



Press Release

**ORCHESTRA OF ST. LUKE'S RECONCEIVES THE 2020 OSL BACH FESTIVAL
AS A CURATED ONLINE SERIES *BACH AT HOME 2020* THIS JUNE**

***BACH AT HOME* PARTICIPATING ARTISTS TO INCLUDE PRINCIPAL CONDUCTOR BERNARD LABADIE, ORCHESTRA OF ST. LUKE'S, CELLIST PIETER WISPELWEY, HARPSICHORDISTS JEAN RONDEAU AND PIERRE HANTAÏ, SOPRANO AMANDA FORSYTHE, PIANIST PEDJA MUŽIJEVIĆ, COMPOSER ANNA CLYNE AND CONDUCTOR BEN GERON**

**OSL Relief Fund Established with Leadership Gifts from Board of Directors
to Support Musicians and Organization Through COVID-19 Related Loss of Business**

New York, NY, April 2, 2020 — Orchestra of St. Luke's (OSL) has cancelled the [2020 OSL Bach Festival](#) scheduled for June 9–30, 2020 for the health and safety of its community during the COVID-19 pandemic. Cancelled events include three orchestral concerts at Zankel Hall presented in association with Carnegie Hall, in addition to concerts, events, and masterclasses at The DiMenna Center for Classical Music, Manhattan School of Music's Neidorff-Karpati Hall, and Temple Emanu-El's Streicker Center. OSL musicians will be paid in full for these cancelled programs.

The festival has been reconceived as a curated online series, *Bach at Home 2020*, and will be released on [OSLmusic.org](#) in June. The full details of the series will be announced in the weeks to come. Participating artists include Principal Conductor Bernard Labadie, Orchestra of St. Luke's, cellist Pieter Wispelwey, harpsichordists Jean Rondeau and Pierre Hantaï, soprano Amanda Forsythe, pianist and speaker Pedja Mužijević, composer and mentor Anna Clyne and the four emerging composers selected for OSL's 2020 DeGaetano Composition Institute, and conductor Ben Gernon.

James Roe, President and Executive Director of OSL, said, "People turn to Bach's music for comfort and solace, insight and inspiration. The themes of the original 2020 OSL Bach Festival were *The Musical Offering* and the music of Bach's sons. Generosity and family are values on which we will rely as our society recovers and rebuilds. In that spirit, OSL will create a curated online series, *Bach at Home 2020*. Music has the power to connect people across physical distance and we hope this musical offering will do just that."

Daire Fitzgerald, cellist and member of OSL's Orchestra Committee, added, "This is a difficult and challenging time for all of us. The support of OSL's Board of Directors, and the unique relationship between them, the staff, and the musicians, means the world to all OSL musicians. We all draw inspiration from the OSL family and it inspires us while planning our future."

Responding to the Crisis – OSL Relief Fund

Orchestra of St. Luke's previously suspended concerts from March through May 11 and suspended activity at its rehearsal, recording, and performance venue, The DiMenna Center for Classical Music, for the same period. The Youth Orchestra of St. Luke's (YOSL) transitioned to distance learning, offering online tutorials to its 150 violin, viola, cello, flute, and clarinet students from public schools in Hell's Kitchen and the Police Athletic league.

Due to cancellations and the closure of The DiMenna Center for Classical Music, OSL projects a revenue shortfall in fiscal year 2020 of \$1,250,000 and has recently sustained losses in its endowment value of approximately 15%. OSL's musician roster of 100 players represents the most distinguished freelance musicians New York City. The musicians are paid per concert and their health plan is administered by Local 802. Financial hardship for the musicians has been compounded as their portfolio of employers also cancelled work and performances. OSL has committed to paying the musicians for the work that was scheduled through June 2020 and making payments into its musicians' union health plan.

OSL's Board of Directors promptly established the OSL Relief Fund to respond to COVID-19 related loss of business, to sustain the musicians and the organization as its model temporarily shifts to remote operations, and to ensure the strength of the company when concert halls reopen. With currently \$165,000 in gifts from board members and foundations, the Fund eases the impact of lost revenue and serves as a ballast for the organization as it focuses on the health of musicians, staff, and audiences over the coming months. More details on the OSL Relief Fund and how to contribute can be found at OSLmusic.org/Relief.

