From: Wolf, Karin
To: "Samantha Crownover"
Subject: RE: Appearance at MAC meeting Tuesday?
Date: Wednesday, June 7, 2023 10:55:05 AM

Thank you, Sam.

I can distribute this in advance of the meeting.

You will need to register for public comment. You can do that here: https://www.cityofmadison.com/council/meetings/register.cfm#:~:text=You%20can%20register%20at%20www.participate%20in%2Dperson%20of%20virtually.

Thank you for taking the time to speak with them.

Best,
Karin

From: Samantha Crownover <samanthacrownover@sbcglobal.net>
Sent: Tuesday, June 6, 2023 12:49 PM
To: Wolf, Karin <KWolf@cityofmadison.com>
Subject: Appearance at MAC meeting Tuesday?

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Hi Karin,

Can I appear at the MAC meeting next Tuesday at 5:30? I would like to distribute this letter. I will read part of it, I know I would only have three minutes.

We at Bach Dancing & Dynamite Society are shocked and disappointed that for the outstanding, trail-blazing work we've done for 32 years in our community and for our national reputation as innovative arts leaders, our long-standing arts organization received neither funding nor endorsement, in the Legacy category no less, from the City of Madison.
Bach Dancing & Dynamite Society's three-week summer chamber music festival is a cultural pillar in the greater Madison area. Many smaller, newer chamber music festivals have popped up in Madison and around the country all using the model we developed in our first season. We taught them that model: the founders of these festivals were our students and our performers and our administrative assistants; we have mentored them as they began their own organizations, and we've helped them grow and thrive. From our first season in 1992, we've been committed to programming music by composers who were excluded from the mainstream: Black composers, Latin composers, Native American composers, Asian composers, women composers, LBGTQ composers, composers in their 90s, composers who are teenagers. Our first commission was awarded to a Latin composer, Miguel del Aguila, who went on to win a Latin Grammy. Our most recent commission, set to premiere later this week, was awarded to John Wineglass, a Black composer, and is based on a devastating short story by Alice Walker. Few classical music organizations in the country can match BDDS for its extraordinarily inclusive programming.
And few music organizations of our size can match us for the employment opportunities we have given artists. In our 32 years, we've provided high-level, meaningful employment for close to 1,000 musicians, composers, visual artists, graphic designers, dancers, and actors. These people come from Madison and from all over the US and Canada. Our musicians have national and international profiles and it's thrilling to have artists of this caliber in Madison performing for our community.
Chamber music is a very old collaborative art form, as it is music that is played by a small group, often a small group of friends, in a hall or a room in one's home. Music is still being composed for small ensembles like this; it is much easier for composers to have their music performed by chamber ensembles than by much larger chamber or symphony orchestras. The genre itself promotes diversity and inclusivity and deep engagement with the work of different voices. Yes, we play Beethoven. But we also play Jessie Montgomery and Shawn Okpebholo, and we program them alongside Beethoven as a sign of respect: their voices are just as worthy of being heard as Beethoven and Bernstein.
"Classical Music" is a complex art form that merits intense listening and that requires time and reflection. The common perception is that this does not appeal to twenty-somethings, but let's remember that music schools across the country are filled with those twenty-somethings. Those youngsters soon become older listeners. The more one listens, the more one learns, and the more enthusiastic one becomes. That's why super-devoted audiences tend to be older. However, our combination of commentary from the stage and fun surprises ensure we appeal to both new and long-time listeners. There's a tradition of great classical music-listening in Madison and beyond. WERN, our local and state wide radio station, offers one of the most successful classical music programs in the country. It was the first radio station of its kind.
It's no secret that our Madison schools don't provide sufficient music education opportunities in our schools. But we're grateful at the many initiatives addressing that lack, such as Madison Youth Arts and the new WYSO building. We need these foundational, community-based organizations to fill these roles. In our 32 years, Bach Dancing & Dynamite has collaborated with about 75 of them. You can look on our website under "community engagement." Next year we will partner with Madison Youth Choirs and Madison Choral Project.
Last, you must understand that our organization has one part time local employee, me, who administers all activities (along with our artistic directors and board, of course, a seasonal assistant, and volunteers I coordinate). In addition, because I am devoted to this community, to the arts, and to our organization, I volunteer my time to be co-host of the Art Party, which is a free, monthly event at arts venues. It brings together, with regularity and consistency, creative people in our community. It brings together ALL artistic disciplines, ALL ages, ALL ethnic/racial backgrounds, in ALL points of people's careers. I see the need for collaboration and for healing in our community and I am heeding the call with action through everything I do.
Arts organizations in all 50 states are perpetually struggling for funding. But only Wisconsin has the distinction of being the rock bottom last state in per capita funding for the arts. The dollars MAC provides are not many—but its endorsement, and the endorsement of the City of Madison, are critical to the success of local organizations, like ours. We invite you to join us at a concert or two. Our season is only three weeks long, June 9 – 25, and it begins this Friday!
Bachdancing.org
Thank you,
Sam

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