

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: June 15, 2021

**ONE YEAR AGO, CLASSICAL MOVEMENTS BROUGHT BACK
THE FIRST CLASSICAL MUSIC CONCERT FOR LIVE AUDIENCE**

DEDICATED TO KEEPING IN-PERSON MUSIC ALIVE, DESPITE CHALLENGES

INNOVATIVE MODEL OF OUTDOOR, HOUR-LONG PROGRAMS

TO DATE: 68 CONCERTS, 180 PROFESSIONAL MUSICIANS, 2,368 AUDIENCE MEMBERS



June 20, 2021: Classical Movements presents the first live classical music in the U.S. since the start of the pandemic

Alexandria, VA

On Saturday, June 20, 2020 Classical Movements presented the first classical music concerts for a live, in-person audience in the gorgeous and acoustically excellent **Secret Garden** of the historic **Rectory on Princess Street**, Classical Movements' home in **Old Town Alexandria, VA**.

Following the success of those programs, Classical Movements expanded into a full concert season in an innovative model of **hour-long programs presented twice in an outdoor venue for limited, socially-distanced audiences** that was soon replicated across the country. Featured artists of the highest caliber have included internationally-renowned soloists and musicians from the **National Symphony, Metropolitan Opera, Philadelphia Orchestra, Washington National Opera**, and other eminent institutions.



“One year ago, when people were isolated and no one was performing at all, it was heartbreaking to know that our music and musicians were silenced,” says **Classical Movements President Neeta Helms**. “Knowing that we had our own beautiful garden in our historic, but empty building – and with all our tours cancelled – we planned three concerts in June 2020. After the overwhelming response from artists, audiences and the community and the extensive press, we decided to dedicate our time and creativity to presenting an almost-weekly concert series of chamber, vocal music, jazz and more. This was far from easy and became completely beyond anything we anticipated when the City of Alexandria told us to get a permit at the end of last year. Through it all, we have been buoyed by the unyielding support of our artists and audiences.”

Even while other venues across the nation are only just now reopening, Classical Movements has already been open for a year. **Between June 20, 2020 and June 20, 2021**, we will have...

- Presented **68 concerts** for **2,368** audience members of **chamber music, opera, choral music, jazz**, and more
 - Including the **first live choral concert** since the beginning of the pandemic, September 12, 2020

“This hidden gem provided a peaceful sanctuary and world-class performances throughout the pandemic. It keeps our souls alive.” – *Audience Member*

- Hired **180 professional musicians**, **two-thirds** of whom were **women or people of color** – and for all of whom this was their **first opportunity to perform for a live audience** since the beginning of the pandemic
 - Internationally renowned soloists including **Philadelphia Orchestra concertmaster David Kim** (May 20, 2021), **cellist Amit Peled** (April 24, 2021) and Metropolitan Opera **tenor Issachah Savage** (August 5, 2020) – to name only a few
 - **51** musicians from the National Symphony



“That was such a precious opportunity for us to play music together and see colleagues and friends from all over this area. It meant a lot to us and we were so grateful to be asked to be part of it.” – *Musician of the NSO*

- Programmed **280 works of music**, by **251 composers**



- Alongside such audience favorites as **Vivaldi's *Four Seasons*** and **Puccini's "O mio babbino caro,"** programs deliberately showcased works by often-overlooked women and composers of color, from the 18th century Venetian composer **Maddalena Sirmen** to **Molly Joyce** to a world-premiere by **B. E. Boykin**, commissioned by Classical Movements

- Through the end of the summer, **16 concerts** still to come for a total of **84 since June 2020**. Upcoming concerts include...
 - A festive **Juneteenth Celebration** (June 17) through classic spirituals, art songs, narration and for the first time in the Secret Garden, dance, headlined by rising stars of opera **baritone Jarrod Lee** (The Metropolitan Opera, Washington National Opera) and **soprano Shana Oshiro** (Opera Philadelphia, Baltimore Symphony), with **dancer Shawna Williams** (The Washington Ballet), **pianist Lester Green** and **narrator Pamela Simonson**
 - The **first staged opera in the Secret Garden**, Mozart's *Magic Flute* (June 24, 25 & 26) performed by a cast of 13 students from top conservatories across the United States
 - Schubert's famous, rarely performed *Trout Quintet* (July 1), also featuring **Carlos Simon**'s gorgeous "Be Still and Know" played by musicians from the National Symphony and featuring the first appearance in the Secret Garden of Classical Movements' Haines Brothers baby grand piano
 - Jazz quartet **Sweet Something** returns for a command performance of classic jazz standards (July 8)
 - Two Savory Soirees – a sophisticated combination of curated menu and musical program – honoring Bastille Day (July 17) and **Astor Piazzolla's centennial year** (August 14)
 - The Washington, DC-debut of tenor **Errin Brooks**, whose career took off in 2019 with debuts at Lincoln Center, Carnegie Hall and the Metropolitan Opera (in the Grammy Award-winning production of *Porgy and Bess*) before being interrupted by Covid-19; Brooks sings a winning program of favorite, heroic opera arias by Verdi, Puccini and more, in honor of the 100th anniversary of the death of Enrico Caruso and birth of Mario Lanza



By the end of August 2021, we will have presented **84 concerts**, engaged **227 artists**, and welcomed a total of at least **2,800 audience members** to the Secret Garden

For full details of all concerts in this and past seasons:

<https://www.classicalmovements.com/secretgardenconcerts/>

ABOUT CLASSICAL MOVEMENTS:

Classical Movements is the premier concert tour company for the world's great [orchestras](#) and [choirs](#), creating meaningful cultural experiences through orchestra tours and choir tours with their music in [145 countries](#). An industry leader since [1992](#), we understand both the travel and the performance needs of professional symphony orchestras and choruses, as well as conservatory, university and youth ensembles. Producer of two international choir festivals—[Ihlombe!](#) in South Africa and [Serenade!](#) in Washington, D.C.—and the [Prague Summer Nights: Young Artists Music Festival](#). Through our [Eric Daniel Helms New Music Program](#), we've commissioned over 97 works from Grammy, Oscar, Pulitzer and MacArthur-winning composers. Since our founding in 1992, as a truly global enterprise, **Classical Movements** remains committed to facilitating [cultural diplomacy](#) across the world.

During the time of COVID-19, Classical Movements has led the way to be the first to **present live, in person, classical music concerts** in The Secret Garden of our office, [The Rectory on Princess Street](#) with **40 concerts** from June to December 2020. We created our own [Choir of Hope & Harmony](#) as well as the **Hope & Harmony Ensemble** made up of **professional musicians from 14 major orchestras** for a virtual "Inauguration Fanfare in Honor of Joe Biden and Kamala Harris." In addition, we launched "[Ossia](#)", a virtual educational program for orchestral students, and partnered to create a virtual choral Festival "[Vox Virtual](#)". Finally, by using our resources and expertise in the fields of music and travel, we have developed a wide range of [national](#) and [international tours](#) for individuals and small groups including itineraries highlighting the [Civil Rights Journey](#).

Press Contact:

Adam Jackson

Classical Movements

+1 (703) 683-6040, ext. 201

Adam@ClassicalMovements.com