Dear Friends,

In February 2013 I attended SPHINXCON, a convening sponsored by the Sphinx Organization in Detroit to discuss ideas about diversity in the performing arts. It was a significant event that drew every major service organization in the country. More than 30 leaders talked about how they defined diversity and what they were doing – or at least trying to do – to be more inclusive. The subject is not new to our field, but the size and scope of SPHINXCON represented renewed energy to engage the broadest possible spectrum of the performing arts.

I came away from the two-day event with much to think about, and the board of ACF devoted a lot of time to the topic in its May meeting. The word diversity is a broad term that can be defined in many different ways. How diverse are the boards of our performing arts organizations? Or the executive directors – or the staff that work for them? Why does a majority of arts funding in this county go to the top 50 arts institutions? As the white population moves toward a minority position, are we satisfied that so many performing organizations continue to be predominantly white? How do we support artists who do not live in the large urban centers?

My colleague Ann Meier Baker at Chorus America said they are working to be more intentionally inclusive instead of unintentionally exclusive. It’s a phrase that made great sense to me, and I’ve been living with it now for many months as I think about the new music field. We have spent lots of ink and chatter (for decades) on the subject of under-representation of female composers. Stylistic diversity also continues to dominate our conversations about craft, quality and artistic integrity. What we do not discuss enough is cultural diversity. People of color are still a very small group within our circles, and I worry that we are not doing enough to encourage more people of color to feel welcome.

These questions have no easy answers, but if ACF is to be a leader in the field, and an advocate for the living composer, we must keep these questions on the table at all times. Over the last two years, ACF has increased our efforts to encourage grant applicants from a broad pool of artists. We are connecting to artists by announcing opportunities to culturally-specific arts organizations and through social media. These efforts have shown positive results and we will continue to work at ways to be more intentionally inclusive in all of our programs. I invite your thoughts and perspectives on how we can do that effectively.

As always, thank you for your support and commitment to the work of living composers.

Sincerely,

John Nuechterlein
President and CEO

The American Composers Forum enriches lives by nurturing the creative spirit of composers and communities. We provide new opportunities for composers and their music to flourish, and engage communities in the creation, performance and enjoyment of new music.

Our Vision

Make composers, and the music they create, a vibrant and integral part of our culture.

2013
Letter from the President

Dear Friends,

In February 2013 I attended SPHINXCON, a convening sponsored by the Sphinx Organization in Detroit to discuss ideas about diversity in the performing arts. It was a significant event that drew every major service organization in the country. More than 30 leaders talked about how they defined diversity and what they were doing – or at least trying to do – to be more inclusive. The subject is not new to our field, but the size and scope of SPHINXCON represented renewed energy to engage the broadest possible spectrum of the performing arts.

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Sincerely,

John Nuechterlein
President and CEO
Fostering Artistic Development for Composers

- Awarded more than $411,600 in grants to a diverse group of composers and performers of new music.
- In partnership with McNally Smith College of Music and Minnesota Public Radio, produced GAME ON! An Insider’s Guide to Video Game Scoring, that drew 80 composers from across the United States and Canada to Saint Paul, MN, for a full slate of workshops and a concert featuring transcriptions of video game scores written by keynote speakers: Jason Graves and Lennie Moore.
- Completed the third year of awarding Live Music for Dance Minnesota grants to composers, choreographers and Minnesota-based professional dance companies.
- Collaborated with VocalEssence (MN) on Essentially Choral, a unique opportunity for composers to work with a professional chorus to refine their works for voices. Six composers heard their pieces rehearsed by the 32-voice VocalEssence Ensemble Singers and attended mentoring sessions with the ensemble’s Artistic Director Philip Brunelle and composer/conductor Francisco Núñez.

Membership

- Total membership remained strong at 1,700+ composers, performers and educators in all 50 states and 17 countries.
- In partnership with Zeitgeist, offered 8 performance salons, serving 33 composers and 46 performers.
- Partnered with the Twin Cities chapter of Opera on Tap for a special night of “homegrown opera,” including works for voices written by local composers.

Inspiring Students with Fresh Music

- Reached more than 673,650 children to date through the BandQuest® series.
- The All City Band in Newton, MA premiered the 20th BandQuest® piece, Nonantum Bulgar by klezmer composer and revivalist, Hankus Netsky.
- The Children’s Choir at the School for Creative and Performing Arts in Cincinnati, OH, premiered the fourth piece in the ChoralQuest® series, Hear My Voice by Jennifer Higdon.
- Introduced elementary students at Saint Paul Music Academy (MN) to basic composition skills during a residency with Michael Croswell.
- Launched a new partnership with Classical Minnesota Public Radio by creating a composer category in the annual Minnesota Varsity competition for high school musicians. Four young composers received mentorship from Carol Barnett and heard their works read by the wind trio Mill City Winds. Two of the four composers’ works were then performed by the same ensemble at the Fitzgerald Theater (Saint Paul, MN).
- Convened a national advisory board to discuss the creation and launch of NextNotes™ High School Composition Awards, a new program designed to encourage and award musical creativity in young people.

