NWS BLUE PROGRAM
ANNUAL REPORT
2022–23

STÉPHANE DENÈVE
ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

MICHAEL TILSON THOMAS
CO-FOUNDER AND ARTISTIC DIRECTOR LAUREATE

HOWARD HERRING
PRESIDENT AND CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

CASSIDY FITZPATRICK CARLSON
SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT FOR MUSICIAN ADVANCEMENT AND DEAN

HEATHER OSOWIECKI
DIRECTOR OF ENTREPRENEURIAL LEADERSHIP

New World Symphony, America’s Orchestral Academy
500 17th Street, Miami Beach, FL 33139
The NWS BLUE program is made possible with support from the Maxine and Stuart Frankel Foundation and NWS’s Fund for New Ventures.

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NWS BLUE: BUILD, LEARN, UNDERSTAND, EXPERIMENT

New World Symphony’s BLUE program combines leadership and entrepreneurship training with hands-on experimentation for Fellows and alumni to provide a comprehensive business-oriented skill set alongside their artistic training and orchestral experience. NWS firmly believes that more skills than technical proficiency are required to be leaders in ensembles today.

In creating a robust support system for innovative musician-driven programming, NWS is on the cutting edge of training orchestral and community leaders of the future by providing essential immersive learning experiences within its personalized curriculum. A safe space for exploration, the NWS BLUE program allows Fellows and alumni the opportunity to explore impactful passion projects that are relevant to their goals as classical musicians, while purposefully reaching and engaging new audiences or deepening attachments to existing audiences atop undercurrents of equity, diversity, inclusion, belonging and sustainability. Through the BLUE program, NWS is leading the industry by creating a model for entrepreneurship and leadership training, continually evolving and adapting while sharing out real-time learnings with the field.
2022–23 NWS BLUE PROGRAM SNAPSHOT

NUMBER OF FELLOW PROJECTS* 23
NUMBER OF ALUMNI PROJECTS 4
NUMBER OF PARTNERS 61
NUMBER OF FACULTY 37

NWS BLUE Projects allow all Fellows and selected alumni to pursue musical activism and entrepreneurship based on their personal interests. This type of training fosters essential and comprehensive skill sets, putting Fellows in particular at a competitive advantage beyond their time at NWS. Each project begins with a Fellow or alumnus’ vision driven by their original ideas, from concept to execution. These projects are part of their training and development as artists.

Each NWS BLUE Project is comprised of a team of Fellows or alumni, headed by a team leader and mentored by an NWS staff member or outside professional with experience coaching artists. Team leaders developed initial project concepts and budgets in comprehensive applications submitted for consideration. All accepted projects were selected based on weighted average scores by a panel of relevant staff adjudicators in the criteria areas of: artistic content; impact and innovation; financial and staff resource feasibility; sustainability beyond the project’s initial implementation period; incorporation of actionable Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, and Belonging (EDIB) principles; and service to/building of the NWS mission, audience and community. Upon approval of their proposals, leaders then recruited team members to fully realize their projects, manage their budgets, and work collaboratively to fulfill various roles. Mentors coached Fellows and alumni, and NWS staff provided support and expertise throughout the season.

All projects, mentor meetings and curriculum activities took place using a variety of media, with a mix of remote and in-person activities for Fellows and a fully remote experience for alumni. Numerous programs were livestreamed or pre-recorded for later streaming in addition to serving in-house audiences. Other projects used digital platforms such as social media, YouTube, podcasting services and custom-developed websites. Fellows connected at the New World Center, virtually and throughout the greater Miami community to implement their projects, receive coaching and attend workshops facilitated by NWS BLUE visiting faculty.

Prepared piano on Musicians’ Forum #5

*Two Fellow projects were granted support for an extended planning phase beginning in the 2022–23 season and will culminate in the 2023–24 season. Descriptions of these projects will be included in the 2023–24 BLUE program annual report.
THE PROJECTS: OVERVIEW

Many of the following projects are concert formats that appear annually on the NWS calendar. The Inside the Music, Solo Spotlight and Musicians’ Forum series are free, ticketed chamber music events open to the community. The 2022–23 season marked the first-ever WALLCAST® concert performance of an NWS BLUE project featuring the full-orchestra El Maiz de mi Gente program, also webcast to members of the NWS Inside digital streaming service. At the New World Center, Fellows’ projects succeeded in attracting new audiences, with 32.4% of all BLUE ticketholders being first-time attendees. Beyond Miami, off-site and alumni BLUE Projects impacted communities in northern and central Florida, Illinois, Maine, Texas, Toronto and the Turks and Caicos.

