

Excellence in the Arts : Entry # 168

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

208616-Roberts2020

Organization Name

Connecticut Guitar Society

Organization's IRS Tax ID #

222768662

Principal Contact Name

Dawn B Cwirka

Title

Vice President

Email

dcwirka@ymail.com

Phone

(860) 228-1488

Address

P.O. Box 1528
Hartford, Connecticut 16144
United States
[Map It](#)

Website

<https://ctguitar.org>

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Amount requested this application

\$6,000.00

What is the organization's mission/vision statement?

The mission of the Connecticut Guitar Society is to foster the growth and appreciation of the guitar in our community, as well as the New England area at large and to serve the educational and cultural needs of professional, student and amateur guitarists. CGS is dedicated to showcasing extraordinary local and international talent through events of significance that include concerts, master classes, ensembles, outreach, media and special events, designed to reach new and varied constituencies.

Provide a brief history of your organization and its activities.

The Connecticut Guitar Society (CGS) was founded in 1985 to promote the performance and appreciation of the classical guitar. Established by two guitarists, founding president Judith Handler and founding executive director Penny Phillips, the Society was incorporated as a nonprofit organization in 1986 as a 501 (3)c non-profit corporation. Now in its 36th season, CGS embraces all styles of guitar music. The Society presents concerts, master classes, outreach programs, recording projects, referral services, and an internet website hosting guitar resources — a variety of programs offered by no other arts organization in the region. Members and affiliates are drawn from all over New England and beyond. Membership is open to all including professional, student, and amateur guitarists, as well as people who simply enjoy the guitar's music. Over the years, invited artists have represented the most esteemed classical, jazz and acoustic guitarists performing in their time, it is well known among guitar enthusiasts throughout the northeast region of the United States. CGS had proven its ability to adapt to the changing music scene and economic climate, including the incorporation of an all virtual program format for the COVID 19 pandemic. The Society is recognized by the guitar world as a model guitar society. Our concerts, known for quality and variety, bring virtuoso performances by acknowledged masters and rising stars playing every musical style and taste from Bach to Blues - from Flamenco to Jazz.

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

Audience by Geography

Hartford Residents: 14%

Capital Region Residents Outside Hartford: 54%

CT Residents Outside the Capital Region: 26%

Out of State Visitors: 6%

Audience by Age Group

Children and Teens (18 & Under): 6%

Young Adults (19-40): 22%

Adults (41-61): 49%

Seniors (62+): 23%

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Describe your organization's governance.

The Board of Directors meets six times a year as a full board, and also meets bi-monthly in teams/committees to conduct governance of our organization. Attendance at board meetings averages 83 - 100%. Teams are made up of Board members, volunteers and staff; they include Executive, Planning, Development, Marketing, Media, and Funding. Chief Administrator and Artistic Director David Giardina is an award-winning guitarist and bandleader throughout New England and a founding member of CGS.

Describe the diversity of your board.

Gender: The Board of Directors for the Connecticut Guitar Society is comprised of 66 percent female members.

Race and Ethnicity: The board is made up of 17 percent Latino/Hispanic members.

Age: Board members range in age from the early 30s to the mid 70s.

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

One hundred percent of the Board of Directors for the Connecticut Guitar Society make personal financial contributions to the organization. Board members are also active volunteers who give freely of their time and related professional skills.

Project Name

CGS All Star Guitarists and Local Favorites

Is this project related to the Visual Arts?

No

Project Description

The Connecticut Guitar Society is excited to present the theme, CGS All Star Guitarists and Local Favorites, for a series of three uplifting late spring concerts. We are proud to showcase some of the immense musical expertise found right here in Connecticut. Lorena Garay earned her Summa Cum Laude Master's from The Hartt School. She passionately blends classical technique with Spanish melodies and Latin rhythms. Analisa Ewald (pending) began classical guitar studies with Sophocles Papas and a Bachelor's from Bard College. Her cd reached No. 8 on Billboard's Classical Chart. Award-winning jazz guitarist and bandleader Dave Giardina received a Bachelor's from St. Anselm College. He continued studies at Longy School of Music, as well as with Sal Salvador, Bob Kobus and others. Dave Giardina will be joined by CGS jazz favorites Rich Goldstein and Frank Varela for an exciting reunion of the Topsy Gypsies.

Total estimated project budget

\$9,500.00

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Project start/opening

05/01/2022

Project end/closing

06/30/2022

Project venue

Asylum Hill Congregational Church, Windsor Arts Center

Project town

Hartford, Windsor

Admission fees, attendance, and activity details

Each performance will be a one time event. Please note that these venues are tentative, as CGS adapts to outdoor formats, due to ongoing pandemic health concerns.

Sunday, 5/1/22 Windsor, Analisa Ewald: \$25 General Admission, \$20 Member, \$15 Student. Paid 65, Comp 8.

Saturday, 5/21/22 Hartford, Lorena Garay: \$30 General Admission, \$25 Member, \$15 Student. Paid 60, Comp 8.

Saturday, 6/4/22 Hartford, Typsy Gypsies: \$30 General Admission, \$25 Member, \$15 Student. Paid 70, Comp 10.

