

City of Alexandria, Virginia

MEMORANDUM

DATE: JANUARY 28, 2022

TO: CHAIR NATHAN MACEK AND MEMBERS OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION

FROM: KARL W. MORITZ, DIRECTOR, DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING & ZONING

SUBJECT: DOCKET ITEM #7 – SPECIAL USE PERMIT #2021-00119 – 711 PRINCESS STREET

This memorandum provides replacement language for the commission’s consideration for the “*SUP Noise Compliance Testing – Condition #29*” and “*Revised Noise Ordinance*” sections on pages 5 and 6 of SUP #2021-00119. Staff will replace the existing narrative and Tables 1 and 2 with the following information in the City Council staff report:

B. SUP Noise Compliance Testing – Condition #29

The applicant worked diligently with the City’s Transportation & Environmental Services staff to comply with Condition #29, to collect noise measurements for three representative concerts, and with Condition #30, to submit a noise mitigation plan if noise measurements were found to exceed the permissible noise levels of 60 dB(A) as measured at the property lines. Classical Movements conducted noise compliance testing during three concert events that took place on April 25, May 27 and July 23, 2021. City staff was present at all three concerts to conduct noise measurements independently of those obtained by the applicant’s consultant. The applicant submitted to the initial noise compliance testing report on August 20, 2021 and an amended report on October 18, 2021.

City noise measurements were conducted based on the measurement procedures written in the noise code section 11-5-5(2). The applicant’s consultant conducted noise reading for the last two events of May 27 and July 23 since for the first event of April 25, the consultant’s noise meter was not equipped with a noise calibrator and could not provide comparable results to the ones used by City staff. Decibel readings from both sets of measurements recorded a general range of 46 – 69 dB(A) and the majority complied with the 60 dB(A) standard.

1. Revised Noise Ordinance

The City Council adopted a revised noise ordinance on December 18, 2021. Accordingly, the maximum permissible noise limits (MPNL) at the property lines are determined by the property use category of the noise source. The daytime (7 a.m. to 11 p.m.) MPNL for commercial uses increased from 60 dB(A) to 65 dB(A). Moving forward, the applicant's operations must now adhere to the maximum noise limit of 65 dB(A) at its property lines. Because of the business's proximity to residents and an increase in number of outdoor concert and dining patrons, if approved in this SUP request, the potential still exists to exceed the noise standard and submission of a mitigation plan is deemed important, as required in Condition #30.

Staff continues to recommend approval of the one-year SUP review and for amendments to SUP #2021-00119.

[EXTERNAL]In Support of Classical Movements' SUP Application #2021-00119

Tucker Bailey <tucker.bailey@gmail.com>

Tue 1/25/2022 11:17 AM

To: PlanComm <PlanComm@alexandriava.gov>; Gloria Sitton <Gloria.Sitton@alexandriava.gov>

Some people who received this message don't often get email from tucker.bailey@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Hi Alexandria planning team. As a nearby neighbor, I want to express my support for the Classical Movements' SUP referenced in the subject line. I live one block away on N. Columbus St. and LOVE that classical music can flourish in our neighborhood.

I have attended several concerts personally and find it such a benefit to the community that they are permitted to perform there.

Further, I am fully supportive of extending the hours allowed, the maximum number of seats, and allowing moderate amplification. Their noise levels is well below other allowable noise producers-- and it sounds so much better!

Thank you for your consideration.

Best,
Tucker Bailey
228 N. Columbus St.

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[EXTERNAL]In support of Classical Movements

Mildred Neely <solamildred@yahoo.com>

Tue 1/25/2022 11:49 AM

To: PlanComm <PlanComm@alexandriava.gov>; Gloria Sitton <Gloria.Sitton@alexandriava.gov>

Cc: adam@classicalmovements.com <adam@classicalmovements.com>

You don't often get email from solamildred@yahoo.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Dear friends,

I'm a resident of Old Town and have nothing but praise for the live concerts held by Classical Movements. During this long Covid nightmare, that was the only live performance venue that I was able to attend, since I'm 73 years old. It was pure heaven to go -- despite surgery, I was able to attend 5 concerts this past summer/fall. Not only that, I had friends from Washington, D.C. and other neighborhoods in Virginia attend with me. Then we went to a local restaurant and had dinner outside. Great fun, as well as inspirational and supportive of performance artists who've been largely frozen out from their venues.

Please don't let obnoxious people, like the neighbor who plays loud music to down the concert out, persuade you that there is anything to object to in these concerts. The planes that go over his home, the fire trucks, traffic -- all of those necessary parts of urban living - are louder and more disturbing than music.

Please approve Classical Movements' petition and the revisions they are requesting.

Sincerely,

Mildred S. Neely
600 Second St. #301
Alexandria

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[EXTERNAL]In Support of Classical Movements' SUP Application #2021-00119

Larry Feinberg <lfeinber@gmail.com>

Tue 1/25/2022 11:52 AM

To: PlanComm <PlanComm@alexandriava.gov>; Gloria Sitton <Gloria.Sitton@alexandriava.gov>

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The concerts are wonderful,. They have brought us to Alexandria to eat in your restaurants and shop on King Street, as well as to hear the great music.

I support their application, and hope it is approved.

Sincerely,

Lawrence Feinberg
3016 Tilden St., NW - Apt. 302
Washington, DC 20008

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[EXTERNAL]In Support of Classical Movements' SUP Application #2021-00119

Kristen Schwendinger <kmschwendinger@gmail.com>

Tue 1/25/2022 12:10 PM

To: PlanComm <PlanComm@alexandriava.gov>; Gloria Sitton <Gloria.Sitton@alexandriava.gov>; Adam@classicalmovements.com <Adam@classicalmovements.com>

Some people who received this message don't often get email from kmschwendinger@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

I am an avid supporter of the arts generally, and of this organization in particular. Its events virtually revitalized my faith in culture this past year. Undoubtedly, you may receive many of these letters of support. Know that I share my support directly to Classical Movements as well as notify you because I believe this organization is a catalyst for community fabric, culture, and humanity - connecting people.

(1) I would be grateful for events that start as early as possible. As early as 10am.

(2) I do not appreciate the 65 decibel limit to Classical Movement's events. Please avoid arbitrary limitations on a venue that soothes the soul.

From the bottom of my heart, please approve a SUP for the organization this year. I cannot imagine handling the demands of the pandemic without this kind of local event that acts as a bridge from the arts to mental health.