INSIDE THE MUSIC SERIES

INSIDE THE MUSIC #1: COMPOSERS IN CONFLICT
Monday, October 24, 2022 at 7:00 PM ET
Fellows: Hyunjae Bae (leader), Christina Choi, Ye Jin Min
Alumnus: James Churchill

Whether political, social or personal, composers have always been inspired by the collective human experience of struggle. Drawing on their own individual backgrounds while also reflecting on current events, Fellows explored a range of works centered around the concept of composers creating in the midst of conflict, from whom powerful and poignant artistic statements have emerged.

INSIDE THE MUSIC #2: HONORING HEALTHCARE WORKERS
Tuesday, December 6, 2022 at 7:00 PM ET
Fellow: Alan Tolbert

In partnership with the Viano String Quartet, this program paid homage to the tireless efforts of healthcare heroes, featuring the southeast premiere of Ted Babcock’s String Quartet No. 2, “A Hero Quartet.” Audiences saw and heard the stories of individual frontline personnel interspersed between musical movements, illuminating similarities between artistic and medical institutions in their ever-resilient ability to uplift humanity and affect change. Later in the season, team members went into the community to offer live chamber performances to patients and medical staff in local hospitals.
INSIDE THE MUSIC #3: CELEBRATING BERNARD GARFIELD
Tuesday, January 17, 2023 at 7:00 PM ET
Fellows: Brendon Sill (leader), Wesley Ducote, Jessica Hong, Beatrice Hsieh, Noah Sonderling, Seth Van Embden
This program celebrated the life, works and career of bassoonist, educator and composer Bernard Garfield, retired principal bassoonist of the Philadelphia Orchestra with a tenure of over 40 years. The orchestra field’s current generation of leading bassoonists shared in their own words how Garfield’s influence was pivotal to their own careers as he instilled important lifelong lessons about humanity over artistry.

INSIDE THE MUSIC #4: SOUNDS OF THE EARTH—A MUSICAL JOURNEY THROUGH NATURE
Tuesday, March 14, 2023 at 7:00 PM ET
Fellows: Ye Jin Min (leader), Hyunjae Bae, Dominique Bégin, Kenneth Chauby, Guangwei Fan, Carolyn Farnand, Jessica Hong, India Hooi, Jingyi Rebecca Hou, Yu-Chia Hsu, Victor Huls, Jiyoung Lee, Minglun Liu, Nicholas Pelletier, Ayrton Pisco, Jaewon Seo, Brendon Sill, Noah Sonderling, Alan Tolbert, Mario Rivera, Chase Waterbury, Emily Yoshimoto
Fellows explored the ever-changing facets of nature in this immersive program that aimed to inspire appreciation for the harmonies present throughout the natural world while reckoning with the discord between the environment and humankind.

INSIDE THE MUSIC #5: QUEER AMERICANA
Tuesday, April 18, 2023 at 7:00 PM ET
Fellows: Wesley Ducote (leader), Allison Taylor
Programmed within Miami Beach Pride Month, this concert celebrated the rich history of queer U.S. artists, highlighting the many contributions of LGBTQIA+ musicians to American classical music. The program’s finale featured a solo piano work by Michael Tilson Thomas.
SOLO SPOTLIGHT SERIES

SOLO SPOTLIGHT #1: FELLOW FAVORITES
Monday, November 14, 2022 at 7:00 PM ET
Fellows: Dominique Bégin, Wesley Ducote, India Hooi, Beatrice Hsieh, Yu-Chia Hsu, Ye Jin Min, Ayrton Pisco, Brendon Sill, Noah Sonderling, Seth Van Embden
Fellows brought their favorite works to the stage, sharing personal stories of musical connection that lent new meaning to the repertoire of the first Solo Spotlight of the season.

