

## 2024 Season: *MUSIC IN BLUE*

March 5, 2024

Dear friends of Salt Bay Chamberfest,

We have been on a musical adventure together for 30 years!

As we celebrate this milestone, I feel so grateful for all that SBC has brought to our lives. As well as a creative journey, it has been a unique opportunity to learn from and form meaningful connections with all of you. Together we have created and sustained a place for music-making of the highest level; a place that grasps and connects with other cultures through the arts; and a place where musical innovation is valued and supported.

The 2024 festival theme, **Music in Blue**, intermingles historical and contemporary works that exemplify the influence of blues and jazz on classical chamber music, together with music inspired by blue landscapes in nature and the visual arts. Our season will begin with pianist/composer Conrad Tao performing a world premiere of his new (and SBC-co-commissioned) work inspired by the 100th anniversary of Gershwin's *Rhapsody in Blue*. In a season that showcases virtuoso pianists, pianist Anne-Marie McDermott will be joined by bass phenomenon Xavier Foley in a program pairing his own works with Schubert's Trout quintet; and pianist Shai Wosner will perform Mozart's Piano Quartet in G minor as well as Vijay Iyer's new piano concerto, accompanied by the East Coast Chamber Orchestra! Returning musicians include violinists Jennifer Koh and Jennifer Frautschi and clarinetist Derek Bermel; and we are excited to welcome newcomers including violinist Geneva Lewis, trombonist Angel Subero, and percussionist Javier Diaz.

Against a backdrop of vibrant natural reflections of color—deep blue seas, sapphire rivers, and indigo skies—the coast of Maine is an ideal setting for audiences to engage in a musical exploration of all things **Blue**, and to ring in our thirtieth anniversary.

See you this summer!



Wilhelmina Smith, Artistic & Executive Director

### Committed to Our Mission

Producing chamber music concerts of the highest artistic level, Salt Bay Chamberfest enriches the cultural life of Midcoast Maine with innovative programming performed by today's finest musicians.



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## 2024 SEASON

**SUNDAY, JULY 14**

Benefit Concert

**TUESDAY, AUGUST 6**

Musical Lecture/Demo  
Festival Concert 1

**WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 7**

Family Concert

**THURSDAY, AUGUST 8**

Solo Recital – Xavier Foley

**FRIDAY, AUGUST 9**

Festival Concert 2

**SATURDAY, AUGUST 10**

Collaboration with  
Wabanaki musicians

**SUNDAY, AUGUST 11**

Music at Riverside

**TUESDAY, AUGUST 13**

Festival Concert 3

**THURSDAY, AUGUST 15**

Solo Recital – Jennifer Koh

**FRIDAY, AUGUST 16**

Festival Concert 4

**SATURDAY, AUGUST 17**

Master Class

*All events and artists subject to change.*

## Conrad Tao Dazzles

BY VIRGINIA E. SWAIN

FINDING words to describe the American pianist and composer Conrad Tao is not a problem. Reviewers agree that he is “effervescent,” “lively and dynamic,” “electric,” and that his playing displays “joy and spontaneous poetry” as well as a “probing intellect.” Not yet 30, Tao thrills and fascinates audiences with his virtuosic command of the classical piano repertoire and his multifaceted compositions for piano, chamber ensembles, orchestra, and even tap dance. Given his wide-ranging interest in everything musical—from the traditional to the cutting-edge—and his desire to explore and expand the limits of what is possible, he is truly “shaping the future of classical music.”

Conrad’s musical career began at an early age and he has been much sought after as a soloist. He has performed with every major American orchestra, even with the Portland Symphony at Merrill Auditorium, among many other national and international venues. For almost as long as he has been a celebrated pianist, Conrad has also been receiving awards for his compositions. While still in his teens, for example, he earned eight ASCAP Morton Gould Young Composer Awards. He continues to compose and perform his pieces, among them *The Oneiroi in New York*, a (not surprisingly) dreamlike piece that reveals the influence of jazz music on his writing. He was also commissioned by the New York Philharmonic to write *Everything Must Go*, premiered by the orchestra in 2018. You can hear some of his compositions and piano performances on several albums from Warner Classics, especially *Voyages* (2013), *Pictures* (2015), and *American Rage* (2019).