--

Kristen Schwendinger—[617-510-3574](tel:617-510-3574) - kmschwendinger@gmail.com

- [Washington, D.C.](#) - [LinkedIn Profile](#) - [Skype Name kmschwendinger](#)

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[EXTERNAL]In Support of Classical Movements' SUP Application #2021-00119

Pam Shover <pam.shover@gmail.com>

Tue 1/25/2022 1:26 PM

To: PlanComm <PlanComm@alexandriava.gov>; Gloria Sitton <Gloria.Sitton@alexandriava.gov>; Adam@classicalmovements.com <Adam@classicalmovements.com>

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I would like to respectfully ask the governing bodies to whom this email is sent to approve the SUP 2021-00119 as requested by Classical Movements.

The opportunity to enjoy their outdoor venue during the last year has been truly golden! With limited indoor opportunities to enjoy the arts, my daughters and I were so grateful for the opportunity to enjoy the outdoor setting and then walk to nearby outdoor restaurants for dinner.

Likewise, I might mention there were several individuals in wheelchairs who seemed to take exceptional pleasure in this opportunity to easily access this venue versus some indoor venues that are more challenging to navigate.

Fast forward to 2022, do any of us really know if there will continue to be challenges for indoor events and restaurant dining?

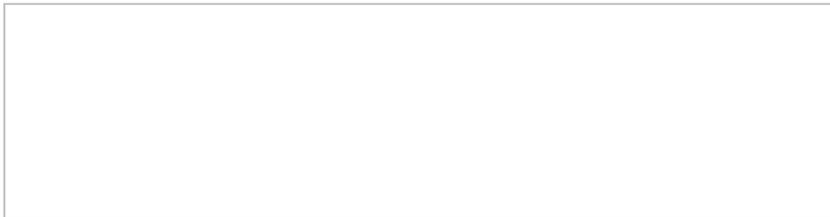
This outdoor venue brings a wonderful opportunity to continue to showcase talent, provide work for the employees of both the venue and surrounding retail and restaurants at a moment in time when support of these entities is so vital.

I believe Classical Movements has engineered a wonderful use of their space for the enjoyment of their guests and the well-being of the artists and employees.

I would encourage all members of the Planning Committee to attend a performance, your time will be exceptionally well-spent!

Respectfully,

Pamela Shover



Pamela Shover, Realtor
Schuler Bauer Real Estate Services
Powered by ERA
pamelashover@schulerbauer.com
502.396.5003

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[EXTERNAL]In Support of Classical Movements' SUP Application #2021-00119

Deborah Outlaw <deborah@outlawgroupdc.com>

Tue 1/25/2022 1:26 PM

To: PlanComm <PlanComm@alexandriava.gov>; Gloria Sitton <Gloria.Sitton@alexandriava.gov>

Some people who received this message don't often get email from deborah@outlawgroupdc.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Dear Sir/Madam: This is to wholeheartedly support the new SUP application by Classical Movements with several requests for an expanded venue. The series of wonderful musical events and excellent theme—focused dinners have provided such a needed morale boost to Old Town, both during the height of the pandemic and up to the present. I have enjoyed every performance I have been able to attend,

As a resident of Old Town for over 40 years, I believe the concerts amplify and support Old Town as a cultural venue. There are absolutely no down sides to the SUP and I very much hope that the unnecessary vitriol exhibited over the last year by one individual in opposition is ignored in totality.

Thank you for your consideration.

Deborah Outlaw
The Outlaw Group
Deborah@outlawgroupdc.com
703-819-7783

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[EXTERNAL]In Support of Classical Movements' SUP Application #2021-00119

Jim Dulicai <jim.dulicai@cox.net>

Tue 1/25/2022 4:32 PM

To: PlanComm <PlanComm@alexandriava.gov>; Gloria Sitton <Gloria.Sitton@alexandriava.gov>

Cc: Adam@classicalmovements.com <Adam@classicalmovements.com>

[Some people who received this message don't often get email from jim.dulicai@cox.net. Learn why this is important at <http://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification>.]

I'm writing in support of SUP Application #2021-00119 not only because of the fine concerts presented at the Rectory, but also because of the economic benefits to the city of Alexandria. I'm not an Alexandria resident but come regularly from Fairfax Station to enjoy these concerts, and I dine in one or another Alexandria restaurant either before or after each concert, nearly always with a friend or two. Sometimes we shop, too. Without these concerts, there'd be no reason to drive 40 minutes each way just to patronize Alexandria establishments.

I understand there are concerns about "noise," but all I've heard within the garden is beautiful music at a moderate volume. I don't know any complainant(s), but I'd question why anyone could object in any way to these tasteful concerts at the Rectory. They are a great asset for the cultural life of a great city. Indeed, you would be doing the city and the region a great service by expanding the limits of audience size and performance hours.

I am not related to or affiliated in any way with the Rectory or the sponsors of these Secret Garden concerts, except as an appreciative audience member.

Thank you for considering my views.

Respectfully submitted,
James F. Dulicai

7700 Willowbrook Road
Fairfax Station, VA 22039-2128

703.250.3414

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[EXTERNAL]Support for Special Use Permit #2021-00119: Keep the music playing at the Rectory on Princess Street: Support Classical Movements' SUP application

TARA <thardiman@prodigy.net>

Tue 1/25/2022 7:11 PM

To: PlanComm <PlanComm@alexandriava.gov>; Patrick Silva <Patrick.Silva@alexandriava.gov>; Gloria Sitton <Gloria.Sitton@alexandriava.gov>

Cc: Adam Jackson <adam@classicalmovements.com>; Neeta Helms <neeta@classicalmovements.com>; Johan Van Zyl <johan@classicalmovements.com>

You don't often get email from thardiman@prodigy.net. [Learn why this is important](#)

Dear Ms. Sitton, Mr. Silva, and Planning Commission Members,

I am writing again this year to express my support for Classical Movements' Special Use Permit (SUP) Application **#2021-00119**. Given their incredible track record, I am very disappointed that the innovative, dedicated, and hard working organizers -- who have contributed so much to the Alexandria community and to the performing art world -- are having to spend their time on the SUP again this year.

I fully support all the changes they are proposing this year to the SUP regarding timing, amplification, and additional audience space. No other organizations are restricted in such a manner, and the benefits to the community and the art world are enormous. In fact, I was taken aback by comparisons I am hearing may be circulating of this fine classical music to "noise." The brief applause following a sublime performance is an expression of pure joy and appreciation -- as contrasted with the noise of lawn work, construction work, or speeding vehicle traffic. I urge you to debunk and dismiss such falsehoods that are perpetuated by one unfortunate soul and vote to further beautify and improve what our city offers.

Like you, I have served on a number of Alexandria Boards and Commissions during my 30+ years living in the city (Women's Commission (Chair), Arts Commission, Budget and Fiscal Affairs Advisory Commission, Human Rights Commission). Charged with making recommendations for important decisions that affect the quality of life in Alexandria, I always welcomed input from the community we serve.