SOLO SPOTLIGHT #2: SOUNDSCAPES—A MUSICAL JOURNEY THROUGH THE SEASONS
Monday, December 12, 2022 at 7:00 PM ET
Fellows: Benjamin Cruz (leader), Emily Bieker, Kamila Dotta, Carolyn Farnand, Min Ha Kim, Jakob Lenhardt, Sabrina Parry, Noah Sonderling, Allison Taylor, Seth Van Embden
Audiences joined Fellows for an artistic journey through the four seasons in a program that aimed to evoke a sense of urgency for preserving the beauty of the earth through a collective call for climate action.

SOLO SPOTLIGHT #3: GET IT!—CONTEMPORARY WORKS FOR CELLO AND PERCUSSION
Monday, January 23, 2023 at 7:00 PM ET
Fellows: Amy Sunyoung Lee (leader), Ben Cornavaca, Joe Desotelle, Matthew Kibort, Jennifer Marasti, Jacquelyn O'Brien, Phoebe Powell
This program helped audiences discover the unique and rarely paired sonic landscape of cello and percussion. Using skillful techniques, specialized technology and theatrical elements, Fellows showcased a variety of styles and timbres as they highlighted the compelling relationship possible between these two instrument families when thoughtfully combined.
SOLO SPOTLIGHT #4: LOVE STORIES
Monday, March 20, 2023 at 7:00 PM ET
Fellows: Ka-Yeon Lee (leader), Noah Sonderling
Alumnus: Antonio Escobedo
Full of comfort and warmth, this program aimed to activate the healing power of music through a lovingly selected list of works that have ignited passionate fires of musical inspiration within the Fellows performing on stage.

SOLO SPOTLIGHT #5: EMBRACING THE WILDERNESS
Monday, April 10, 2023 at 7:00 PM ET
Fellow: Eleni Katz (leader)
Audiences journeyed through the wilderness and tangled webs of friendship in this multimedia recital that intertwined reed instruments with vocals, poetry and visual art. This program featured multiple commissions as well as custom animations and videography accompanying each musical selection by the NWS Media team.
MUSICIANS’ FORUM SERIES

Monday, November 7, 2022 at 7:00 PM ET
Monday, December 5, 2022 at 7:00 PM ET
Monday, February 27, 2023 at 7:00 PM ET
Monday, March 27, 2023 at 7:00 PM ET
Monday, April 24, 2023 at 7:00 PM ET
Fellows: Peter Ayuso, Vivian Chang, Julianna Darby, Nicholas Pelletier, Tanavi Prabhu
Curated and produced by the Fellows, Musicians’ Forums came alive in the New World Center’s Michael Tilson Thomas Performance Hall through musical inspiration, spontaneity and unique artistic partnerships.

PERFORMANCE AND VENUE-BASED PROJECTS

EL MAÍZ DE MI GENTE
Saturday, November 12, 2022 at 7:30 PM ET
Fellows: Julia Karstens (co-leader), Luis Salazar (co-leader), James Zabawa-Martinez (co-leader), Yanki Karataş, Natalie Lee, Gabrielle Monachino, David Olson
A celebration of the variety of musical and visual art that Mexico has to offer, El Maíz de mi Gente was a multimedia experience uplifting the similarities and differences in us all through the narrative lens of a Mayan creation story. This project was the first-ever NWS BLUE program to be featured as part of the WALLCAST® and NWS Inside webcast series.

CAROL OF THE BASSES
Sunday, December 4, 2022 at 1:00 PM and 3:00 PM ET
Fellows: Lindsey Orcutt (leader), Bryan Bailey, Jakob Gerritsen, Josephine Kim, Logan May, Matthew Peralta, Eric Windmeier
A festive ensemble of bassists performed arrangements of holiday favorites plus newly written seasonal creations for unhoused community members at Lotus House and Chapman Partnership.
NWS IN THE CARIBBEAN

Wednesday, April 5, 2023 through Sunday, April 9, 2023

Fellows: Nash Ryder (leader), Hosanna Carella, Emily Yoshimoto

Fellows embarked on a multi-day residency in the Turks and Caicos, developing engaging and collaborative outreach performances and educational exchanges in support of the accessibility-focused Ashley’s Learning Center.

