

# WIPA's 2019-2020 Concert Season

## Focus: Equity, Diversity & Inclusion

By Mabel Pais

**"We view our work through the lens of social justice and shared power, ensuring that our programs are accessible to all students despite their ability to pay, socioeconomic background or where they come from."**  
- Peter H. Gistelincq, Executive Director

The Wharton Institute for the Performing Arts (WIPA), New Jersey's largest non-profit community performing arts education organization announced today its 2019-2020 season, featuring 35 public events presented by over 1,500 talented students and faculty members. And with a grant from The Catalyst Fund of the League of American Orchestras, Wharton Institute for the Performing Arts (WIPA) embarks this season on an equity, diversity, and inclusion initiative to help advance its mission to create supportive and inclusive learning for a wide range of students.

"As we continue to inspire our students to strive for personal excellence through performing arts education, we desire to practice culturally responsible instruction by embracing and celebrating diversity on and off the stage," says WIPA Artistic Director and Principal Conductor Helen H. Cha-Pyo. "To this end, we will offer more intentional programming this season with works representing cultures from around the world and music written by under-represented composers, in addition to celebrating the 250th anniversary of Beethoven's birth with over 15 works by this beloved 19th century composer."

"Wharton Institute for the Performing Arts (WIPA) is committed to transforming communities through music education, a powerful tool that affects the greater education system by improving student graduation rates, college readiness, and job readiness," says incoming Executive Director and new force behind Wharton's growing community presence, Peter H. Gistelincq. "It also spurs economic development by making communities more attractive to live in, creating jobs, and improving quality of life as Wharton's programs impact communities across the state of NJ from Berkeley Heights, to Paterson, and beyond. Above all, we view our work through the lens of social justice and shared power, ensuring that the benefits of music are accessible to all students despite their ability to pay, socioeconomic background or where they come from."

The New Jersey Youth Symphony (NJYS), a Wharton Institute for the Performing Arts program, officially opens the symphonic season on Saturday, October 26 at 8:00pm at Montclair State University's Kasser Theatre. Featuring a joint concert with the MSU Symphony Orchestra and NJYS Youth Symphony led by Cha-Pyo, the concert also marks the debut of the newly minted clarinet quartet "CL4tet."

"Two Nutcrackers: Tchaikovsky & Ellington," a rare performance not to be missed, on Sunday, December 8 at 3:00pm, NJYS will give at the Union County Performing



Helen H. Cha-Pyo and Peter H. Gistelincq

Photo / WIPA

Arts Center, located at 1601 Irving Street in Rahway. The NJYS and Jazz Orchestra will perform side-by-side in this holiday spectacular sure to delight the entire family. Tickets can be purchased at [www.ucpac.org](http://www.ucpac.org).

In addition to collaborating with and under the guidance of a consultant to further equity, diversity, and inclusion, NJYS will celebrate female African-American composers Florence Price and Julia Perry in a concert on Sunday, January 26 at 4:00pm at Princeton University's Richardson Auditorium.

A world premiere by New Jersey resident Aferdin Stephens, winner of the 2018 Bohuslav Martin? Award and 2018 ASCAP Young Composer Award, will be featured alongside the annual NJYS Concerto Competition winner on Sunday, May 3 at 7:30pm at Rutgers University's Mason Gross Performing Arts Center.

The Performing Arts School (PAS) Wharton Players will present "Elf, Jr." on Friday, December 6 and Saturday, December 7 at 7:00pm and Sunday, December 8 at 3:00pm in the Wharton Arts 100-seat black box theatre located at 60 Locust Avenue in Berkeley Heights. Tickets can be purchased at [whartonarts.org](http://whartonarts.org). PAS will also present practical workshops and inspiring master classes with world-class artists such as Afendi Yusuf, Principal Clarinet of the Cleveland Orchestra, and Dr. Min Kwon, Professor of Piano at the Mason Gross School of the Arts at Rutgers University.

WIPA's Paterson Music Project (PMP) will perform in nearly 30 public performances this season, including the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial Park ribbon-cutting ceremony in Paterson and at the Prudential Center located at 25 Lafayette Street in Newark on Tuesday, February 11 at 6:00pm prior to the New Jersey Devils' game against the Florida Panthers.

Tickets to the game can be purchased through [Ticketmaster.com](http://Ticketmaster.com).

On March 29 at 3:00pm, the annual crowd-pleasing Playathon pops concert takes place at The Mills at Jersey Gardens in Elizabeth, featuring a 500-piece orchestra performing a wide range of movie and Broadway favorites. Students from NJYS, PMP, and PAS participate in this day of music making, furthering the organization's mission to make performing arts accessible to everyone.

The season culminates with the NJYS American Celebration of Music Concert Series in Italy, June 27- July 6. The tour, including four orchestral concerts and one chamber concert, will present some of NJYS' and the Garden State's most talented young musicians at Milan's Teatro dal Verme, Florence's Teatro Verdi, Rome's St. Andrea della Valle and St. Eustachio, and Albano's Festival Liszt Albano at Castel Gandolfo. NJYS will participate in a festival exchange with the Florence Conservatory of Music (Conservatorio Luigi Cherubini) in an exclusive concert series through Music Celebrations International.

For ticket information and full 2019-20 season brochure, visit [WhartonArts.org](http://WhartonArts.org).

### About WIPA And Its Mission

The Wharton Institute for the Performing Arts' (WIPA) mission is to provide the highest quality performing arts education to a wide range of students in a supportive and inclusive environment, where striving for personal excellence inspires and connects those we teach to the communities we serve.

Wharton Arts is New Jersey's largest independent non-profit community performing arts education center serving over 1,500 students through a range of classes and ensembles including the 15 ensembles of the New Jersey Youth Symphony (NJYS), which serve 500 students in grades 3 - 12 by audition. Beginning with Out of the Box Music and Pathways classes for young children, Wharton

Arts offers private lessons, group classes, and ensembles for all ages and all abilities at the Performing Arts School (PAS). With the belief in the positive and unifying influence of music and the performing arts and that arts education should be accessible to all people regardless of their ability to pay, Wharton teaches all instruments and voice and has a robust musical theater program. Based in Paterson, New Jersey, the Paterson Music Project (PMP) is an El Sistema-inspired program of the Wharton Institute for the Performing Arts that uses music as a vehicle for social change by empowering and inspiring children through the community experience of ensemble learning and playing.

Wharton Institute for the Performing Arts (WIPA) is located in Berkeley Heights, New Providence and Paterson, NJ and reaches students from 10 counties. All of Wharton's extraordinary faculty members and conductors hold degrees in their teaching specialty and have been vetted and trained to enable our students to achieve their personal best.

(Mabel Pais writes on the Arts and Entertainment, Social Issues, Spirituality and Health & Wellness. She can be reached at [mabelep1406@gmail.com](mailto:mabelep1406@gmail.com))

**"As... we inspire our students to strive for excellence through performing arts education, we practice culturally responsible instruction by embracing diversity"**  
- Helen H. Cha-Pyo, Artistic Director