How do you intend to promote/market this project?

Distribute press releases, posters and related materials.

Post on FaceBook, Twitter, Pinterest and Instagram.

Arrange for radio interviews with local stations, such as WWUH, WFCR, and WHUS.

Load event description and photos to Event Brite.

Update ctguitar.org to promote each concert.

Prepare email blast flyers to send to CGS database for each concert.

How is your organization going to use Roberts funding?

We are requesting \$6,000 in funding from the Roberts Foundation for our new concert series, CGS All Star Guitarists and Local Favorites. We are thrilled to be hosting live concerts again and will adjust to all safety protocols carefully. We will begin May 1, 2022. Income will be generated through ticket sales, donations and new memberships. Expenses will include the artist's fees and operational costs, such as production, marketing, and venues. Please see the attached project budget.

How will Roberts support be recognized?

Support from the Edward C. and Ann T. Roberts Foundation will be announced from the stage at each concert. The logo for the Roberts Foundation will be featured in flyers sent out by email and all related promotional material for the concert series. The logo will also be on the CGS displayed prominently on the CGS web site.

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What is your organization's definition of artistic excellence?

The Connecticut Guitar Society is committed to artistic excellence in all its endeavors - performance, education, referrals, resources and media recordings. We measure artistic excellence in several ways: qualities of each artist, attendance by the public, press attention, feedback that includes social media comments and the over-all success of the program. At the convention for the Guitar Foundation of America, leading foreign artists seek us out to start their American tours. We are also very proud to be able to provide exposure to lesser known, but talented artists performing all styles of guitar music. To our knowledge, we are the only guitar society that has been awarded grants by the prestigious National Endowment for the Arts.

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

This project showcases extraordinary talent; it includes the local talents of Lorena Garay, Analisa Ewald (pending), and of CGS Artistic Director Dave Giardina, joined by Rich Goldstein and Artist Frank Varela. All of the musicians selected have stellar educational backgrounds and have earned great success through their artistry. They have demonstrated popularity in their musical leadership and ability to attract audiences to their performances. CGS makes a difference to both the local community and to the extended community of guitar players and enthusiasts living outside the greater Hartford area who attend our musical events and support us.

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

We expect that the artistry and versatility of the guitar will be epitomized by the musicians in this series. The Connecticut Guitar Society is fortunate to be able to draw upon its collective experience in bringing the very best guitar music to the region. CGS will present music rooted in tradition, yet also new, innovative and cutting edge. We believe CGS plays a significant and unique role in the community's and region's cultural landscape and that music can transcend culture and brings people joyfully together. CGS All Star Guitarists and Local Favorites will attract audiences other than guitar fans and the selected performers will broaden the appeal to include a younger demographic. These artists are expert at performing in intimate settings where they and their music can be fully appreciated.

How will this project be evaluated?

Typically the Connecticut Guitar Society focuses their evaluation in two specific areas. The Board's Planning Committee, including the Artistic Director, review the quality of the performance and the impact it has on both the community and the organization. Did we increase access to cultural and artistic programs among the diverse communities of Connecticut? Did we receive feedback? The Finance Committee reviews the overall financial success of the program, including ticket sales, marketing efforts, and funding from sponsorship and grants. Did we bring back previous members, draw in new members, and make tickets affordable? However, this exciting series will be a rebirth of live music concerts. Therefore the Administration and Board of Directors will also be taking a very close look at the impact of any post pandemic safety or economic issues among our concert goers. We are eager to reconnect with live music!

Thank you to the Edward C. and Ann T. Roberts Foundation for their support!

Cover letter

- [Jan31LetterRobertsSigned.pdf](#)

Board list

- [CGSBoardMemberList.pdf](#)

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IRS 501(c)3 determination letter

- [IRS-Ltr-of-Determination.docx-1.pdf](#)

Financial statement

- [Interim-Financial-Statetment-IRS-990-2018.pdf](#)

Last year operational budget

- [LastYearOperatingRevenueExpenses.pdf](#)

Current year operational budget

- [Current-Year-CGS-2021-2022-Operating-Budget.pdf](#)

Balance sheet

- [InterimBalance-Sheet-Feb-2020.pdf](#)

Project budget

- [ProjectBudgetJan31AllStarGuitar.pdf](#)

Does your organization produce an annual report?

Yes

Annual report

- [Interim-Financial-Statetment-IRS-990-20181.pdf](#)

Has your organization adopted a strategic plan?

Yes

Strategic plan

- [CGS-Strategic-Plan-2021.pdf](#)

Grant Report

- [Connecticut-Guitar-Society-Grantee-Reporting-Form.pdf](#)

We are thrilled to be returning to live music concerts featuring popular CT musicians. The Connecticut Guitar Society has continuously adjusted throughout the Covid 19 pandemic by drawing on its collective experience, as well as fresh ideas. Please note that the venues listed in this proposal are tentative. We are currently seeking outdoor performance locations in order to ensure the success of this proposal. In addition, we look forward to supplying updated financial documents as soon

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as they are available. Our organization shares your commitment to artistic excellence and to providing entertainment and education for a diverse and growing public. We look forward to working with you again.

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