BEER AND BRASS

Season-Long Project

Fellows: Morgen Low (leader), David Alexander, Spencer Bay, Kyle Thompson

A newly commissioned chamber work by Zoe Cutler was inspired by the effervescent combination of beer and brass. Persisting through challenges in identifying an available partner brewery for the 2022–23 season, the team now aims to culminate their program by debuting the commissioned work alongside other festive brass ensemble tunes in a live Oktoberfest performance at a local beer hall during the early months of the 2023–24 season.

BLUE AND GREEN SUSTAINABILITY TEAM

Season-Long Project

Fellows: Zoë Merrill (leader), Jacob Buhler, Hana Cohon, Mark Debski, Maggie O’Leary, Justin Park, Mario Rivera

By building a Green Team of environmentally conscious advocates and experts, Fellows aimed to contribute towards a long-term artistic future for NWS through a sustainability planning process intended to reduce institutional climate impact, promote an internal culture of environmental responsibility and stewardship, and bring awareness to the ideologies of intersectional environmentalism.
COLLEGE TRACK MENTORSHIP PROGRAM

Season-Long Project
Fellows: Caleb Breidenbaugh, Christina Choi, Kamila Dotta, Eleni Katz, Josephine Kim, Maggie O’Leary, Luis Salazar, Allison Taylor, Chase Waterbury, Eric Windmeier
Fellows spent the 2022–23 season coaching and mentoring local high-school-aged musicians both virtually and on-site at the New World Center. The student participants each had a demonstrated financial need and were from communities historically excluded from classical music.

FELLOWS CHOIR

Season-Long Project
Fellows: India Hooi (leader), Victor Huls, Ye Jin Min, Noah Sonderling
Through the establishment of an informal internal choral ensemble, Fellows built community, well-being and new musical leadership skills to enhance their interpersonal and artistic experiences at NWS through communal vocal artistry and experimentation.

NWS LOW BRASS TOUR AND ALBUM RECORDING

Season-Long Project
Fellows: Andrew Abel (leader), Guangwei Fan, Noah Roper, Chase Waterbury
With a focus on education and resource-building, New World Symphony’s low brass section embarked on a season-long endeavor to bring master classes, section leadership training and chamber performances to higher learning institutions throughout the southeast, culminating in an album release project featuring previously unrecorded repertoire and a commission. Residencies included:

- University of South Florida (Tampa), October 31–November 1, 2022
- Florida State University (Tallahassee), March 6–7, 2023
DIGITAL PROJECTS

AUDIENSYNC
Season-Long Project
Fellows: Thea Humphries (leader), Joo Bin Yi
AudienSync is a robust, interactive online guide that facilitates meaningful audience interactions and experiences by bringing confidence to teaching artists and performers of all experience levels. This user-friendly resource site is full of adaptable and accessible interactive concert activities categorized by audience, musical elements, interactivity and more. In November, team leader Thea Humphries received the honor of being named a 2022 Knight Emerging Arts Champion by the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation for her outstanding work on this project.

CLEARING THE STAGE
Season-Long Project
Fellows: Carson Marshall (leader), Natsuko Takashima
Clearing the Stage combined guided meditation with music and spoken word to deepen listening experiences and help audiences build emotional resiliency and self-regulation via podcasts and live events. Through the commission of musicians, poets and meditation guides, listeners were brought through an emotional arc of intensity, embracing musical tension and dissonance as an engaging focal point.

@FELLOWSOFNWS
Season-Long Project
Fellows: Kenneth Chauby, Carolyn Farnand, Sabrina Parry
Through the active management of a social media account featuring engaging Fellow-curated content, @fellowsofnws aimed to create a living archive of the fellowship experience by celebrating all the individuals that make NWS America’s Orchestral Academy.

