



Las Vegas Philharmonic Media Contact:
Michele Madole, VP Communications & Development
Phone (702) 462-2005
Email Michele@lvphil.com

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Las Vegas Philharmonic to Commission New Work From Composer, Juan Pablo Contreras as Part of New Music USA's Amplifying Voices Program

Las Vegas Philharmonic Will Lead Consortium of Orchestras to Commission and Perform Juan Pablo Contreras's New Work Inspired by the Las Vegas Community



LAS VEGAS (June x, 2020) – [The Las Vegas Philharmonic](#) (LVP) is pleased to announce that it has been selected as one of six orchestras in the U.S. to lead an initiative to co-commission a new orchestral work through New Music USA's Amplifying Voices program, supported by the Sphinx Venture Fund. Amplifying Voices fosters collaboration and collective action toward equitable

representation of composers in classical music. LVP will lead a collective of esteemed orchestras joined by California Symphony, Richmond Symphony Orchestra and one other TBD in the co-commission of a new musical work by Mexican composer, Juan Pablo Contreras. Contreras will immerse himself in the Las Vegas community, as he joins patrons and musicians on a journey of discovery three times throughout the coming year and engage deeply with our broader community in meaningful ways that both demonstrate the program's efficacy and speak to our community's unique spirit and vibrant potential. His resulting composition will be an inspired 12-minute orchestra work, which LVP will debut at its world premiere during the 2021-2022 season, under the baton of Music Director, Donato Cabrera.

Contreras is inspired to tell a story that celebrates the edge effect that occurs in communities that are in the shared border between the United States and Mexico. While Las Vegas is not in the specific geographic area cited in the concept, it shares many of the inherent elements explored in the project. The edge effect is an ecological concept that describes how there is a greater diversity of life in the region where the edges of two adjacent ecosystems (i.e. land/water) overlap. It is a place where you can find species from each region, as well as unique species that have specially adapted to the new environment. The composition will tell the story of these new communities where immigrants and locals blend their ways of living to create unique subcultures.

Contreras shares "I am thrilled to collaborate with the Las Vegas Philharmonic and their co-commissioning orchestras for this exciting project and I applaud them for championing voices from all backgrounds to feel more included and represented in the beautiful genre that is classical music. I'm extremely honored to be a part of New Music USA's "Amplifying Voices" program and to write a new work that will further this mission. My composition will shine a light on Mexican-American communities that have flourished in the border, and in cities like Las Vegas, where this cultural edge effect has taken place. My hope is that this will also continue to happen in classical music: that diversity is championed, and all voices are valued and heard."

"It is such an honor to bring Juan Pablo Contreras to work with the Las Vegas Philharmonic, to bring his artistic voice into this wonderful city with so much cultural intersection. To celebrate the diversity of our city through a world premiere is very exciting. Additionally, working alongside a consortium of orchestras within the New Music USA program will give the new work increased presence, and enhance the power of the story told," says LVP Executive Director Lacey Huszcza.

About Juan Pablo Contreras

Contreras is a Latin GRAMMY®-nominated composer and Universal Music recording artist who combines Western classical and Mexican folk music in a single soundscape. His works have been commissioned and performed by orchestras throughout the Americas including National Symphony Orchestra of Mexico, Simón Bolívar Symphony Orchestra of Venezuela, Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra, and Victoria Bach Festival Orchestra. Winner of the BMI William Schuman Prize, Presser Music Award, and the Young Artist Fellowship of Mexico's National Fund for Culture and the Arts, Contreras holds composition degrees from California Institute of the Art,

Manhattan School of Music, and is pursuing his DMA at University of Southern California.

www.juanpablocontreras.com

Contreras created a video for New Music USA, where he explains why this commission means so much to him and goes into the details of this collaboration: <https://youtu.be/1SB-983dm-g>.

Additional Composers selected for the Amplifying Voices program include Valerie Coleman, Tania León, Brian Raphael Nabors, Tyshawn Sorey, and Shelley Washington. Additional lead orchestras co-commissioning new works are The Philadelphia Orchestra commissioning Valerie Coleman, the Arkansas Symphony Orchestra commissioning Tania León, the Berkeley Symphony commissioning Brian Raphael Nabors, the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra commissioning Tyshawn Sorey, and Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra commissioning Shelley Washington.

