

Feedback from our Livestreams:

“

Just wanted to thank you for your amazing performance!! You are a bright light in worrisome times.

Thank you again for making my evening so special. It is so hard with our social separation and your music brings me in touch with you and our times together.

Wonderful concert!, The Smetena Made my heart break; the Dvorak made me want to dance. You folks really get us in touch with our emotions! Many thanks.

Bravi Tutti!! I absolutely loved this concert. Thank you SO VERY MUCH!!!

You are a wonderful gift to our community.

Keep doing what you are doing!

*Today's concert was sublime: beautiful playing and gorgeous music.
What more can one ask for?*

”



Ashuelot Concerts

December 2020 Newsletter

ashuelotconcerts.org

Connections...

While out shopping with our young sons recently, a friendly checkout assistant shared with me the thing he is missing the most during this strange year: Concerts - Live Music. I thought he must have known I was a musician! He told me he would give anything right now to attend a concert and pretend just for a moment that all was well with the world. I sighed and agreed whole-heartedly.

As I climbed in the car afterwards with the rain falling hard, wrestling with my kids' seat belts and fielding their competing demands of the moment, I thought it must be a sign; it is so important to keep making music through this challenging year and we must share it as far and wide as possible.

For each of us, this year has involved unique difficulties, emotionally and physically. We have all been affected in a significant way and we are all connected in our need to look forward to something better. We



all share the hope that one day very soon, we will be able to gather again and feel that incredible energy that only comes from experiencing a live performance together.

Despite all the compromises that 2020 has demanded, it has been a joy to share our virtual performances with you this season. Even though you are not

in the room with us, we still appreciate your presence so very much, and will continue to play our hearts out for you.

Thank you for being there and for supporting our young organization through this most challenging year. I keep you all in my heart as I play.

Louisa Stonehill

More Live Music to Look Forward to This Season:

Gala Fundraiser: December 13 7:30PM

Edward Elgar
Romance, Op.1
Philip Sawyers
Violin Sonata No.1
John Ireland
Violin Sonata No.1

Join Nick & Louisa online for a virtual Gala Fundraiser featuring live music from three English Composers. We will also be sharing more details about our future plans - 2021 is looking bright for Ashuelot Concerts.

January 10 & 17

J.S. Bach
Suites for Solo Cello
BWV 1007-1011
Paul Cohen - Cello

February 13

Siegel Solo Cello Sonata,
Kodaly Duo for Violin & Cello
Fauré Violin Sonata in A,

March 13

Mendelssohn
Piano Quartet in B min
Brahms Piano Quartet in A

April 25

Walton Piano Quartet in Dm,
Watkins Piano Quartet,
Fauré Piano Quartet in Cm,

June 6

Danny Elfman
Piano Quartet
Dvorak
Piano Quartet in E-flat, Op. 87

All virtual performances are available to watch online at ashuelotconcerts.org/live and on our Youtube & Facebook channels.



The healing power of music

Since COVID19 struck in March, the idea that classical music concerts might eventually disappear has gone from being unimaginable, to an immediate reality. While concert halls have fallen silent, the toll of the virus, lockdown and social-distancing restrictions on the community has increasingly become apparent.

There are already worrying trends obvious in terms of mental health and a widening achievement gap is developing in schools: According to the CDC one in four young adults seriously contemplated suicide

in June of this year and 40% of all adults reported struggling with their own mental health. Also, the OECD estimates that the loss of learning that has already taken place during 2020 for students in Grades 1-12 will result in a 3% reduction in income over their lifetimes with the disadvantaged feeling the longterm effects most acutely.

Live music has a unique ability to help with the healing that will be so necessary for our community after this period is over. Concerts serve an important purpose in the well-being of the community: Music has been

proven in countless clinical studies to reduce stress, improve mood and reduce depression and anxiety. Those of us who have been present for thousands of concerts can attest to the live experience being so much more potent than a recording or indeed a livestream.