SPOTLIGHT SERIES WITH MUSIC:DECONSTRUCTED
Season-Long Project
Fellows: Allison Taylor (leader), Jacob Buhler, Shomya Mitra, Toby Winarto
This digital media series intended to promote widely accessible social learning, creative participation and meaningful discourse, highlighting the role of intersectionality in the arts and the importance of representation in collaboration with Music:Deconstructed. The project culminated in the recording of a newly commissioned work by a young composer aligned with the project’s ethos.
ALUMNI PROJECTS

AUSTIN UNCONDUCTED
Alumna: Andrea Beyer (Bass, 2017–2020)
Location: Austin, Texas
Austin Unconducted is a new, conductor-less orchestra that builds community by creating inclusive, immersive and relevant concert experiences to engage diverse audiences. As a cooperative orchestra, they re-examine the long arc of musical tradition through a contemporary lens with performances that promote equity and generate new excitement for art music in their ever-changing city. Unconfined by tradition, unafraid to feature unheard voices and unapologetically Austin, they are keeping music current.

HOLD FAST STRATEGIES
Location: Digital, based in Chicago, Illinois
In transitioning from the role of performer to that of advocate and catalyst, the NWS alum behind Hold Fast Strategies aimed to address vital community needs with tangible implications for progressive programming, authentic inclusivity and musician job security through the creation of a public relations and brand development consultancy serving classical and new-music artists across the nation.
SONORITY SISTERS: 6 IN THE 6IX
Location: Toronto, Ontario, Canada
Sonority Sisters is a violin and flute duo first formed in the summer of 2020 to share music in creative and safe ways in response to a need for shared human connection. After connecting with over one million Canadians and sharing over 15,000 minutes of classical music, the duo focused their project on commissioning a relay-style musical work co-created by six composers in celebration of Toronto’s unique diversity, enabling citizens of “The 6ix” (a local nickname for Toronto) to experience a more personal relationship with classical music.

![Image of Alum Kal Sugatski in performance at Vigorous Tenderness’ vernal equinox program at Bradbury Mountain State Park](image)

VIGOROUS TENDERNESS: A VERNAL EQUINOX CONCERT
Alum: Kal Sugatski (Viola, 2012–2014)
Location: Portland, Maine
Vigorous Tenderness is an outdoor concert series that amplifies marginalized voices in classical music and democratizes new and experimental works. Featuring performances on the solstices and equinoxes, Vigorous Tenderness brings classical music out of the rarified concert hall into Maine’s enchanting public spaces. This program celebrated the reemergence of spring with chamber music and forestscapes featuring music by composers of color and those from the LGBTQIA+ community. This vernal equinox event resembled an art museum experience, with chamber music blooming throughout the landscape while the audience followed a path of listening and reflection.
NWS BLUE PROJECT MENTORS

Rafael Baldwin*
Christina Bonatakis*
Cassidy Fitzpatrick Carlson*
Eduardo Delgado*
Larry Dressler, Blue Wing Consulting
Carlton Ford, Taproot Foundation/Nu Deco Ensemble
Tom Hadley*
Lisa Husseini, Lisa Husseini Consulting
Mary Javian, Curtis Institute of Music
Michael Linville*

Nicholas Luby, The Concert Truck
Elyse Marrero*
Nicole Newman, Yoga for the Arts
Heather Osowieck*
Charlotte Schou*
Marte Siebenhar, Cultured Innovations
Kewan Smith*
Tatum Travers*
Justin Trieger*
Susan Zhang, The Concert Truck

Fellows in the Turks and Caicos with mentor Kewan Smith

Fellows Choir workshop with Patrick Dupré Quigley of Seraphic Fire

VISITING FACULTY

Jeffrey Apana, AFM Local 655
Paul Austin, International Conference of Symphony and Opera Musicians
Siggi Bachmann*
Rafael Baldwin*
Tamika Bickham, TB Media Group
Rachel Campagna, Stagetime
Danielle Cannon, Right to Be
Peter Dahl, Define Sustainability
Susan Dodd, Master Chorale of South Florida
Cody Engstrom, The Guild Live
Julisa Fusté*
Laura González-Estefani, TheVentureCity Summit
Fredara Mareva Hadley, The Juilliard School
Lisa Husseini, Consultant
Tanya Kalmanovitch, National Endowment for the Arts
JT Kane, Manhattan School of Music
Brett Karlin, Master Chorale of South Florida
Sarah Kim, Stagetime
Nicholas Luby, The Concert Truck

