

Excellence in the Arts : Entry # 227

Is your organization a 501(c)3 nonprofit?

Yes

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

Hartford

Where will your project be performed or exhibited?

Hartford

Will this activity occur after August 1, 2023?

Yes

Are you a recent grantee?

Yes

Enter your Report Code

178491-Roberts2020

Organization Name

Women Composers Festival of Hartford

Organization's IRS Tax ID #

471095892

Principal Contact Name

Rami Levin

Title

President

Email

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West Hartford, Connecticut 06137
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[Map It](#)

Website

<http://womencomposersfestivalhartford>

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Amount requested this application

\$10,000.00

What is the organization's mission/vision statement?

The mission of the Women Composers Festival of Hartford is to promote the music of contemporary and historical women composers.

Provide a brief history of your organization and its activities.

The Women Composers Festival of Hartford was founded in 2001 by Heather Seaton, a student at the Hartt School of Music, and became a 501(c)3 in 2014 to better advocate for the ongoing recognition of work by women composers. We celebrate music by women with an annual 2-3 day public Festival held each spring, which includes a **Scholarly Symposium**, a forum including multimedia presentations by academic scholars and artists that addresses a range of topics about contemporary and historic women composers, a **Music Marathon**, a full day concert devoted to women's music performed by musicians from throughout the United States, and an **Emerging Composers Workshop**, a public reading session by a professional ensemble of works by students and early career composers, offering the opportunity for them to receive feedback. The Festival culminates with a **Feature Concert** performed by our Ensemble-in-Residence, premiering a newly commissioned work by our Composer-in-Residence along with other works selected from an international Call for Scores.

Past Composers-in-Residence have included North American composers Judith Shatin, Hilary Tann, Andrea Clearfield, Tawnie Olson, Melika Fitzhugh, and Hanna Kim. Past Ensembles-in-Residence have included Iktus Percussion, Nautilus Brass Quintet, Nouveau Classical Project, Craft Ensemble, and the Hartford Independent Chamber Orchestra.

Our performances have been held at colleges, universities, churches, and art museums in the Greater Hartford area. We have evolved from student leadership to a community-based board of professionals in music, education, and relevant fields who reflect the diversity of the Hartford community. We are a proactive and committed group of individuals focused on finding innovative ways to advance our mission.

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

The 2022 Virtual Festival was accessed by an average of 82 devices in each of 5 events. Viewers were from 12 countries including the US. There were 66 participants including performers, composers, and presenters, more than twice the number of our 2021 Virtual Festival. Of those, 19 (roughly 30%) were BIPOC, comparable to our 2021 Festival. Our 2023 Festival will be hybrid, allowing us to maintain our international audience in addition to local attendees.

Describe your organization's governance.

The WCFH Board currently includes President, Vice President, Artistic Chair, Secretary, and two members-at-large. Monthly Board meetings have 100% attendance. Active committees include Grant Writing, Festival Planning, Strategic Planning, and Selections, which reviews applications for Composer-in-Residence, Ensemble-in-Residence, and participation in other Festival events. We have had no substantial changes in governance since our last application.

Describe the diversity of your board.

Our board currently consists of six members, including one gender-fluid BIPOC individual, one openly gay cisgender male, one Asian cisgender woman and three Caucasian cisgender women. Our ages range from 30s to early 70s.

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

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One hundred percent of our board makes personal contributions.

Project Name

Women Composers Festival of Hartford 2023 Festival

Is this project related to the Visual Arts?

No

Project Description

The 2 day 2023 Festival will be held at Trinity College and virtually. It includes the events described above: **Scholarly Symposium, Music Marathon, Emerging Composers Workshop, and Feature Concert.**

Composer-in-Residence, Maria Kaoutzani is a Chicago-based composer originally from Cyprus, and a winner of the American Prize. Her works have been performed in Europe, Asia, North and South America by Civic Orchestra of Chicago, JACK Quartet, Spektral Quartet, New York Contemporary Ensemble, and others. She is a PhD candidate in Composition at the University of Chicago, has an MM in Music Theory and Composition (NYU), and a BA in music (University of York).

Ensemble-in-Residence, Chartreuse, is committed to developing string trio repertoire through commissions of new works, which they have premiered throughout the US and Norway. They were part of the inaugural cohort of the Chamber Music America Ensemble Forward Grant in 2020-2021, underwritten by the New York Community Trust.

Total estimated project budget

\$20,000.00

Project start/opening

03/17/2023

Project end/closing

03/18/2023

Project venue

Trinity College - Gruss Music Center

Project town

Hartford

Admission fees, attendance, and activity details

Participant fees

Registration: \$75 Adjunct Faculty or \$50 Students/seniors.

Audience Admission

Festival passes \$50/\$40 general/student

Music Marathon \$30/\$20 general/student

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Feature Concert \$30/\$20 general/student

Free events

Scholarly Symposium

Emerging Composers Workshop

Donations will be encouraged for streamed events.