As a frequent attendee of Classical Movements' concerts in Alexandria, I strongly support this SUP to present more concerts again this year. Classical Movements' concerts and events have proven a vital opportunity for our community to experience the healing and illuminating power of live music in a safe outdoor -- and indoor when appropriate -- environment. I appreciate this model of short, outdoor concerts that has made it possible to enjoy live music once again. I have been very grateful for the opportunity to support not only local musicians, but also other local businesses while I see so many forced to close in Old Town.

At a time when arts organizations and other businesses in Alexandria and around the country continue to suffer due to the pandemic, I enthusiastically support Classical Movements' efforts to present live music. Each time my husband and I attended a concert this year -- including providing sponsorship -- we took the opportunity to support the local restaurants and businesses that were also inventing new practices and models to survive the pandemic. In addition, the concerts also attracted patrons from outside Alexandria, including some friends of ours to whom we spread the word about this unique, enriching opportunity -- not only attending the concerts, but strolling the downtown area to support struggling businesses. This series has undoubtedly contributed to immensely to, not only the arts, but to greater economic prosperity in Alexandria.

I am very grateful for the opportunities Classical Movements has offered to experience world-class music in an intimate and safe setting. I strongly urge the Planning Commission to approve their application for the benefit of the artists, the cultural enrichment of the patrons, the economic prosperity of the City, and Alexandria's notoriety as an ideal place to work live, and visit.

Sincerely,

Tara Hardiman
207 Laverne Avenue
Alexandria, VA 22305

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[EXTERNAL]In Support of Classical Movements' SUP Application #2021-00119

Gloria Black <gloria.black@gmail.com>

Wed 1/26/2022 12:18 PM

To: PlanComm <PlanComm@alexandriava.gov>; Gloria Sitton <Gloria.Sitton@alexandriava.gov>

Cc: Adam@classicalmovements.com <Adam@classicalmovements.com>

Some people who received this message don't often get email from gloria.black@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Dear Committee: I am writing in strong support for Classical Movements' SUP application #2021-00119.

I first discovered these marvelous outdoor concerts in the midst of the pandemic, I learned of their existence from someone who had attended their concerts. I attended their next concert, and have been attending ever since then, very much looking forward to the experience.

If you have not attended these concerts yourselves, I encourage you to do so to learn what a blossoming gift the program they offer is for our community. There is a vast range in the offerings for attendees to choose from, the cost is more than reasonable, the hosts do an outstanding job keeping the events sufficiently low key so as not to be a disturbance to those in the neighborhood, the hosts have also been remarkably sensitive to requirements of our peculiar times - not shrinking from making decisions to postpone programs when the virus or weather became too much of a factor. They are passionate about music, yet they place the physical safety of all attendees above all. They follow and respect all mandates and recommendations concerning virus safety.

I've attended a range of their concerts: the quality is exceptional. An additional plus to supporting this program is the fact that we all serve our environment quite well when we don't need to do anything more than walk, cycle or use public transportation for our entertainment and cultural experiences. I know that people come from outside of Alexandria too to attend these events.

In sum, Classical Movements is a rising star and in my view a must-experience event for our community. I hope it will have a long, long life span right here, in our own backyard. They deserve for our town to do everything possible to ensure their success, because it is our success as well. Thank you for your time. Respectfully, Gloria Black

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[EXTERNAL]In Support of Classical Movements' SUP Application #2021-00119

Patti White <patti@4whites.com>

Wed 1/26/2022 11:15 PM

To: PlanComm <PlanComm@alexandriava.gov>; Gloria Sitton <Gloria.Sitton@alexandriava.gov>

Cc: Adam Jackson <Adam@classicalmovements.com>

Some people who received this message don't often get email from patti@4whites.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Dear Planning Commission and Members of the City Council

I am writing to express my wholehearted support for the concerts and festivals that Classical Movements has brought to Old Town Alexandria. We have attended MANY of the concerts, even if not quite all 95. And have invited friends from around the DC area to join us. All of them are in awe that we have live, outdoor music within walking distance in a beautiful garden. The value of the concerts during the pandemic was priceless for the audience as well as the musicians. We love the performing arts and for the past two years when so much else has been closed, this has been the only game in town. Life would have been much grimmer without the glorious music in the Secret Garden.

It is absolutely shocking to me that the City would do anything to discourage these concerts or make them more challenging to produce. For a City that supports the arts and encourages tourism, what could be better than live music that receives widespread press coverage and brings diverse audiences from all over the DMV to Old Town which in turn supports the restaurants and shops here?

It would certainly enhance the value of the concerts to attendees and musicians if the cut off time were later. I wholeheartedly endorse the suggestion that the hours of operation for the concerts be extended to 10 pm or even later as is the case for Lee-Fendal House and Lloyd House which are in close proximity to the Old Rectory. It can be challenging to get to a concert that starts at 5 or 5:30 and particularly during the summer when it is so hot, it would be much better to start later when it is cooler.

While social distancing was top of mind, it may have made sense to restrict the seating capacity. But now that other venues have little or no restrictions on capacity, it is beyond me why there is such a strict limit on seating. In a venue with a spacious outdoor area, why shouldn't Classical Movements be able to give larger audiences the opportunity to enjoy the concerts? I understand that Classical Movements is strongly committed to offering free and discounted tickets to seniors, underprivileged children, veterans, etc. But if they are only permitted to sell 50 tickets, that becomes financially impossible. If they could sell 150 or even more, it would enable so many more people to benefit from the wonderful and diverse programming. It is especially odd that the concerts are so strictly limited when Lee Fendal House is permitted up to 125 and Lloyd House up to 100. Where is the fairness in that?

I am puzzled by the restrictions on amplification—again when other venues are not subject to such restrictions. As long as they stay within in the decibel limits, why should it matter if something is amplified? There are some very soft instruments, eg a lute, that are very difficult to hear without amplification.

As a resident of Old Town, I can't overstate how much we have enjoyed the Classical Movement concerts we have attended in the Secret Garden and what a benefit they have been to the entire Alexandria community. Please, please, please lift the onerous restrictions that keep more people from benefitting from these concerts.

Yours sincerely,
Patti White
415 Wolfe St

[EXTERNAL]In Support of Classical Movements Special Use Permit

Scott Corzine <scorzine54@gmail.com>

Thu 1/27/2022 11:30 AM

To: PlanComm <PlanComm@alexandriava.gov>; Gloria Sitton <Gloria.Sitton@alexandriava.gov>

Cc: Adam Jackson <Adam@classicalmovements.com>

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To the City Clerk and the Planning & Zoning staff:

I'm writing in strong support of the SUP (2021-00119) application by Classical Movements. As a fairly new Old Town Alexandria resident, transplanted here from New York City, I was thrilled to discover that Classical Movements brings world class music programs to Alexandria, even more so during the COVID pandemic when few other venues/program were providing a platform for musicians to perform and for extremely appreciative audiences to enjoy.