Hear My Voice, commissioned by ACF’s ChoralQuest® program, premiered by the Children’s Choir from the School for Creative and Performing Arts in Cincinnati. This new work for middle-level voices was written by Pulitzer Prize-winner Jennifer Higdon, one of the most performed living American composers.
innova Recordings

- Released 31 titles (total catalog holds 457) featuring artists and composers from wildly diverse backgrounds and experiences. From a Met Opera star’s take on American songbook classics, to a re-imagining of an Irish folk tune, to Satie played on a traditional Vietnamese instrument, innova continues to challenge, reinvent, and influence.
- Licensed music to myriad sources, including high visibility outlets such as HBO’s “Vice” series, Fox’s “So You Think You Can Dance” and an Ivy League institution’s lecture series.
- Increased earned revenue for artists by 5% and continued to pay out 100% of sales to artists.
- Received reviews in the LA Times, NPR, PRI’s The World, Songlines, Downbeat, Gramophone, New York Times, Huffington Post, and San Francisco Examiner, to name a few.
- Supported artist tours and shows, and continued to foster community connections by arranging gatherings, appearing at conventions, and presenting at conferences.
- Diversified distribution by capturing micro-revenue streams from various online content providers.
- Began online video roundtable discussions with industry professionals and artists.

Chapter Activity

- ACF-Philadelphia awarded 22 grants to 24 composers totaling $85,000 through its Subito and Community Partners programs. It also hosted three composer events and two professional development workshops.
- ACF-Philadelphia organized a meet and greet with Dance/USA Philadelphia to encourage collaboration between composers, choreographers and dancers.
- As part of New Spaces New Formats, ACF-Philadelphia presented an Impromptu Jazz Composition Showcase at Christ Church Neighborhood House.
- Expanded listeners of New Music Philadelphia through presence on Live365 and iTunes radio.
- ACF-LA formed a partnership with Marshall Academy in Pasadena to develop and implement Making Music, a program that trains students in the art, science and philosophy of creating music of all and any genre.

Strengthening Community and Audience Engagement

- Began Faith Partners residencies in Morris, MN and Menomonie, WI and continued residencies in Sartell, MN and Fargo, ND/Moorhead, MN.
- Reached a weekly cumulative audience of one million listeners with Composers Datebook on 165 public radio stations nationwide. Of the 51 new shows this year, three featured pieces from the ChoralQuest® series.
- Co-hosted the inaugural season of the Composer Conversation Series in partnership with The Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra and Minnesota Public Radio. The series featured composers Maria Schneider and Laurie Anderson, with time devoted for audience Q&A and informal receptions.
- Nurtured and collaborated with the Cherry Spoon Collective – a new, multi-generational, multi-instrumental group of musician/composers – to support the efforts of artists and also to engage the community with outside-the-performance-hall music experiences.
Essentially Choral
Rich Campbell (New York, NY)
Ian A. Cook (Northfield, MN)
Brian Coughlin (New York, NY)
Caroline Mailonée (Buffalo, NY)
Andrew McKenna Lee (Brooklyn, NY)
Michael Schachter (Ann Arbor, MI)

Faith Partners
Linda Kachelmeier (Saint Paul, MN)
Jake Runestad (Minneapolis, MN)

Jazz Noir Radio Program
George Maurer (Minneapolis, MN)

Jerome Fund for New Music (JFund)
Chris Cresswell (Brooklyn, NY)
Chris Danforth (Minneapolis, MN)
Alex Freeman (Northfield, MN)
Masatora Goya (Rego Park, NY)
David Hertzberg (New York, NY)
Asako Hirabayashi (Falcon Heights, MN)
Jeremy Howard Beck (New York, NY)
Heath Mathews (Farmington, MN)
Eric Nathan (New York, NY)
Danielle Schwob (New York, NY)

Live Music for Dance Minnesota
Lisa Conlin (Minneapolis, MN)
Mike Hallenbeck (Minneapolis, MN)
Ryan Homsey (New York, NY)
Julie Johnson (Minneapolis, MN)
Katha Dance Theatre (Crystal, MN)
Minnesota Ballet (Duluth, MN)
Alanna Morris (Saint Paul, MN)
Tamara Ober (Minneapolis, MN)
Rosy Simas Danse (Minneapolis, MN)
Threads Dance Project (Golden Valley, MN)
Brian Van Tassel (Saint Paul, MN)
Vanessa Voskuil (Minneapolis, MN)
Jesse Whitney (Minneapolis, MN)
Nioka Workman (New York, NY)
Zorongo Flamenco Dance Theatre (Minneapolis, MN)

Magnificat Project
Zachary Wadsworth (Calgary, AB)