We anticipate audiences of between 50 and 150. Comps will be offered to granting organizations and the press. We do not turn away individuals unable to pay.

How do you intend to promote/market this project?

The Festival and other events will be promoted on social media platforms (Facebook, Instagram, Twitter) beginning in February. We will send emails to our 600+ subscribers, and air public service announcements on WWUH and NEPR. We will reach out to local and industry-wide publications to write online features and print articles about WCFH activities. Flyers will be posted in local businesses, schools, and libraries along with focused engagement of music teachers, colleagues, and students.

How is your organization going to use Roberts funding?

Roberts funding will help pay the Ensemble-in-Residence, the Composer-in-Residence commission, venue fees, and travel costs. The presentation of a hybrid Festival requires additional funding for high quality recording. Our FY23 budget reflects an increase in direct payments to artists, in accordance with guidelines recommended by Chamber Music America. Fair compensation is needed to nurture the careers of the gifted and under-recognized artists who are most in need of our encouragement.

How will Roberts support be recognized?

The Roberts Foundation will be acknowledged with signage at Festival events, on our website, and in all programs, with the accompanying Roberts Foundation logo. We will verbally thank the Foundation in our welcoming remarks before each event as well as in our public service announcements on the radio and in online and print articles.

What is your organization's definition of artistic excellence?

WCFH's high standards of artistic excellence have brought innovative performances to Hartford. A diverse panel of judges, all established composers and performers, ensures that our participating artists are of exceptionally high caliber. We seek composers whose works are well-crafted, show originality, and resonate emotionally with an audience. By including talented emerging composers, we also highlight those in the early stages of their careers. We seek performers whose skill, sensitivity, and nuance most effectively communicate the works they present. The scholars we select pursue relevant and timely research that enhances our understanding of current issues in women's music, both contemporary and historical.

We select professional artists and scholars who inspire the next generation with their example of creativity, collaboration, and community. WCFH supports and elevates talented artists whose voices might otherwise never be heard.

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

As in all previous Festivals, our judges have selected exceptional artists and scholars. Our 2023 Composer-in-Residence Maria Kaoutzani, a native of Cyprus and recipient of the American Prize, holds degrees in composition from NYU, University of York, and is currently a PhD candidate at the University of Chicago. Our 2023 Ensemble-in-Residence, Chartreuse, has given critically acclaimed premiere performances of newly commissioned works throughout the US and Norway. They were

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part of the inaugural cohort of the Chamber Music America Ensemble Forward Grant in 2020-2021, underwritten by the New York Community Trust.

This Festival fulfills our mission to educate and engage the public through performances and scholarship by and about historic and living women composers, with participants of diverse racial, ethnic, and gender identities.

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

Our 2023 Festival, with both a local and virtual presence, will enhance the cultural prominence of Hartford and focus attention on its status as a destination for arts and culture.

The Festival fulfills an important WCFH goal to enrich the lives of members of the Greater Hartford community by offering quality, innovative, and affordable music performances showcasing women's music.

Trinity College will be our venue. We will encourage their students to attend and also promote the events to other educational institutions including the Greater Hartford Academy of the Arts, the University of Hartford, and University of Connecticut. We will advertise through radio announcements, flyers, and social media. The hybrid nature of the event will allow attendance by members of the Greater Hartford area and beyond who might find it difficult to attend in person.

While we charge admission, we welcome all to attend regardless of their financial means.

How will this project be evaluated?

At every Festival, surveys are distributed to all audience members who attend in-person or virtually. In addition, a post-Festival survey will be sent to all composers, performers, and scholars. We will use this feedback toward improving future events. Responses of our audience to the concerts, scholarly presentations, and opportunities to network with other women composers, are subject to an ongoing assessment with information gathered from surveys and conversations with audience and participants throughout the Festival.

In addition, each year we compare attendance numbers with previous Festivals to evaluate the success of our advertising and outreach. We closely monitor social media during the Festival for responses to our concerts and events. We utilize the information, comments, and suggestions to assess our impact in order to continually improve our communication with and impact upon the community, both locally and beyond.

Cover letter

- [Roberts-cover-letter-2022.pdf](#)

Board list

- [Board-of-Directors-2022-with-addresses.pdf](#)

IRS 501(c)3 determination letter

- [WCFH-501c3-designation-letter.pdf](#)

Financial statement

- [Financial-statement-with-2023-Annual-Budget.pdf](#)

Last year operational budget

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- [WCFH-Budget-FY22.pdf](#)

Current year operational budget

- [WCFH-Budget.FY23.pdf](#)

Balance sheet

- [Balance-Sheet-9-30-22.pdf](#)

Project budget

- [Project-Budget-Excellence-in-the-Arts-2023.pdf](#)

Does your organization produce an annual report?

No

Has your organization adopted a strategic plan?

No

Grant Report

- [Women-Composers-Festival-of-Hartford-Grantee-Reporting-Form.pdf](#)

Other materials?

- [2023-WCFH-Festival-Program.pdf](#)

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

No

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

Yes