I've attended and enjoyed a number of Classical Movements programs over the last 18 months and plan to in the future. It is a fabulous entertainment option! I've become aware of the challenges the program has faced from an apparently selfish and unreasonable resident who lives near the venue and goes out of his way to throw tantrums and make noise to disrupt the programs. One dissatisfied gentleman should not be allowed to hamstring these concerts.

Please vote to keep this fabulous program open and available to Alexandria residents, especially since Classical Movements has amended its SUP to assure the City that the program will be viable, follow the rules and improve the performance experience for all stakeholders - performers, attendees, neighbors and the management of Classical Movements. Expanding the permit to performances between 10 AM and 10 PM will provide program flexibility and scheduling options that benefit everyone. Expanding the seating capacity to well beyond the current 50-seat limit to up to 175, which is comparable to the seating limits that similar Alexandria venues enjoy, will help Classical Movements' financial capacity to stage this important entertainment and enable many more residents to enjoy it. Removing the amplification restriction will bring Classical Movements into alignment with other decibel limits; reasonable light amplification will increase the entertainment experience for us all and support Management's responsibility to make safety and evacuation announcements.

Please do not permit a single unreasonable neighbor to put a dagger in the heart of what has become a City of Alexandria treasure!

Sincerely,

Scott Corzine

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[EXTERNAL]Classical Movements' SUP 2021-00119 for Live Concerts in Alexandria

Sara Casar <Sara@classicalmovements.com>

Thu 1/27/2022 11:41 AM

To: PlanComm <PlanComm@alexandriava.gov>

Cc: Neeta Helms <Neeta@classicalmovements.com>

📎 2 attachments (16 MB)

Top Reasons to visit Alexandria Concert Press.pdf; Concerts and Weddings at The Rectory.pdf;

Dear Members of the Alexandria Planning Commission,

While we have already reached out and spoke with some of you directly, we are using this general email to reach those we do not already have emails for.

Our one year **SUP 2021-00119** review is on the docket for the Planning Commission Hearing on February 1. As most of you know, since June 2020, Classical Movements has been presenting innovative live concerts of classical music in the garden of our historic building in Old Town Alexandria, the first and largest series of its kind in the United States since the beginning of the pandemic.

Due to Covid-19, our company – based in Alexandria since 1997 – has seen a complete loss of income as a concert tour company for orchestras and choirs operating at the intersection of travel and music, two of the industries hit hardest by the pandemic. Due to Omicron, our normal level of touring is delayed yet again until 2023 and the few tours we do have are on shaky ground in 2022. Our garden concerts have been one of our few and very limited sources of income and a valuable asset to the community.

We have received overwhelming support. The attached document the Top Reasons to Visit Alexandria and Concert Press highlights our concerts and events. We have also included some photos of the concerts and weddings at our property which we call The Rectory at Princess Street. We are proud of the top recommendations and awards we have received in such a short time. In addition, our application packet includes letters of support for our SUP and you will be hearing more from our neighbors, audience members, artists and businesses we have supported throughout our concert series in the coming days. We would appreciate being able to arrange a call to discuss our application including the Staff Report and the Condition changes we are requesting. We would also like to discuss the Noise Readings as the Staff Report includes readings specifically taken to demonstrate the loud music the neighbor plays to disrupt our concerts. We want to make ourselves available to answer any questions or concerns you might have. We would also be delighted to give any of you a tour of our property. We will be very grateful if we can arrange to speak before the hearing. Please let us know what days and times that would be most convenient for you.

We are great supporters of the city and we appreciate your time and look forward to hearing from you. Sincerely,

Neeta Helms and Sara Casar

Sara Casar

Vice President and Business Director

1-703-683-6040

Classical Movements

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Classical Movements is proud that in a very short time we have appeared on many recommendation lists for places to visit, top wedding venues, and not to miss concerts and continuing to list the Rectory as one of the top reasons to visit Old Town Alexandria.

Alexandria:

1. **[Your Guide to Planning a Wedding in Alexandria](#)**

Rebecca Doser, *Visit Alexandria* | December 22, 2021

2. **[Top Things to Do This Spring in Alexandria](#)**

Caroline Secrest, *Visit Alexandria* | March 4, 2021

“The Rectory on Princess Street’s “secret garden” is the perfect setting for a springtime portrait session when the tulip magnolia trees bloom in mid-March.”

3. **[Top Things to Do This Fall in Alexandria](#)**

Visit Alexandria | August 23, 2021

4. **[Learn About Juneteenth with Alexandria’s Black History Museum Director](#)**

Visit Alexandria | June 17, 2021

“Check Visit Alexandria’s calendar for Juneteenth events, including a celebratory Juneteenth secret garden concert from Classical Movements...”

5. **[Top Things to Do This Summer in Alexandria](#)**

Caroline Secrest, *Visit Alexandria* | May 6, 2021

“Be enchanted by outdoor orchestral arrangements in a secret garden with Classical Movements’ summer series, “[Sounds of Hope & Harmony](#),” hosted at [The Rectory on Princess Street](#). Concerts are hosted twice nightly on most Thursdays and Saturdays throughout the summer, with themes such as “A Haunting Refrain: Jazz in June” and “Liberté chérie: A Bastille Day Celebration.””

6. **[Summer Is Near: Celebrate in Alexandria With Exciting Events](#)**

Zebra | May 4, 2021

“The season features a starry line-up of acclaimed soloists, including recitals by Philadelphia Orchestra concertmaster David Kim and Israeli-American cellist Amit Peled, and local favorites, including members of the National Symphony and the Choral Arts Chamber Singers, among many others. Select programs celebrate holidays including Juneteenth and Bastille Day”

Virginia, DC and Maryland:

7. **[The Rectory one of Virginia Living Magazine's Top 2022 Wedding Vendors](#)**

Virginia Living | January 10, 2022

8. **["Where to Celebrate Bastille Day Around DC"](#)**

Maya Pottiger, *Washingtonian* | July 12, 2021

9. **["Juneteenth 2021: DC region event, festival and exhibit guide"](#)**

Luke Garrett, *WTOP* | June 19, 2021

10. **[14 Ways To Celebrate Juneteenth](#)**

Kelly Magyarics, *Northern Virginia Magazine* | June 9, 2021

11. **[Weekend Arts Round Up, December 10, 2020](#)**

Richard Seldon, *The Georgetown* | December 10, 2020

"Classical Movements will present two afternoon performances of "Hallelujah! Gospel & Choral Favorites with Camerata Baltimore" on **Dec. 19** at 1 and 2:30 p.m. in the Secret Garden at the Rectory, 711 Princess St. in Alexandria, Virginia. The program of gospel music, spirituals and classical repertoire in celebration of Hanukkah, Kwanzaa and Christmas includes "Hallelujah" from Handel's "Messiah," Saint-Saëns's "Christmas Oratorio" and works by John Rutter, Undine Smith Moore and Amy F. Bernon. Seating will be socially distanced and masks are required. Tickets are \$45."