McKnight Composer Fellowships
Randall Bauer (Saint Paul, MN)
Scott Miller (Maple Grove, MN)
Joshua Musikantow (Saint Paul, MN)
David Evan Thomas (Minneapolis, MN)

McKnight Visiting Composer Residencies
Chris Coyle (Philadelphia, PA)
Jin Hi Kim (Bridgeport, CT)

Minnesota Emerging Composer Awards (MECA)
JT Bates (Minneapolis, MN)
Lucas Melchior (Saint Paul, MN)
Orkestar Bez Ime (Minneapolis, MN)

Minnesota Varsity
Austin Kraft (Savage, MN)
Grant Luhmann (Lino Lakes, MN)

Welcome Christmas
David Biedenbender (Ann Arbor, MI)
Sheena Phillips (Trenton, NJ)

“All in all, my experiences with ACF have shaped my professional career in a significant way and I am incredibly thankful for it. I am grateful for the support from the McKnight Foundation and I hope that my residency reflected the kind of work that they envisioned when they made funding available. I enjoyed my time in Minnesota immensely and I will use this experience to drive my writing, teaching and performing to new territories.”

Chris Coyle (McKnight Visiting Composer, pictured above)
>1,350,000 people experienced the work of ACF

>$411,600 granted to composers and performers

7,745 people attended classes and workshops

1,740 members in 50 states and 17 countries

290 individual donors

51 new Composers Datebook shows produced

34 new works commissioned

31 titles added to the innova catalog

ACF social media buzz

2,864 Facebook likes, up 22%
8,302 Twitter followers, up 49%
110 YouTube subscribers, up 31%

Left: Score written by Essentially Choral composer participant, Robert Creeley.

Right: Each year, the McKnight Visiting Composer Program underwrites a Minnesota residency of at least eight weeks for two out-of-state composers. While in residence, the visiting artist collaborates on a project with a Minnesota community of their choosing. Visiting Composer, Charles Peck, explores sound and science with students at Crossroads Elementary School in Saint Paul, MN.
“full of intrigue and difficult to label.” — Daniel Coombs, Audiophile Audition

Nick Brooke
Border Towns

Mary Ellen Childs
Wreck

Bill Ryan’s Billband
Towards Daybreak

Jeri-Mae G. Astolfi
Here (and There)

Andrew McPherson
Secrets of Antikythera

David T. Little
Soldier Songs

Justin DeHart
Strange Paths

Justin Rubin
A Waltz Through the Vapor

Minneapolis Guitar Quartet
Thrum

The Crossing
I Want to Live

Andrew Rindfleisch
In The Zone

Michael Hersch
The Sudden Pianist

Robert Carl
Shake the Tree

Dorothy Hindman
Tapping the Furnace

Misfit Toys
Does Anybody Really Know What Time it is?

Chris Campbell & Grant Cutler
Schooldays Over

Jeremy Beck
String Quartets

The Barber Shop Quartet
The Sudden Pianist

Jerome Kitzke
The Character of American Sunlight

GVSU
Music for 18 Musicians (redux)

Van-Anh Vanessa Vo
Three Mountain Pass

Matthew Burtner
NOISE plays Burtner

Stephanie Blythe
As Long As There Are Songs

The Crossing
Christmas Daybreak

Juan Blanco
Nuestro Tiempo/Our Time

Neil Rolnick
Gardening at Gropius House

Larry Axelrod
Brandenburg Variations

Viv Corringham
Walking

Peter Kerlin Octet
Salamander

Xenia Pestova
Shadow Piano

Ayman Fanous & Jason Kao Hwang
Zilizal

The Living Earth Show
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Corporate, Foundation, and Government Support

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Bush Foundation
McKnight Foundation
William Penn Foundation

$50,000 - $99,999
Jerome Foundation
Minnesota State Arts Board

$25,000 - $49,999
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National Endowment for the Arts
New Music USA, with funds from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation

$10,000 - $24,999
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Athwln Foundation
Aaron Copland Fund
General Mills Foundation
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ASCAP
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BMI Foundation
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+ Matching Gift Fund Contributors  * Gifts were matched

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“I am continually energized by the strong staff and board commitment to ACF’s mission to support the development of new music.”

Nancy Huart, ACF board member and contributor

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Statement of Financial Activity for the year ending June 30, 2013

Revenue
Foundation Grants $830,906
Government Grants 116,847
Individual Contributions 133,307
Corporate Grants 17,689
Membership 75,640
Endowment/Reserves 237,671
Earned Income 220,010
Total Operations Revenue $1,632,070

Expense
Commissioning and Residency $429,586
Readings and Performances 32,984
Education 121,821
Media 300,007
Chapters 236,894
Member Services 127,530
Administration 143,444
Development 236,249
Total Operations Expense $1,628,515
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Fax: 651.291.7978
www.composersforum.org

“ACF is a wonderful organization that
does great work in bringing composers,
performers and audiences together. It should
be called “American Composer’s Friend!”

Benjamin Broening (Composer, pictured above)