Peter Mir, Villain Theater
Lynne Morrow, Oakland Symphony Chorus
Jennie Moser, Stagetime
Deborah Newmark, American Federation of Musicians
Maureen O’Brien*
Erica Peng, Consultant
Patrick Dupré Quigley, Seraphic Fire
Charles Reskin, AFM Local 655
Jannelys Santos, Villain Theater
Clyde Scott*
Rochele Skolnick, American Federation of Musicians
Tiffany Conn Soricelli, Virtuoso Advising and Asset Management for Artists
Tatum Travers*
Justin Trieger*
Stephen Wade, Regional Orchestra Players Association
Alisa Weilerstein, Concert Cellist
Eric Woolsey, Stagetime
Susan Zhang, The Concert Truck

*Indicates NWS staff member
PARTNERS

American Federation of Musicians
Ameyal Mexican Cultural Organization
ARTSail
Ted Babcock
Sophia Bass
Richard Brasseale
Harry Castle
Chapman Partnership
James Churchill
John Clouser
The Concert Truck
Consulado General de México en Miami
Flor Cron
Rui Cruz
Zoe Cutler
Define Sustainability
Antonio Escobedo

intí fíggis-vizueta
Horacio Franco
Bernard Garfield and Family
Anthony Georgeson
Juan de Gomar
Julian Goodwin-Ferris
Satoki Habuchi
Juliet Hay
Timothy Higgins
Instituto Mexicano de Cinematografía
International Conference of Symphony and Opera Musicians
Mio Ishikawa
Javier Jara
Alison Yun-Fei Jiang
The Juan Carlos
Maldonado Art Collection

Ho-Yin Kwok
Michelle Lorimer
Lotus House
Petra Love
Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry
Arafín Mansouri
Maria-Eduarda Mendes Martins
Master Chorale of South Florida
Alberto Hernández Mérida
Bill Morrison
Samuel Murillo
Music:Deconstructed
National Endowment for the Arts

New York University
Stephanie Orlando
Sun-A Park
Frances Pollock
Tanner Porter
Olga Rabetskaya
Regional Orchestra Players Association
Llewellyn Sanchez-Porter
Seraphic Fire
Billy Short
TB Media Group
Stagetime
Viano Quartet
Villain Theater
Virtuoso Advising for Artists and Asset Management
VolunteerCleanup.org

*Indicates artist commissioned through NWS
## WORKSHOPS OFFERED

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<td>SEPTEMBER 19</td>
<td>NWS BLUE Mentor Training Session</td>
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<td>OCTOBER 11</td>
<td>Developing Projects with Passion and Purpose &amp; Audience Building 101 with The Concert Truck</td>
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<td>OCTOBER 20</td>
<td>Fellow BLUE Project Kick-off Session</td>
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<td>NOVEMBER 14–15</td>
<td>Team Building Sectionals</td>
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<td>NOVEMBER 28</td>
<td>Introductory Leadership Practice: Calm Reactivity for Individual and Team Performance</td>
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<td>DECEMBER 5</td>
<td>Fellow BLUE Project Kick-off Session</td>
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<td>DECEMBER 7</td>
<td>Public Speaking and Conversational Improvisation</td>
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<td>JANUARY 19</td>
<td>Fellow-led Leadership Panel with Alisa Weilerstein</td>
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<td>JANUARY 31</td>
<td>Introduction to Negotiation Techniques</td>
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<td>FEBRUARY 12</td>
<td>Choral Workshop hosted by Fellows Choir BLUE Team</td>
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<td>FEBRUARY 15</td>
<td>TheVentureCity Tech Innovation Summit</td>
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<td>MARCH 6</td>
<td>Finance for Artists</td>
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<td>Individual Financial Planning Sessions</td>
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<td>Team Building Sectionals</td>
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<td>MARCH 13–14</td>
<td>NWS x NYU NEA Arts Entrepreneurship Summit</td>
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<td>MARCH 15</td>
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<td>MARCH 21</td>
<td>Introduction to Fundraising</td>
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<td>MARCH 21</td>
<td>Introduction to Grant Writing</td>
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<td>APRIL 18</td>
<td>Union 101 with AFM, ICSOM and ROPA</td>
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<td>APRIL 20</td>
<td>Choral Workshop hosted by Fellows Choir BLUE Team</td>
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<td>APRIL 27</td>
<td>BLUE End-of-Season Fellow Peer Share-out Session</td>
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<td>MAY 11</td>
<td>Sustainability at NWC Workshop hosted by Fellow BLUE and Green Team</td>
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<td>MAY 26</td>
<td>BLUE End-of-Season Alumni Peer Share-out Session</td>
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*First-year Fellows in an improv workshop with facilitators from Villain Theater*

