

Excellence in the Arts : Entry # 211

Is your organization a 501(c)3 nonprofit?

Yes

According to your 501(c)3 letter, in what town is your official office located?

West Hartford

Where will your project be performed or exhibited?

West Hartford

Will this activity occur after February 1, 2023?

Yes

Are you a recent grantee?

No

Organization Name

West Hartford Symphony Orchestra, Inc.

Organization's IRS Tax ID #

020561321

Principal Contact Name

George Fazzina

Title

Vice President

Email

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Phone

(860) 977-0526

Address

PO Box 370036
West Hartford, Connecticut 06137-0036
United States
[Map It](#)

Website

<https://whso.org/>

Amount requested this application

\$10,000.00

What is the organization's mission/vision statement?

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Bring the community together to enrich the Greater Hartford Area's quality of life. We are committed to:

- Providing volunteer musicians an avenue for artistic expression.
- Improve the quality of life for Hartford area residents by providing affordable family concerts.
- Sustain a cooperative effort with West Hartford public and private schools.
- Complement and support other local arts organizations for the mutual benefit of the entire arts community.

Provide a brief history of your organization and its activities.

Founded in 2002, The West Hartford Symphony Orchestra, located in West Hartford, Conn., has grown from a small community orchestra to over sixty musicians and volunteers dedicated to bringing the community together through music. The orchestra is a volunteer organization which includes members whose ages range from 14 to 75 which rehearses each Wednesday evening during autumn, winter and spring months. Our musicians give of their time freely because of their passion for playing and performing music.

The WHSO's substantial community outreach includes local musical talents and choirs as well as a commitment to original and creative concepts which make classical music more accessible. Each year, we perform a free concert for all 3rd grade students in the West Hartford Schools as well as free outdoor concerts for the community. We collaborate with other West Hartford Arts organizations such as WHC-TV, the West Hartford Women's Chorale, West Hartford Art League and the Ballet Theater Company. We intentionally keep our prices low and affordable, and we include senior discounts and free admission to children under twelve.

We provide a season of four paid concerts which take place in local venues and have a variety of themes each year.

Describe the demographics of your audience/people served by your activities.

There are a wide range of people who attend our paid concerts: Families with children and older adults, many of whom purchase season subscriptions, predominate. Additionally, the WHSO teams with the West Hartford school system to offer a free concert to all third grade students in West Hartford. The performance, which was started thirteen years ago, is designed to expose them to live orchestral music.

Describe your organization's governance.

Prior to the COVID pandemic, our board met six times a season: to open and close each season, and approximately ten days prior to each concert to review any outstanding requirements and discuss the next concert. During COVID, we adjusted our schedule to meet every two weeks for the first few months while we discussed alternatives to in person music making. Post pandemic, our board meets monthly, with adhoc meetings to discuss specific topics related to restarting the group.

Describe the diversity of your board.

Currently, we have eleven members: four women and seven men. Historically we have had a well blended, multi racial board with both young and old members. Post COVID, we are in a rebuilding phase, and continue our commitment to a stronger focus on diversity, equity, and inclusion this season by bringing in artists of color to a demographic that has classically been older, white and/or Asian and Middle Eastern.

What percentage of your board makes personal financial contributions to your organization?

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100%. We have always been a “working” board. In addition to making financial contributions, many board members purchase advertisements in our program, donate goods, and volunteer their time at our concerts in a variety of ways.

Project Name

Completing the Circle with Norman Malone

Is this project related to the Visual Arts?

Yes

Will the artists associated with this project be financially compensated?

Yes

Project Description

We are bringing Norman Malone back for a showing of the documentary film, 'For The Left Hand'. He came to our attention in a 'CBS Sunday Morning' video montage in 2015 and agreed to perform Ravel's 'Piano Concerto for the Left Hand' with us in 2016. In 2019, along with a film crew directed by Gordon Quin, Norman returned to play Britten's 'Divisions for Piano (left hand) and Orchestra'. The film crew had been working on a documentary with Norman and incorporated his experience with the WHSO in the film.