Neuroscience has also produced countless studies that prove the huge educational value that music has for children. Studies have shown that a high-quality musical education improves IQ, focus, empathy, fine-motor skills, problem-solving capabilities, resilience, determination and confidence.

Ashuelot Concerts is committed to designing our future program to help with the recovery, where it is needed most.

In the meantime, we are focussed on doing everything possible to offer inspiring and uplifting live, musical programs to help mitigate some of the day to day stresses that will make this Winter a particularly challenging time for so many.

Announcing Our 88-Key Campaign

As part of our original conception and mission, it has always been our intention to build a "world-class" concert series. A series that features performances at the highest level and attracts many different touring international artists. Our theory is simple; the higher the quality of the performances, the greater the positive impact the music can have and the more enticing our program will become for first-time listeners, especially children.

A crucial next step in turning this vision into reality, is to purchase a concert-standard piano, specifically, a Steinway Model D built by the factory in Hamburg, Germany. This would be an invaluable asset which would

immediately, and significantly, improve the quality of our program. It would also give us the flexibility to present events in different places around the Monadnock Region, at venues that are currently not suitable due to the lack of a concert instrument.

The importance of this piano compared to smaller or less meticulously maintained pianos is best explained using these analogies:

- If you wear glasses, it is the feeling of putting on a new pair with an updated prescription - the world is suddenly so much clearer and vibrant. Even more striking is the realization that you had no idea how blurred your



vision had become.

- Imagine comparing the picture quality of the latest High Definition TV with an old boxy model from 20 years ago.

- Think of the difference between the quality of a professional landscape photograph of a stunning view compared to the snapshot which we are all able to capture on a cameraphone.

- Compare the sound quality of listening to music through the speaker of your phone compared to a high end sound system or headphones.

Concert musicians at the highest level are able to create almost limitless expression in sound using their instruments. While string players take their high-quality, concert-standard instruments wherever they play, any visiting pianist performing in our series has to use the instrument we provide.

By purchasing a high-quality, concert instrument, we will instantly and significantly improve the experience for our audience. The difference is so powerful, that it could easily turn

a new audience member of any age into a life-long classical music lover.

Purchasing this piano will also allow us to pursue new partnerships with venues and community spaces such as Stonewall Farm. By presenting concerts in different venues around the region, we will be able to open up our program to people we currently do not reach.

We will shortly be launching our 88-Key Campaign with the target of raising \$110,000 to enable the purchase, storage, maintenance and transport of this beautiful instrument. We also plan to make this instrument available to hire for

other concert presenters and venues in the area.

Over the next few weeks and months we will be looking for supporters to sponsor each of the 88 keys. Each key will cost \$1250 to sponsor.

For more information, please visit:

ashuelotconcerts.org/88keys



Keeping the Music Playing

In place of Ashuelot Concerts usual program of live, in-person events, we have gone to extraordinary lengths to continue to offer a captivating and inspiring live digital

program this season. Despite every conceivable effort, in-person concerts remain impossible for our small organization at this time. However, we are using this time to

build for the future, strive for better and reach as many new ears, hearts and souls as possible.

While 2020 has not quite turned out how any of us expected, our mission to bring music, musicians, lectures, talks, concerts and interviews to as many new ears as possible has been successful. Across our website, YouTube and Facebook channels we have reached over 10,000 people since mid-March! Our live-streams have enabled us to grow our audience locally, nationally and internationally, showcasing our mission across the globe.

Our vision to inspire positive change through music remains at the heart of what we do. Music heals and uplifts us. It taps into the core of what makes us human: our emotions. Ahead of what will no doubt be a challenging Winter, know that we are doing everything we can to make the world a better place through music.

PLEASE SUPPORT ASHUELOT CONCERTS TODAY!

These are extraordinary times and we ask for your support to help us sustain our program during this difficult period:

Please send a check or visit our website to donate securely online. Ashuelot Concerts is a 501(c)3 Non-Profit Corporation.
EIN: 84-2961387

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