When asked which of his various activities gives him the greatest satisfaction, Tao replied that he most loves the “chaotic” process of composing. “Conjuring up” music from somewhere deep inside himself and willing himself to “hallucinate” are profound experiences for him. He likes to push himself “to a place where something just HAS to be”—not an unconscious or irrational activity but perhaps a “pre-rational” one, as



©Brantley Gutierrez

he terms it. Although he acknowledges the vulnerability he feels about transmitting something so intimate to a broad public, he relishes collaboration and rejoices in the shared experience of the performance.

This summer, Salt Bay Chamberfest audiences will have the good fortune to experience Conrad Tao’s exuberance and originality in a new composition inspired by George Gershwin’s *Rhapsody in Blue*. A tribute to the 100th anniversary of Gershwin’s famous composition, this sextet for piano, clarinet, trombone, violin, bass, and percussion is the elaboration of a theme he has been working on for several years. His collaboration with Caleb Teicher, the tap dancer and choreographer, grows out of Gershwin’s piece into an extended improvisation, which NPR’s Tiny Desk concert series recently featured on YouTube. (This exciting performance is well worth watching and will definitely prime you for this summer’s event!)

And what is next for this versatile musician? Conrad is challenging himself to explore the naturally occurring overtones that the well and even temperaments of classical and modern music cannot capture. He expects to bring to the public next year his experiments with the 280-key Lumatone isomorphic keyboard which will allow us to hear new things beyond a twelve-tone even-tempered context. “Shaping the future of classical music,” indeed. ■

## Musician Spotlights



©Matteo Trisolini

### Anne-Marie McDermott

**P**ianist Anne-Marie McDermott will be a featured artist on SBC's August 9 and 13 concerts.

#### Tell us about your career directing music festivals.

I had never thought about becoming an artistic director until an opportunity was presented that I simply couldn't turn down. I started a small chamber music festival in Ocean Reef, Florida, 17 years ago and it continues to this day. When I learned of an opportunity at Bravo! Vail Music Festival in Colorado, I decided to put my name in the mix. I was named the artistic director in 2010 and it has become one of the greatest and most fulfilling opportunities of my career. We host four major orchestras every summer and invite top soloists, conductors, chamber music artists, young artists, and much more. I also started a wonderful chamber music festival at the McKnight Center for the Performing Arts in Stillwater, Oklahoma. I am deeply grateful to have the chance to bring great music into peoples' lives.

#### Do you have any pets?

I travel with my sweet and quirky Maltese, Lola, all over the world! Wherever I am in the world, I always have her unconditional love and she keeps a smile on my face.

#### Have you spent time in Maine before?

I have spent some time in Maine over the years, but never enough. I absolutely love Maine and the amazing people that I have met there. I have played at the Rockport Opera House quite a few times and I always relish eating as much lobster as I possibly can! I cannot wait to be back in Maine this summer.

#### What's next for you after you perform with SBC?

I will be coming to the Salt Bay Chamberfest right after

the Bravo! Festival season ends in early August and I will head to Mexico City right after I am in Maine. I am in the midst of a project recording all five Beethoven Piano Concertos with the Sinfónica de Minería and Maestro Carlos Miguel Prieto. It is a dream come true to be recording this transcendent and powerful music. ■



©Marti Fang-Bentov

### Geneva Lewis

**V**iolinist Geneva Lewis will be a featured artist on SBC's August 6 and 9 concerts.

#### Tell us a little about yourself and your background.

I'm originally from New Zealand, but mostly grew up in California. My parents are not musicians, but both of my siblings are, so I was always surrounded by music in the house. I've always loved music, and especially chamber music, so I'm very excited about the collaborations at this festival in particular!

#### What are some highlights of your performing season this year?

I've gotten the opportunity to work with many exceptional musicians this year, and play for some incredibly warm audiences, which I'm always grateful for. One aspect of this profession that I love is the opportunity to travel—I'm looking forward to some upcoming trips to Mexico, Scotland, and Latvia, and recently enjoyed (briefly!) visiting Lithuania for the first time.

