



**ARTFUL  
ENTERTAINING  
UNEXPECTED**

**For immediate release 4.30.20**

## **Newport Music Festival’s 52nd Season Focuses on the Fall**

**The world-renowned festival will move its traditional July concerts to the fall and winter months in response to the COVID-19 outbreak**

**NEWPORT, R.I.** — The Newport Music Festival is focused on the fall. The 52-year-old festival renowned for its annual July concert schedule, hosted in some of Newport’s most prestigious venues, will reimagine its festival and move it to the fall and winter months in response to the COVID-19 outbreak. The responsibly curated new schedule will feature many of the hallmarks the festival is celebrated for: performances by world-renowned artists and its beloved Resident Artists as well as family-friendly concerts that are part of NMF’s Education and Outreach program. Details on the fall and winter schedule will be announced as local and state guidelines for that period are finalized.

“Over the last several weeks, our board of directors, staff and partners have been united by our resolve to ensure our 52-year-old festival remains a beacon of hope and inspiration to our attendees, and continues to be an economic driver supporting local businesses as well as our beloved Resident Artists,” said Newport Music Festival President and CEO Suzanna Laramee. “Like so many organizations, we have been closely monitoring the course of the outbreak and working with state and local officials to determine the most responsible way forward.”

### **Family First**

“From the tremendous amount of support we have already received from the NMF community — including our amazing partners and attendees — we are confident our decision is the right one, and we are looking forward to announcing our plans soon,” Laramee continued.

That early support has come from advance ticket holders who have donated their summer ticket purchases to the Festival’s Annual Fund and to donors who have agreed to extend their support to the fall. In response to an appeal made by Laramee and other board members, the NMF has converted 100% of the advance VIP season pass sales into donations, a testament to the community the festival has built over the decades. All current ticket holders will be given the option to turn their



**ARTFUL  
ENTERTAINING  
UNEXPECTED**

ticket purchases into a tax-deductible donation that will be matched dollar for dollar through the festival's [Alletta Morris McBean Charitable Trust's \\$500,000 Challenge Grant](#) or to obtain a full refund.

At the heart of the NMF community are **Resident Artists** who perform dozens of concerts each season and are featured in a variety of NMF Education and Outreach programs. To mitigate the impact of the rescheduled season on the artists, the festival has established the [NMF Resident Artist Fund](#) and is allocating a portion of all donations of 2020 summer season ticket sales to the fund.

## **Focused on the Fall**

The team leading the Festival through these unprecedented times has familiar faces well-known to the NMF community.

**Suzanna Laramee**, who was named president and CEO in November, has been part of the NMF family since 2015. She began her career as a professional musician, and then entered the financial industry where she managed teams in San Francisco and New York. Her love for the NMF began in 2015 when she performed as a guest artist and then as a Resident Artist in 2018. She became a member of the board of directors in 2015 and most recently served as vice president.

Along with Laramee, the 52nd annual festival will be reimagined by newly appointed Artistic Director **Trevor Neal**. Neal, a Grammy-nominated baritone, is already well-known to NMF audiences for his incredible performances over the past several seasons. Additionally, in 2019, Neal became the face of NMF's Education and Outreach program, spearheading a mission that mirrors his own: to provide new education initiatives to the underserved youth in our community with an emphasis on diversity and inclusion as a guiding principle.

"I am grateful to the board of directors for trusting me to lead the artistic vision of NMF into the future," said Neal. "I plan to continue to build on what our patrons have come to expect -- great classical music in Newport's historic venues while building on diverse and inclusive programming."



**ARTFUL  
ENTERTAINING  
UNEXPECTED**

## **In Gratitude**

“We are delighted to have Suzanna and Trevor lead us as the festival readies for another season. I also speak for the board of directors in my expression of gratitude to outgoing Executive Director, Pamela A. Pantos, for her visionary leadership over the past three years,” said Stephen Huttler, board vice president. “Her inspiration shaped the extraordinary 50th anniversary season and guided the design of the festival’s year-round presence in the community. An outstanding fundraiser, Pamela embedded development initiatives into the Festival’s culture, including the McBean Challenge Grant. Her focus on outstanding quality of artistry and concerts created audience-centric programming that included world-class artists, such as violinist Joshua Bell, mezzo-soprano Frederica von Stade, composer Jake Heggie, pianist Marc-André Hamelin, and Broadway star Meghan Hilty. Her marketing vision created a strong customer experience and invigorated the NMF brand with exciting and modern visuals. In an effort to engage the entire Newport community and offer the experience of classical music to all, she created our Education and Outreach program. Offerings included free outdoor concerts, performances at local public schools and the Martin Luther King Jr. Center afterschool program, the Young Professional Artist Program, and the free Fourth of July community concert, which now draws thousands of Newport citizens and visitors to King Park— initiatives that will remain a major focus for the festival for years to come.”

More information on the rescheduled 2020 season will be forthcoming in the next several weeks and will be updated on [www.NewportMusic.org](http://www.NewportMusic.org).

Press Inquiries  
Dayla Arabella Santurri  
781.479.6951  
[Dayla@DaylaArabella.com](mailto:Dayla@DaylaArabella.com)

**Newport Music Festival**  
53rd Anniversary  
Coming This Fall

[Twitter](#) | [Facebook](#)

For Tickets & More Information  
[www.newportmusic.org](http://www.newportmusic.org)  
401-849-0700  
[info@newportmusic.org](mailto:info@newportmusic.org)