college?

A: Fun!?! I was working with the Principal Clarinetist of the Minnesota Orchestra. He really pushed hard for our studio to find our voices, asking, “What’s the character? What’s the mood?”



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**BE BENEVOLENT.
BE BODACIOUS.
BELONG.
RENEW TODAY.**
or *join*

**Renew Your CSOL
Membership Today!**

Go to CSOLinc.org →
Membership →
Renew My Membership

Invite a friend to join.

**Membership Directory
inclusion cutoff—August 15!**

Roper Interview, continued

But I learned from him to show vulnerability when I play. As musicians, we strive for perfection, but when we open up and ‘bare our soul,’ we run the risk of messing up something technical. But over time you learn to go for it ... and it’s always worth the risk. I now ask my students to search for the character and intention behind the notes on the page, to reach a conclusion about what the composer wanted.

Q: How did you join the CSO?

A: I auditioned twice. Both times, I was the only finalist, but on the first audition, I had a weak final round. When I

returned for the second audition and the screen came down, everyone laughed: It was me again! That time, I won.

Q: What’s been your contact with the CSOL?

A: I’ve always appreciated the CSOL, but I’ve been especially grateful during and after hard times, like the suspension in 2010. Returning to play was difficult—the orchestra was pretty divided. But the CSOL was a constant. Through the years, you’ve been unconditionally supportive and you just keep coming up with ways to aid the orchestra. The League is awesome!



The new members listed below have joined the CSOL during the past year (7/20 through 6/21). Please reach out and welcome them if you haven’t yet met them at an event.

- ☆ Nan Ahern
- ☆ Robert Barnett
- ☆ Victoria Fehr & Dub Ward
- ☆ Richard Gadsden
- ☆ Sherry Hirsch
- ☆ Jill Ruppel
- ☆ Lauren Shakibanasab
- ☆ Danielle Simonian
- ☆ William Smyth
- ☆ Ann Thomas
- ☆ Christina & John Ward
- ☆ Gilbert Wildstein

SC State Budget Includes \$3.5 Million More for the Arts

On June 21, the South Carolina House and Senate adopted the Budget Conference Committee Report, which recommended a total of \$3.5 million (mm) additional funding for the arts:

- \$2 mm (one-time funding) for COVID relief grants.

- Increase of \$1.5 mm (recurring funding) for general operating grants.

These two items fully fund the requests made by the SC Arts Commission in the fall of 2020, and represent a 27% increase in recurring funding for the arts. This takes total grant funding for the arts in

SC (recurring funds) from \$0.69 per capita to \$0.97 per capita. That helps the arts and the community.

Thank you to the advocates who helped secure this new funding. And, thank you to the SC Legislature for their continued bipartisan support of the arts.

CSO & CSOL

2021-22 CALENDAR

SEPTEMBER

24, 25 Masterworks: A
Triumphant Return
7:30 pm, Gaillard Center

OCTOBER

02 Pops: Music of the
Movies/Heroes &
Villains
7:30 pm, Gaillard Center

12 Cocktails for a
Cause;
SCORE Pop-Up
6:00-8:00 pm, Harbour
Club, \$20 pp/\$10 to
benefit the CSOL

15, 16 Masterworks:
Boléro
7:30 pm, Gaillard Center

29, 30 Masterworks:
Beethoven &
Witches
7:30 pm, Gaillard Center

NOVEMBER

13 Symphony Tour of
Homes on Kiawah;
SCORE Pop-Up

19, 20 Masterworks: Stars
of the CSO
7:30 pm, Gaillard Center

DECEMBER

22, 23 Holiday Pops!
7:30 pm, Gaillard Center

JANUARY

07, 08 Masterworks: Hart
of Tchaikovsky
7:30 pm, Gaillard Center

20 Pops: The Great
American Songbook
7:30 pm, Gaillard Center

FEBRUARY

04, 05 Masterworks:
Chopin's
Masterpiece
7:30 pm, Gaillard Center

MARCH

04, 05 Masterworks:
Stravinsky's
Petrushka
7:30 pm, Gaillard Center

31 Pops: Dreaming of
April in Paris
7:30 pm, Gaillard Center

APRIL

28, 29 Masterworks:
Beethoven's 9th
7:30 pm, Gaillard Center



Let me introduce ...

Danielle Simonian, new CSOL member and Soprano Section Leader for the Charleston Symphony Chorus: "I joined the CSOL because the CSO is one of Charleston's treasures. It's filled with amazing talent and genuine people who want to give the gift of music to our community. I'm honored whenever I share the stage with the musicians—vocalists and instrumentalists. I look forward to participating in the behind-the-scenes programs. I love what the CSOL does for the Lowcountry on a musical and philanthropic level. This seems like a perfect fit for me. I can't wait to get started."