*Fellow panelists with Alisa Weilerstein*
BUDGET

The NWS BLUE program was made possible with support from the Maxine and Stuart Frankel Foundation, which provided a generous three-year gift of $250,000. Their gift enabled an expanded education focused on media, technology and digital spaces for both Fellows and alumni. Additional program support came from the NWS Fund for New Ventures.

All teams were required to create and manage their project’s budget. Amounts ranged from $100 to $16,000 depending on the needs and goals of each project.

ASSESSMENT

NWS staff conducted an evaluation of Fellows and alumni via surveys collecting both quantitative and qualitative data. The purpose of the surveys was to evaluate the overall effectiveness of the program as experienced by its participants, including the NWS BLUE Project curriculum, during the 2022–23 season. The surveys were not designed to evaluate the projects or participants themselves.

At the end of the fellowship year, Fellows and alumni were asked to rate their level of skill and confidence at the start of their project vs. at the present time on a scale of 1 (lowest score) to 5 (highest score) in the following categories:

- Audience Experience and Design Thinking
- Budgeting and Finance
- Event Production and Operations
- Fundraising and Patron Relations
- Leadership and Team Building
- Marketing and Communications
- Negotiation and Advocacy
- Project Management
- Public Speaking

Respondents were also asked to rate themselves on their level of job preparedness plus perceived ability and confidence in acquiring and creating new work opportunities as artistic professionals.
FELLOW ASSESSMENT RESULTS

52 Fellows completed the assessment, representing a 62% response rate. Of these respondents, 28 began their fellowship during the 2022–23 season, and 24 began their fellowship in a prior year.

Every curricular area saw an increase in skills over the course of the season. The self-reported overall skill/confidence increases in the following topical areas were, from greatest to least:

- EVENT PRODUCTION AND OPERATIONS: 36.9%
- PROJECT MANAGEMENT: 31.3%
- FUNDRAISING AND PATRON RELATIONS: 31.3%
- NEGOTIATION AND ADVOCACY: 31.0%
- AUDIENCE EXPERIENCE AND DESIGN THINKING: 27.8%
- LEADERSHIP AND TEAM BUILDING: 22.3%
- BUDGETING AND FINANCE: 20.9%
- MARKETING AND COMMUNICATIONS: 19.5%
- PUBLIC SPEAKING: 13.7%

In addition, Fellows self-reported the following overall increases in confidence in the areas of acquiring and creating work opportunities and job preparedness:

- CREATING WORK OPPORTUNITIES: 18.4%
- ACQUIRING WORK OPPORTUNITIES: 17.6%
- JOB PREPAREDNESS: 16.6%

Fellows who began their fellowship during the 2022–23 season self-reported, on average:
- a 29.5% higher level of knowledge in curriculum topics
- a 15.7% increase in confidence in job preparedness, acquisition and creation

Fellows who began their fellowship prior to the 2022–23 season self-reported, on average:
- a 22.3% higher level of knowledge in curriculum topics
- a 19.8% increase in confidence in job preparedness, acquisition and creation

First-year Fellows learning about unions and advocacy with representatives from AFM, ICSOM and ROPA
ALUMNI ASSESSMENT RESULTS

4 alumni team leaders completed the assessment, representing an 80% response rate that was reflective of all 4 alumni teams, as one team (Sonority Sisters) had two co-leaders.