#### Have you been to Maine before? Do you like lobster?

I've been to Maine a few times before, and have always thoroughly enjoyed my time spent there! I'm not so big on lobster, but I do love being close to the water. I'm really looking forward to enjoying the beautiful scenery and getting to know the area a little more. ■



## Save the Date!



## Benefit Concert on Sunday, July 14

Featuring cellist Edward Arron  
and pianist Jeewon Park

4 pm at the home of  
George Mason & Susan Weiser Mason

Enjoy a brief concert paired with hors d'oeuvres, wine,  
and art. Tickets can be reserved using the form at the  
back of this newsletter.

**NATIONAL  
ENDOWMENT  
for the ARTS**  
 **arts.gov**

## We are honored to announce

that SBC has been chosen by the National Endowment for the Arts to receive a \$20,000 Grant for Arts Projects award, supporting this summer's festival of concerts and community events.

## Board Updates

### Welcome to Our Newest Board Members



Joel Russ

**J**OEL RUSS grew up in Cape Elizabeth, attended Wesleyan and the University of Maine School of Law, and served in the U.S. Army. He has held a variety of senior level positions in community-based non-profit organizations, including with Greater Portland Landmarks, Maine State Chamber of Commerce, and Maine Science & Technology Foundation, among others. In addition to Salt Bay Chamberfest, he serves on the boards of Coastal Kids Preschool and the Maine Gun Safety Coalition. He has previously served on many other national and local non-profit boards. Joel and his wife Carolyn live in Walpole.

**R**OBERT (SKIP) SWEET grew up in New York City. After working as an auto mechanic, photographer, bartender, and carpenter, Robert attended Northeastern Law School, and was a partner at Foley Hoag LLP in Boston, where he practiced corporate law for 37 years. He also had a brief career as a restaurateur in Boston. Robert serves as a director at the Boston Medical Center, Bridge Boston Charter School, YouthConnect (a program of the Boys and Girls Club of Boston), The Sheffield Chamber Players, and Kisoro Children's Foundation. Robert and his wife Karen live in Newton, Massachusetts, and South Bristol.

**D**AVID WOLFSOHN is a nationally renowned intellectual property trial lawyer. In 2020, Mr. Wolfsohn was named Philadelphia Lawyer of the Year in trademark litigation by *Best Lawyers in America* and, in 2012, he received the same award for copyright litigation. Before attending law school at the University of Chicago, he received a Doctorate of Musical Arts in piano performance from the Manhattan School of Music. He is also a board member of Astral Artistic, an organization mentoring the early careers of extraordinary classical musicians.



David Wolfsohn

## A HEARTFELT THANK YOU

to **Vivian Brodsky, Ben Harris, Penny Mardoian,**  
and **Russ Zajchuk** for all they have done for the Festival  
as they step down from the board.

Salt Bay Chamberfest would also like to express  
our sincere appreciation for the hard work and support  
of all of our board members.

## Community Engagement 2023 Recap

OUR 2023 free community engagement programs reached nearly 400 people. We are proud that our partnerships with Wabanaki Public Health & Wellness, Skidompha Public Library, Central Lincoln County YMCA, and the Frances Perkins Center expanded access to meaningful music programs in our community.