12. **[The best things to do — virtually and in person — while quarantined in the D.C. area](#)**

Going Out Guide Staff, *The Washington Post* | October 29, 2020

13. **[The world is loud. These upcoming classical music performances will give you some comfort.](#)**

Michael Andor Brodeur, *The Washington Post* | October 14, 2020

Only live Classical Pick for October:

"With the new season comes another change as the Alexandria-based [Classical Movements](#) refreshes its series of socially-distanced chamber concerts with a new name and 22 more performances, starting on Halloween and continuing through December 19.



[...] That evening, they'll clear the cobwebs for "[A Venetian Halloween](#)," featuring NSO musicians playing an autumnal chunk of Vivaldi's Four Seasons as well as Puccini's "Crisantemi." (If this isn't a perfect opportunity to step up your mask game, I'm not sure what is.)"

14. [A critic's suggestions for music to fill the dog day](#)

Michael Brodeur, *The Washington Post* | July 29, 2020

"Alexandria-based orchestral touring group [Classical Movements](#) continues its Sounds of Hope and Harmony series through the month of August and beyond. On Aug. 1 at 6 and 7:30 p.m. it will host "Prague Comes to Washington," a pair of hour-long programs of arias and art songs in its freshly pergola'd "[secret garden](#)," featuring Chilean baritone Javier Arrey ([an alum](#) of the Castleton Festival and WNO's remonikered Cafritz Young Artist Program); soprano Kaylee Norris; and pianist Taylor Hutchinson. Upcoming installments of these 100-ticket, socially distanced soirees this month include NSO musicians performing chamber works by Molly Joyce, Victor Ewald, Andy Akiho, Alvin Singleton, Zhao Tian and Duke Ellington on Aug. 8, and an evening of grand opera arias sung by "heldentenor par excellence" Issachah Savage, accompanied by pianist Joy Schreier on Aug. 15."

15. [The best things to do — virtually and in person — while quarantined in the D.C. area](#)

Going Out Guide Staff, *The Washington Post* | July 23, 2020

"For classical music fans missing the thrill of live performances, an unlikely destination is filling the void left by the Kennedy Center and Strathmore: A 235-year-old rectory in Old Town Alexandria. Classical Movements began holding concerts in the courtyard behind its headquarters in June, with socially distanced seats allowing up to 43 people (singles or couples) to attend. This Saturday, a seven-week series of chamber, opera, choral and jazz performances begins with string quartets and cello duos by musicians from the National Symphony Orchestra. Beethoven, Bartok and the Beatles are all on the one-hour program."

WAMU 88.5

16. **AMERICAN UNIVERSITY RADIO**

Lori McCue, *All Things Considered* | July 23, 2020

"I'm really looking to check out one of these intimate garden concerts put on by this concert tour company Classical Movements in Alexandria [...] they're holding it outdoors in what they call the 'Secret Garden' at their facility on Princess Street and that sounds really magical and I'm looking forward to learning more."

17. [**“10 Virtual And IRL Things To Do In D.C. This Weekend”**](#)

Chelsea Cirruzzo, *DCist* | July 23, 2020

18. [**Four summertime strolls: Where to take them and what to listen to**](#)

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“If you happen to be biking the Mt. Vernon Trail on July 25, consider locking up in Old Town Alexandria that evening as orchestral touring company Classical Movements launches “Sounds of Hope & Harmony,” a new series of 16 concerts in its socially distanced “secret garden.” I covered the company’s first go at a pandemic-defying outdoor concert (spoiler: it was great!), and its forthcoming programs (Aug. 1, 8, 15; Sept. 12, 19, 26; and Oct. 3) will reach beyond chamber music to include opera, jazz and even choral works.

This first date will bring together players from the National Symphony Orchestra to celebrate “the four B’s” — Barrière, Bologne, Bartók and Beethoven. (And especially that last guy, whose big sesquicentennial has been all but ruined by the pandemic.) Oh, and the ride over is as good a time as any to brush up on your Joseph Boulogne — a.k.a. Chevalier de Saint-Georges — whose String Quartet No. 3 in G Minor is a particular treat on the program.”

19. [**Mostly Virtual Arts Round Up, July 16, 2020**](#)

Richard Seiden, *The Georgetowner* | July 16, 2020

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Classical Movements owner recognized by Musical America

Olivia Anderson - December 16, 2021



Neeta Helms



Neeta Helms, the president of Classical Movements in Old Town, was named one of Musical America's top 30 professionals of 2021, according to a news release.

Classical Movements organizes tours of classical music ensembles around the world. In 2020, with concerts cancelled or put on hold due to the pandemic, Classical Movements shifted gears and started hosting outdoor concerts in the "secret garden" behind its Old Town headquarters at 711 Princess St. The first entry in the concert series, which took place in June 2020, was the first live classical music concert since the start of the pandemic. The concerts remain a huge hit with residents and local classical music fans and regularly feature musicians from renowned national symphonies.

Helms also oversaw other pandemic-era projects, including virtual music education programs, a live streamed concert of India and a cross-country celebration of President Joe Biden and Vice President Kamala Harris' inauguration.

Helms was recognized as part of a special report from Musical America, one of the country's oldest classical music magazines, titled "The Pandemic: Meeting the Moment." This year's report honored those "whose heroic efforts have helped to sustain the performing arts during one of the most difficult and often tragic times in modern history — the pandemic." Helms was named alongside acclaimed musicians such as Jennifer Koh and the leaders behind the San Diego Symphony and Seattle Opera, according to the release.

-cmelloklein@alextimes.com





2021 YEAR IN REVIEW



◀◀◀ FEBRUARY

Chapman and Aguirre run for re-election

Councilors John Chapman and Canek Aguirre announced on Feb. 1 they would be running for re-election for Alexandria City Council.

Chapman, a lifelong Alexandrian, has served on City Council since 2012. He has worked as an educator throughout the region and currently works in Fairfax County Public Schools as a community use program specialist. He also owns and operates Manumission Tour Company, a local Black history tour company.

Aguirre, the first person of Hispanic heritage to serve on council, was elected in 2018 and during his time on council helped lead the city's 2020 Census Complete Count Committee, resulting in a 100% count of Alexandria households.