Every curricular area saw an increase in skills over the course of the season. The self-reported overall skill/confidence increases in the following topical areas were, from greatest to least:

- **FUNDRAISING AND PATRON RELATIONS**: 40.0%
- **BUDGETING AND FINANCE**: 27.3%
- **LEADERSHIP AND TEAM BUILDING**: 21.4%
- **NEGOTIATION AND ADVOCACY**: 16.7%
- **PROJECT MANAGEMENT**: 12.5%
- **EVENT PRODUCTION AND OPERATIONS**: 12.5%
- **AUDIENCE EXPERIENCE AND DESIGN THINKING**: 12.5%
- **MARKETING AND COMMUNICATIONS**: 7.7%
- **PUBLIC SPEAKING**: 6.7%

In addition, alumni self-reported the following overall increases in confidence in the areas of acquiring and creating work opportunities and job preparedness:

- **JOB PREPAREDNESS**: 12.5%
- **CREATING WORK OPPORTUNITIES**: 6.3%
- **ACQUIRING WORK OPPORTUNITIES**: 0.0%

The 2022–23 alumni cohort self-reported overall, on average:
- a 17.5% higher level of knowledge in curriculum topics
- a 6.3% increase in confidence in job preparedness, acquisition and creation

*Alumni team leaders with NWS staff at the virtual kick-off meeting for the Alumni BLUE Project cohort*
NEA RESEARCH LAB

Launched in the 2021–22 season, NWS BLUE has been the focus of a study by the National Endowment of the Arts (NEA) which established an NEA Research Lab on Sustainable Entrepreneurship in the Performing Arts as part of NYU Steinhardt’s Music and Audio Research Lab. The purpose of this lab is to research methods and practices of sustainable entrepreneurship and innovation within the classical music ecosystem in the United States as the field responds and evolves in the post-COVID-19 world. This lab is funded by the NEA’s Arts, Entrepreneurship and Innovation research program.

The lab’s research agenda, spanning at least five years, will address the following two questions:

- What individual and organizational characteristics and practices best support sustainable, culturally and locally relevant entrepreneurial activity and innovation among current and former NWS Fellows, their employers, feeder organizations and schools?
- What role might performing arts training organizations such as NWS play in promoting artistic and civic innovation among early-career musician artists within their communities and feeder organizations?

The initial keystone study will investigate and map the entrepreneurial mindsets, attitudes and attributes of early-career musicians enrolled in the NWS fellowship program and their impact on community partners as they experience the NWS BLUE entrepreneurial leadership training curriculum and respond to a post-COVID-19 world.

Future studies will extend understandings derived from the initial keystone study to the broader classical music training and professional ecosystem to investigate the successful entrepreneurial and intrapreneurial mindsets, organizational characteristics and practices of NWS alumni, the organizations and communities in which they work, as well as the feeder educational organizations whose graduates become future NWS Fellows.

Vital to understanding entrepreneurial mindsets and practices of sustainability, cultural relevance and creative place-making within and through the classical music field is a trans-disciplinary approach to research, integrating strategies drawn from the disciplines of education, psychology, artistic practice and critical theory. Quantitative, qualitative and artistic research methods will continue to be used for data collection, analysis and dissemination.

Key Personnel:

- S. Alex Ruthmann, Principal Investigator
- Tanya Kalmanovitch, Co-Principal Investigator
- Meghan Todt Williams, Research Associate
THE FUTURE OF NWS BLUE

- Project application criteria expansion to value multidisciplinary, collaborative, audience-targeted projects even more highly
- New value and feedback models to ensure high-impact Fellow learning experiences
- Reimagined mentorship model with increased peer-to-peer learning and alumni involvement
- Greater investment in institutional marketing per project as well as enhanced audience engagement feedback mechanisms
- Awards of recognition for exemplary achievement in building new audiences

“This program was immensely helpful for me at this point in my career. A lot became possible for my organization that we had not expected, positioning us for greater impact and growth in the next year. The NWS BLUE support came at a crucial time, early in our existence when it is difficult to secure outside funding, which we have now been able to sustainably leverage to other potential donors. Plus, our mentor was game-changing!

—ALUMNI TEAM LEADER

Having worked on several teams this season, I now truly appreciate how great this BLUE program is. The ability for anyone to start any kind of different creative endeavor, something that hasn't been done before... it's such an amazing opportunity to get support and broaden your skillset, and we all should be taking full advantage of it!

—FELLOW TEAM LEADER/MEMBER