PHOTOS BY JIM DUGAN.COM EXCEPT AS NOTED

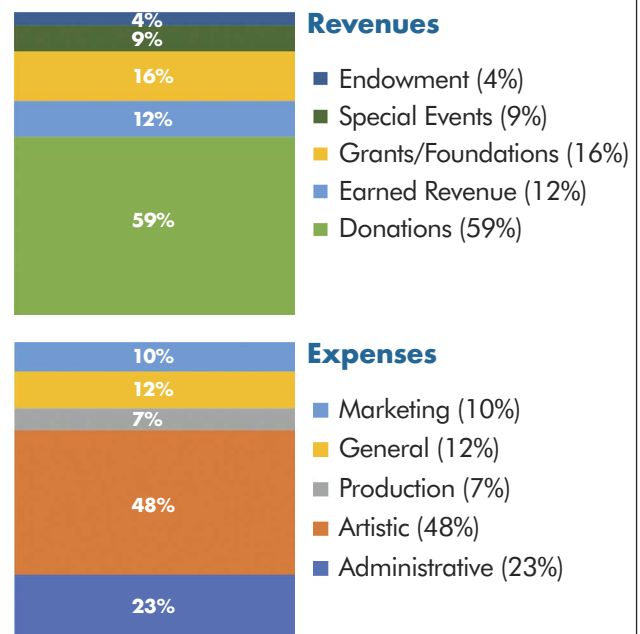


## 30th Anniversary Gifts

Help us celebrate 30 years of presenting distinctive music, advancing the art form through commissions, and reaching audiences near and far with unforgettable musical experiences. A special 30th Anniversary contribution will help the organization continue to serve and thrive for another 30!

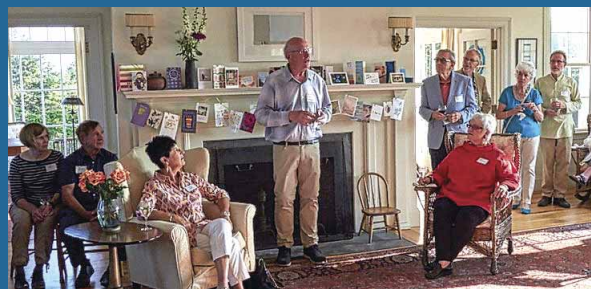
*Donation information on the back page.*

## 2023 Financial Update





## Salt Bay Chamberfest Supporters



*We warmly welcome  
you into the Sostenuto Circle*  
Join the Circle with an annual gift of \$1,000 or more. All members of the Sostenuto Circle receive a variety of opportunities to connect with artists and are invited to an invitation-only event hosted by the SBC board.

## Special Piano Sponsors Needed!



SBC is hosting three incredible pianists. It costs \$10,000 to rent and move a piano to Lincoln Theater for the festival. Take advantage of this special opportunity to support one of our performers as well as the piano they'll be playing!

*Find more information on the back of this newsletter.*

# Thank You!

SALT BAY CHAMBERFEST deeply appreciates the contributions from all of our patrons. With your support, we continue to bring world-class musicians and innovative programming to the heart of Midcoast Maine.

*Donations made between January 1, 2023 and December 31, 2023.*

### Encore Society

Members of the Encore Society have made legacy gifts and have included Salt Bay Chamberfest as a beneficiary in their wills.

Peter Felsenthal  
& Jennifer Litchfield  
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Phillip & Jane Johnston  
Anton & Allison Lahnston  
Martha G. Mason  
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Donations of \$10,000 or more

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David Wolfsohn

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Donations of \$5,000–\$9,999

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Donations of \$2,000–\$4,999

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Donations of \$500–\$999

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## Become an SBC Supporter!

Thanks to the generosity of our donors, we are able to bring world-class musicians to Maine, support new artists, and commission new works. We can't do that without your help.

- **Ticket revenue only covers about 17% of our operating budget**
- **It costs approximately \$3,000 to bring each festival musician to Maine**

We rely on your generous support to continue presenting the world's finest musicians in Midcoast Maine each summer.

## THANK YOU again to our 2023 Business Sponsors!

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P.O. Box 1268  
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Franklin to  
add indicia

## JOIN THE ENSEMBLE!

Look for our ticketing brochure later this spring with full information about the season. You can purchase Benefit Concert tickets and support SBC now by using the form below.

- ☐ Yes, I would like to purchase \_\_\_\_\_ (qty) tickets for the Benefit Concert on July 14 (\$175 each).
- ☐ Yes, I would like to advance the vitality of chamber music by supporting Salt Bay Chamberfest.  
Donation Amount \$ \_\_\_\_\_

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☐ CHECK (payable to Salt Bay Chamberfest) ☐ CREDIT CARD

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- ☐ Season Sponsor (\$15,000)
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