Council approves stormwater fee increase

City Council unanimously passed an ordinance doubling the stormwater utility fee from \$140 to \$280 during a Feb. 20 public hearing.

The increased fee will add \$155 million into the city's coffers over the next

10 years and will help fund an ambitious new flood mitigation action plan, according to city staff. The plan includes various capacity and spot improvement projects meant to overhaul Alexandria's crumbling stormwater in-

frastructure.

Although residents have been calling on the city to take action and address the stormwater system after a slew of intense flooding events over the past two years, several residents said they be-

lieved enlarging the city's budget was not enough to curb flooding in their neighborhoods. Previously, the city has used the stormwater fee to fund projects intended to control water quality and not flooding.

Bagley, Lewis join City Council race

Another City Council candidate, affordable housing advocate and community activist Sarah Bagley, tossed her hat in the ring on Feb. 9. James Lewis, vice chair of the Alexandria Traffic and Parking Board, also announced on Feb. 10 that he was running for City Council in the June 8 Democratic Primary.

Other notable events:

School Board rejects affordable housing for Minnie Howard; Councilor Mo Seifeldin announces run for mayor, then backs out of race; Charles Hooff III dies at 80; **Classical Movements forced to shut down popular outdoor concert series**



PHOTO/CLASSICAL MOVEMENTS

National Symphony Orchestra cellists played for a socially distanced crowd as part of Classical Movements' outdoor concert series.

DANNY SMITH, Realtor-Old Town is my Home



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*My most recent listing brought the highest sale price in over 4 years for that neighborhood--even higher than larger homes on larger lots.
(Source: BRIGHT MLS)*

Interested in Old Town history?

I'll present tours on Sundays in February for the George Washington Birthday Celebration Committee. Visit washingtonbirthday.com for details as they are finalized. Email me for other tour dates.



Danny Smith, Realtor
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◀◀◀ MARCH

Council denies Braddock West project

City Council voted 4-3 to deny a request from developer West Street Acquisitions, LLC, to build a 180-unit multi-use building across from the Braddock Road Metro station that would have featured 14 affordable housing units, during a public hearing on March 13.

In addition to housing, the building proposal included plans to provide additional space for retail, restaurants and other shopping. While the city's Planning Commission voted 6-1 in December 2020 to approve the project's development special use permit, several members of council expressed concern with the building's impact on an already over-taxed stormwater system and its relative lack of affordable housing when compared to other projects such as the redevelopment of the Heritage at Old Town apartment complex.

City and unions debate collective bargaining

The city discussed a proposed draft ordinance on collective bargaining on March 9 that, when passed, would bring the labor practice to Alexandria for the first time.

Collective bargaining is the legal process by which public sector

employees negotiate their wages, benefits and working conditions with their government employers.

Alexandria's proposed ordinance was much more limited in scope than those on the books in Washington D.C. and Maryland. It allowed only for legally bind-

ing negotiations over wages and benefits. The proposed ordinance did not include negotiations about working conditions, such as how workplace hours and schedules are assigned and how the city manages its handling of grievances and discipline.

Council approves American Rescue Plan spending

City Council approved the immediate use of \$450,000 in American Rescue Plan funding to extend food distribution and housing assistance efforts through July during the March 23 legislative meeting.

Like localities across the country, Alexandria was eligible to receive a direct influx

of funding from ARPA, the \$1.9 trillion federal COVID-19 stimulus package that President Joseph Biden signed into law on March 11. The city would ultimately receive \$59.4 million in direct funding, while Alexandria City Public Schools would receive about \$35.4 million.

Other notable events:

Vice President Kamala Harris visits fibre space; **City Council approves permit for Classical Movements' outdoor concerts;** New public art that honors history of Potomac River comes to Waterfront Park; Police arrest four suspects in West End armed robbery

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“SOUNDS OF HOPE & HARMONY” & “SOUNDS OF JOY & LIGHT”

LIVE, SOCIALLY-DISTANCED OUTDOOR CONCERT SERIES

CHAMBER MUSIC | OPERA | CHOIR | JAZZ

**Saturday, June 20, 2020: Musicians of the National Symphony, Alexandria
Symphony, Fairfax Symphony and New Orchestra of Washington**

The Washington Post

[Going to my first concert of the pandemic felt like preparing for battle. Then I got there.](#)

Michael Brodeur, *The Washington Post* | June 22, 2020

“Classical Movements isn’t in the business of throwing garden parties, but its fledgling attempt to bring music back to real life, led by founder Neeta Helms, was an ambitious model for what live music might look like for the foreseeable future. As Phase 2 of reopening relaxed some restrictions in the District starting Monday, it’s likely that more attempts to gather skittish audiences will spring up around the area. Even so, the baby steps of Saturday’s gathering in the garden felt like a giant leap.”

“...the intimacy of the experience — and our collective hunger to hear just about anything — gave the feeling that audience and performers were conducting the same experiment: just being there. Even before the first notes were played, I found myself getting lost in the music of chitchat and laughter — our own birdsong.”

“For audience and musicians alike — and especially for Helms and her team, who found themselves immediately fielding questions about when the next concert will be (they’re figuring it out) — the various tweaks, compromises and precautions required to realize something as simple as a night of music felt like a major achievement.”



[Live music returns, offering a preview of the new concert normal](#)

Charles T. Downey, *Washington Classical Review* | June 21, 2020

“At 5 p.m. Saturday evening, something extraordinary happened: a group of people gathered to hear another group of people play classical music on their instruments.”



WAMU 88.5

AMERICAN UNIVERSITY RADIO

[How D.C.'s Live Music Venues Are Trying To Survive The Pandemic](#)

Mikaela Lefrak, *WAMU* | July 1, 2020

“The classical musicians wore jeans and khakis, not tuxes. Audience members stood six feet apart — for now, plush concert hall seats are a thing of the past. It wasn’t what anyone was used to, but for one afternoon, the music was back.

““These are great artists. For them, performing is sort of an essential thing,’ says Neeta Helms, Classical Movements’ founder and president. ‘And there’s nothing like live music.”

Advance Press

[Hear That Sound? Live Music Returns to Alexandria on June 20](#)

Kevin Dauray, *The Zebra* | June 18, 2020

“With the City of Alexandria in the second phase of reopening, some musicians are about to have the opportunity to play before a genuine audience. Yes, you read that correctly. On June 20, members of several local orchestras, including the ASO, Fairfax Symphony Orchestra, National Symphony Orchestra, and the New Orchestra of Washington, will once again delight concertgoers.”

[“Sounds of Hope & Harmony” chamber-music concerts from Classical Movements](#)

League of American Orchestras, *The Hub* | June 15, 2020

“Classical Movements Founder and President Neeta Helms has characterized ‘Sounds of Hope & Harmony’ as ‘an important gesture of support and optimism, both to local musicians and orchestras and to our community as a whole.’”