Leadership at each orchestra will also work with their partner composer to increase the programming of works in their mainstream seasons by composers of all generations whose voices have not been represented in orchestral programming.

About New Music USA's Amplifying Voices

Amplifying Voices aims to make major strides in transforming the classical canon. According to the Institute for Composer Diversity's analysis of 120 American orchestras' 2019-2020 plans, 94% of music programmed for that season's mainstage orchestral concerts was written by white composers.

Through Amplifying Voices, New Music USA commits to be a steward and partner in a multitude of projects that foster strong working relationships between American orchestras and composers whose work should be more frequently heard in the concert hall. Amplifying Voices seeks to increase support and promotion of composers of color, bringing them to the table for artistic planning at major national orchestras, and ensuring orchestras' engagement with repertoire, past and present, that has previously been omitted from major concert programs.

About New Music USA

New Music USA supports the sounds of tomorrow by nurturing the creation, performance, and appreciation of new music for adventurous listeners around the world. We empower and connect US-based music makers, organizations, and audiences by providing funding through our Project Grants; fostering new connections through our programs; and deepening knowledge through our online magazine, NewMusicBox, and our work as an advocate for the field. New Music USA works in collaboration with its community in response to pressing needs and to amplify the diverse voices of music creators. New Music USA envisions a thriving and equitable ecosystem for new music throughout the United States. Amplifying Voices is the next step in New Music USA's 20 years of support for the orchestra sector in the US. It builds on New Music USA's Music Alive Composer residency program which was supported by Andrew W. Mellon Foundation and run in partnership with the League of Orchestras.

www.newmusicusa.org @newmusicusa

About The Sphinx Organization and Sphinx Venture Fund

The Sphinx Organization is the social justice organization dedicated to transforming lives through the power of diversity in the arts. Sphinx's four program areas – Education & Access, Artist Development, Performing Artists, and Arts Leadership – form a pipeline that develops and supports diversity and inclusion in classical music at every level: music education, artists performing on stage, the repertoire and programming being performed, the communities represented in audiences, and the artistic and administrative leadership within the field. Sphinx was founded in 1997 by Aaron P. Dworkin with the goal of addressing the underrepresentation of people of color in classical music. The name Sphinx, inspired by the mythical creature and legendary statue, reflects the power, wisdom and persistence that characterize Sphinx's participants, as well as the enigmatic and interpretive nature of music and art. Now led by President and Artistic Director Afa S. Dworkin, Sphinx programs reach more than 100,000 students and artists as well as live and broadcast audiences of more than two million annually.

Over five years, Sphinx will invest \$1.5 million to transform the future of cultural diversity, equity, and inclusion in the arts with the Sphinx Venture Fund (SVF). Through competitive grants, SVF will catalyze initiatives designed to solve a challenge or an issue related to DE&I in the sphere of the performing arts, with an emphasis on classical music. www.SphinxMusic.org

About the Las Vegas Philharmonic

The Las Vegas Philharmonic, led by Music Director Donato Cabrera, established its presence in Southern Nevada in 1998. The mission of the Las Vegas Philharmonic is to inspire a lifelong appreciation of music through performances and educational experiences for our community that enhance the lives of our residents and the culture of our city.

Music education and community engagement are the cornerstones of the Philharmonic's commitment to Las Vegas. The Youth Concert Series brings more than 23,000 children annually into the concert hall for a vital music education program, and the Las Vegas Philharmonic Concerto Competition recognizes and encourages emerging talent among Nevada youth in the area of music performance.

Each season of concerts showcases local talents alongside stellar nationally and internationally known guest artists on the magnificent Reynolds Hall stage. At the orchestra's core are 76 contracted professional musicians, many of whom are esteemed educators who also perform in other professional productions in Las Vegas, bringing depth and variety to the organization.

As a 501(c)(3) organization, the Philharmonic's community, education and artistic programs are made possible by the generous donations and support of individuals and corporations. To join us in our mission or learn more, visit lvphil.org or call 702.258.5438.

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PRESS CONTACT INFORMATION

Hi Res Photos of the Las Vegas Philharmonic are available on request from Michele Madole, VP of Communications & Development, Phone 702.462.2005, email michele@lvphil.com.