This 2022 concert brings us full circle to view the film with Gordon Quin, Howard Reich from the Chicago Tribune and Norman Malone for an interactive audio visual experience with the artists. After the film is shown, there will be a live discussion with Norman, Howard, Gordon and the audience. Norman will perform some impromptu musical compositions after the discussion. The concert will finish with Borodin-'Allegro from Symphony No.2' and 'In the Steppes of Central Asia'.

Total estimated project budget

\$10,000.00

Project start/opening

11/06/2022

Project end/closing

11/06/2022

Project venue

Roberts Theatre, Kingswood Oxford School

Project town

West Hartford, CT

Admission fees, attendance, and activity details

Ticket prices are twenty dollars, general admission and fifteen dollars for seniors and students with children under 12 free. We have been averaging between 200 and 300 people post COVID depending on the concert in question. We issue between five and ten comp tickets.

How do you intend to promote/market this project?

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We will promote the concert on social media. Press releases will be sent to all local print media and online news outlets.

How is your organization going to use Roberts funding?

The funding will be used to cover the travel costs, accommodations and appearance fees for Norman Malone, Gordon Quin and Howard Reich as well as the fees for showing the documentary 'For the Left Hand'.

How will Roberts support be recognized?

Roberts Foundation funding will be recognised in all print and electronic advertising and from the stage, on the day of the concert.

What is your organization's definition of artistic excellence?

One of the finest efforts of the WHSO is that we continue to give musicians an outlet to play, regardless of ability. For the past 20 years we have offered a space for musicians of all ages, from 15 years to 80 years, to gather and make music together. For us, that defines artistic excellence.

How does this project align with that definition, and how does it advance your mission?

Our mission of bringing the community together through music will be exemplified when we open our 20th season with the inspiring return of Norman Malone. Further, we stand by our commitment to introducing our audiences to diverse orchestral music by featuring Norman and his incredible gift of playing piano with only one hand.

How will your audience and the community benefit from this project?

The WHSO prides itself in bringing together music lovers to enjoy programs and share in those personal triumphs they might not ordinarily encounter. Everyone takes something different away from a performance. Like any human endeavor, the public performance is only one part of the experience. This concert in particular, will bring that aspect of the preparation into clear view in the documentary film.

Norman is a gifted pianist who rarely makes public performances. His performances with the WHSO in 2016 and again in 2019, were dreams fulfilled for him. He never imagined the opportunities would present themselves. Still he studied and prepared: Always for his own enjoyment. This concert and the documentary film allows a chance to share in Norman's trials and triumphs. It is a rare opportunity for all of us.

How will this project be evaluated?

Without having any sort of formal evaluation, we will know the success of the event immediately following the concert based on the instant feedback of delight from the concert attendees as they excitedly flow from the theatre out into the lobby of the Roberts Theatre.

Cover letter

- [Cover-Letter1.pdf](#)

Board list

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- [WHSO-board-of-directors.pdf](#)

IRS 501(c)3 determination letter

- [WHSO-IRS-501c3.pdf](#)

Financial statement

- [2020-21-990-Taxes.pdf](#)

Last year operational budget

- [WHSO-Budget-2021-22.pdf](#)

Current year operational budget

- [WHSO-Budget-2022-23.pdf](#)

Balance sheet

- [WHSO-Balance-Sheet-2021-22.pdf](#)

Project budget

- [Norman-Malone-Guest-Artist-Budget-Fall-2022.pdf](#)

Does your organization produce an annual report?

No

Has your organization adopted a strategic plan?

No

Does your organization have a formal policy or organizational commitment to ensure that visual artists are financially compensated?

No

Other materials?

- [Circle_Poster.pdf](#)
- [West-Hartford-Symphony-Orchestra-Program-Budget.pdf](#)

I have included some of the material we examined when we were first introduced to Norman Malone in 2016 as well as a Chicago Tribune Article from 2019 which incorporates pictures and details from his appearance with the WHSO.

[Symphony of survival - YouTube](#)

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[Childhood attack silenced pianist's right hand, but not his dream - Chicago Tribune](#)

[82-year-old Chicago pianist Norman Malone who was injured in childhood takes on a new challenge: Britten's Diversions for piano \(chicagotribune.com\)](#)

Have you contacted the Executive Director by email or phone to discuss this proposal?

Yes

Is your cover letter signed by your senior executive? on your letterhead? with your official office address?

Yes