A Live, Stateside Concert to Promote Goodwill

Sarah Shay, *Musical America* | June 12 2020

INDUSTRY NEWS

A Live, Stateside Chamber Concert to Promote Good Will

June 12, 2020 | By Sarah Shay, *Musical America*



On June 20 Classical Movements, the Virginia-based touring company, will present a day of concerts designed for the era of pandemic. "Sounds of Hope & Harmony" will feature two one-hour-long programs, each performed three times, at 10am, 11:30am, and 1pm, and at 5pm, 6:30pm, and 8pm respectively.

The venue is the garden in the rectory of historic Christ Church (1785) in Alexandria, site of Classical Movements' office, and attendees will be required to wear face coverings and stand at least six feet apart per person or small household group. Tickets and programs will be distributed digitally.

Classical Movements Founder and President Neeta Helms has characterized "Sounds of Hope & Harmony" as "an important gesture of support and optimism, both to local musicians and orchestras and to our co million unity as a whole." Performers will include members of the National Symphony, Alexandria Symphony, New Orchestra of Washington, Fairfax Symphony, and several other local ensembles.

The morning program will include works by a potpourri of composers ranging from John Williams to Franz Schubert. The evening program features works by, among others, Mozart, Shostakovich, Astor Piazzolla, Poulenc, Schubert, Handel, and Bizet.

Sunday, June 21, is the rain date. Tickets and program details can be found [here](#).

Pictured: Neeta Helms

[Soon You Will Be Able to Go to an Actual Concert in Alexandria](#)

Rob Brunner, *The Washingtonian* | June 11, 2020

“This is not a live-stream event or something informal you watch on somebody’s porch: It’s an actual concert with tickets and a program and everything—a once-cherished ritual that now feels like a dim memory from a distant era.”

Music • Review

Going to my first concert of the pandemic felt like preparing for battle. Then I got there.



Socially distanced crowds applaud for musicians during a performance at the Rectory, a music venue in Alexandria on Jun. 20. (Armando Andrade-Rhoades/for The Washington Post)



By Michael Andor Brodeur

Classical Music Critic

June 22, 2020 at 1:26 p.m. EDT

It's coming up on four months since the [coronavirus](#) scattered every cluster of the classical music community back to their respective abodes, and over the course of this eerie interim, it's as though a whole new set of instincts has set in to replace the old ones. In the past, my preparations for a concert involved listening to the work a few times, finding a trustworthy pen and eating a big enough lunch to keep my stomach from joining in with the orchestra.

Saturday afternoon's checklist was a bit more thorough.

I was preparing to head to Old Town Alexandria, where the local orchestral and choral touring company [Classical Movements](#) was hosting "Sounds of Hope & Harmony," an outdoor trio of hour-long chamber concerts in the "Secret Garden" tucked behind its former-rectory headquarters on Princess Street. But it felt like I was preparing for battle.

I had my mask — two of them, actually — a blue plaid number that seemed formal enough to block pathogens at a garden party. I had a small bottle of Purell. A big bottle of water. A hankie for lens fog. An umbrella and a raincoat for the looming thunderheads. A printout of my assigned location in the garden (No. 11 of 35 or so reserved spots). And my usual kit of reporter stuff — phone, pad, pen. I also had a serious case of nerves.

Riding to the rectory in the back of a Lyft, I took shallow breaths (which I'm sure is effective) and hung my head halfway out the open window with all the enthusiasm of a golden retriever en route to the vet. It was raining, and the ominous droplets pelting my forehead felt like tiny omens that I should turn around and go back to the apartment, that this was all too soon, that it was actually crazy. My phone said crowds were starting to form at President Trump's campaign rally in Tulsa, and I felt around my tote bag to make sure I had my inhaler.

But upon reaching the garden, the rain stalled, the clouds parted, the sun glimmered through the trees, and the sounds of nearly two dozen musicians tuning in the various rooms of the 235-year-old rectory filtered into the courtyard. It was the sound of music preparing to return; and just like that, my jitters subsided.



A musician's mask hangs off her stand during a socially distanced concert at the Rectory. (Amaranta Andrade-Rhoades/for The Washington Post)

Classical Movements isn't in the business of throwing garden parties, but its fledgling attempt to bring music back to real life, led by founder Neeta Helms, was an ambitious model for what live music might look like for the foreseeable future. As Phase 2 of reopening relaxed some restrictions in the District starting Monday, it's likely that more attempts to gather skittish audiences will spring up around the area. Even so, the baby steps of Saturday's gathering in the garden felt like a giant leap.

"There are a lot of reasons to worry," Helms would tell me in a debrief on the phone the next day. "But I feel like we have to try to go ahead."

[Caught between silence and clamor, these musicians find connection in birdsong]

This time out, hand-sanitizing stations stood at the ready and little flags staked out each listener's spot for standing, six feet apart (though couples could cluster). It felt odd at first, but also oddly luxurious if you've ever been vexed by the personal space afforded by seats in a concert hall. Attendees improvised their hey-I-know-you reunions in the rows through a mix of elbow bumps and weird waves and salutes.



Audience members stand at their designated socially distanced spots. (Amanda Andrade-Rhoades/for The Washington Post)

The musicians, too, had some improvising to do. Ensembles representing the Alexandria Symphony Orchestra, the National Symphony Orchestra, the New Orchestra of Washington, as well as the Barclay Brass ensemble (which includes members of the Maryland, Annapolis and Fairfax symphony orchestras) were staggered across the three programs and spread around the stage — the unfamiliar acoustics of socially distant performance requiring more reliance on visual cues between the players.

A quintet of horn players from the Alexandria Symphony Orchestra opened the evening easing into selections from Giles Farnaby's "Fancies, Toyes, and Dreams" before segueing into "That's a Plenty," a 1914 rag-turned-jazz-standard by Lew Pollack, and one of a few detours into ragtime that lent the program a disarming lightness. Members of the NSO later took on Scott Joplin's "Maple Leaf Rag" and Barclay Brass chased the second suite from Handel's "Water Music" with Allen Toussaint's "Java." (And in all cases, even when a rag sounds a little rusty, it feels right.)



David Murray plays trombone at a socially distanced concert at the Rectory. (Amanda Andrade-Rhoades/for The Washington Post)

The wind quintet of National Symphony Orchestra players also gave a brilliant account of Valerie Coleman's "Umoja" (written for Imani Winds) that held court against the noisy birds in the tulip magnolia above us. And a quintet of string players from the Alexandria Symphony Orchestra showcased the skilled interplay of concertmaster Claudia Chudacoff and violinist Peter Haase, delivering a stirringly beautiful selection from Mozart's Divertimento No. 1 in D.