Known as New York City's hometown band, OSL performs over 70 concerts a year, in more than 18 different venues, through all five boroughs of New York City, many of which are presented free of charge. OSL's impact on the musical life of New York City extends far beyond its own schedule of concerts. With dozens of artistic partners, its free Education and Community Programs, and the hundreds of ensembles that use The DiMenna Center as a home base to rehearse, record, and broadcast, OSL's community includes thousands of artists that reach audiences in the hundreds of thousands.

Postponed and Cancelled Performances

In total, OSL has cancelled over 20 performances due to COVID-19 health concerns. The Bach Festival's [June 30](#) final performance showcasing world premieres of four new compositions inspired by *The Musical Offering* by emerging composers William Gardiner, Charles Peck, Jeremy Rapaport-Stein, and Nicky Sohn, selected for the second year of OSL's DeGaetano Composition Institute, will be postponed. The annual [Gift of Music Gala](#), scheduled for April 27 at The Plaza Hotel, will not take place. Previously canceled performances include OSL's Beethoven-focused [Chamber Music Series](#), scheduled for late March and May at The Morgan Library & Museum, Brooklyn Museum, and Merkin Hall. The five-borough tour [Music in Color: Eleanor Albergg](#) free community concert series highlighting the works and lives of classical composers of color has been postponed.

Ticket information

For information on how to donate the value of your ticket to the OSL Relief Fund, hold the value of tickets on-account with OSL for use for 2020-21 season performances, or to receive a refund, contact OSL at tickets@OSLmusic.org or at 212-594-6100 x2. More information is available [here](#).

About Orchestra of St. Luke's

Orchestra of St. Luke's (OSL), an independent orchestra and arts organization, evolved from a group of virtuoso musicians who began performing concerts at Greenwich Village's Church of St. Luke in the Fields in 1974. Now in its 45th season, the Orchestra performs over 70 times each year at venues throughout New York City and beyond. Celebrated expert in 18th-century music, Bernard Labadie, became OSL's Principal Conductor in 2018, continuing the Orchestra's long tradition of working with proponents of historical performance practice.

OSL's signature programming includes an orchestra series presented by Carnegie Hall, now in its 33rd season; the OSL Bach Festival, presented in association with Carnegie Hall and at other venues; the Chamber Music Series presented at The Morgan Library & Museum, Brooklyn Museum, and Merkin Hall; the *Music in Color* free community concert tour of New York City's five boroughs; a summer residency at Caramoor Center for Music and the Arts, now in its 42nd season, and a creative partnership with Paul Taylor American Modern Dance, in which OSL provides live musical accompaniment during the company's annual Lincoln Center season.

OSL's education programs include the Free School Concerts series, presenting innovative concerts to student audiences since 1977; Youth Orchestra of St. Luke's, providing free instrumental coaching to elementary and middle-school students; and the DeGaetano Composition Institute, providing emerging composers mentorship and creative support as they develop new works to be performed by the Orchestra.

In 2011, OSL opened The DiMenna Center for Classical Music, New York City's only rehearsal, recording, education, and performance space expressly dedicated to classical music. The Center serves more than 500 ensembles and 30,000 musicians each year. In collaboration with Audiosmith Digital Solutions, The DiMenna Center offers state-of-art recording facilities. Recording highlights include the feature film soundtracks for *Joker* (Oscar winner for Best Original Score), *Little Women*, *The Girl On The Train*, *The Greatest Showman*, and *Hail, Caesar!*; Broadway cast albums for *The King and I*, *Hello, Dolly!*, *Natasha, Pierre, and the Great Comet of 1812*; a Grammy Award-winning album by Room Full of Teeth; and the Tchaikovsky Symphony No. 1 recording on Harmonia Mundi, featuring Pablo Heras-Casado and Orchestra of St. Luke's.

Learn more at OSLmusic.org or @OSLmusic on Instagram, Facebook, Spotify and more.

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