Their take on Shostakovich's lovably stumbling polka from "The Golden Age" — and its grasping toward a familiar form — felt freshly relatable; and likewise, their closing selection of "Toreador Song" from "Carmen" felt appropriately victorious for the occasion. After all, we'd made it!

Much like those nervously gathered to listen, the program was a little all over the place; but the intimacy of the experience — and our collective hunger to hear just about anything — gave the feeling that audience and performers were conducting the same experiment: just being there. Even before the first notes were played, I found myself getting lost in the music of chitchat and laughter — our own birdsong.



Socially distanced crowds listen to music during a performance at the Rectory. (Amanda Andrade-Rhoades/for The Washington Post)

And while there were little reminders of the virus — the wiping down of musicians' seats between sets, the concerted effort to avoid touching the microphone, somewhat-matchy masks — it never overshadowed the evening. (The sun sails hung overhead did that, while helping keep the music contained from the roar of landing planes.)

For audience and musicians alike — and especially for Helms and her team, who found themselves immediately fielding questions about when the next concert will be (they're figuring it out) — the various tweaks, compromises and precautions required to realize something as simple as a night of music felt like a major achievement. I was tempted to high-five my neighbors in audience but, well, you know.

Saturday, July 25, 2020: Musicians of the National Symphony

Advance Press

The Washington Post

Four summertime strolls: Where to take them and what to listen to

Michael Brodeur, *The Washington Post* | July 15, 2020

“If you happen to be biking the Mt. Vernon Trail on July 25, consider locking up in Old Town Alexandria that evening as orchestral touring company Classical Movements launches “Sounds of Hope & Harmony,” a new series of 16 concerts in its socially distanced “secret garden.” I covered the company’s first go at a pandemic-defying outdoor concert (spoiler: it was great!), and its forthcoming programs (Aug. 1, 8, 15; Sept. 12, 19, 26; and Oct. 3) will reach beyond chamber music to include opera, jazz and even choral works.



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10 Virtual And IRL Things To Do In D.C. This Weekend



Chelsea Cirruzzo, *DCist* | July 23, 2020

“Concerts are slowly making a comeback and this summer head to a very special show. Concert tour company Classical Movements is putting on a series of intimate garden concerts starting on Saturday.”

WAMU 88.5

AMERICAN UNIVERSITY RADIO

Lori McCue, *All Things Considered* | July 23, 2020

“I’m really looking to check out one of these intimate garden concerts put on by this concert tour company Classical Movements in Alexandria [...] they’re holding it outdoors in what they call the ‘Secret Garden’ at their facility on Princess Street and that sounds really magical and I’m looking forward to learning more.”



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Series and Upcoming Programs

TheHub

League
of American
Orchestras

Classical Movements' outdoor "Sounds of Hope and Harmony" concerts, July 25-Oct. 4

INDUSTRY BUZZ

The concert tour company Classical Movements, based in Alexandria, Virginia, will present eighteen intimate, socially-distanced concerts and recitals from late July through early October at the Secret Garden of...

July 22, 2020



[Javier Arrey, Kaylee Norris, Issachah Savage Headline Classical Movements 'Sounds of Hope & Harmony' Garden Concert Series](#)

David Salazar, *OperaWire* | July 16, 2020

“The first major program for opera lovers is “Prague Comes to Washington,” an evening of Art Song and Opera. The showcase will feature baritone Javier Arrey and soprano Kaylee Norris as they take on music by Mozart, Dvorak, Stravinsky, Brahms, Liszt, Wolf, and Beethoven, alongside pianist Taylor Hutchinson.

“An Evening of Grand Opera, Italian and American Art Songs’ will star tenor Issachah Savage and pianist Joy Schreier. The duo will perform music by Verdi, Wagner, Strauss, Tosti, Donaudy, and Margaret Bonds.”



[A critic's suggestions for music to fill the dog day](#)

Michael Brodeur, *The Washington Post* | July 29, 2020

“Alexandria-based orchestral touring group [Classical Movements](#) continues its Sounds of Hope and Harmony series through the month of August and beyond. On Aug. 1 at 6 and 7:30 p.m. it will host “Prague Comes to Washington,” a pair of hour-long programs of arias and art songs in its freshly pergola’d “[secret garden](#),” featuring Chilean baritone Javier Arrey ([an alum](#) of the Castleton Festival and WNO’s remonikered Cafritz Young Artist Program); soprano Kaylee Norris; and pianist Taylor Hutchinson. Upcoming installments of these 100-ticket, socially distanced soirees this month include NSO musicians performing chamber works by Molly Joyce, Victor Ewald, Andy Akiho, Alvin Singleton, Zhao Tian and Duke Ellington on Aug. 8, and an evening of grand opera arias sung by “heldentenor par excellence” Issachah Savage, accompanied by pianist Joy Schreier on Aug. 15.”

Live Outdoor Concerts by Four Indoor Organizations

Susan Elliott, *Musical America* | July 27, 2020

INDUSTRY NEWS

Live Outdoor Concerts by Four Indoor Organizations

July 27, 2020 | By Susan Elliott, *Musical America*

As the cancellations mount up for performing arts organizations, most are continuing their valiant efforts to stay in the public eye online.

A few brave souls are complementing that with small outdoor events, using safety protocols that are perhaps awkward and labor-intensive to execute, but nonetheless worth it, both for the players and the listeners. Among the first to go the al fresco route was the Minnesota Orchestra, earlier this month announcing a series of [24 chamber concerts on the adjacent Peavy Plaza](#) in August, each lasting no more than 70 minutes (no intermission), requiring advance reservations, face masks, temperature screenings, and keeping to a total capacity--including staff--of 250. Ensemble size is up to eight.

The Detroit Symphony has since followed a [similar path](#) – small ensembles of DSO musicians performing six concerts out of doors in varying locales, some of which require reservations; all events are free with strict protocols in place for social distancing (those who don’t follow the rules will be asked to leave); no seating provided—BYOBlanket.

The San Francisco Symphony, which has a new online series titled Currents, also has joined the al fresco crowd with its [1:1 Concerts](#), bringing a new level to intimacy—literally one orchestra member performing for one listener at a time, using the Davies Hall outdoor terraces. First priority goes to donors, volunteers, etc., but it appears they may be available to the general public as well.

Classical Movements just launched the first of an ongoing outdoor series in Alexandria, VA, titled [Sounds of Hope and Harmony](#). National Symphony Orchestra musicians are among the performers and tickets can be purchased through CM’s website. Planned to continue through October 4 on Saturday evenings, the 18 concerts take place in a church garden in Old Town, Alexandria, and feature a range of repertoire.

Kudos to all for fighting the uphill battle of the pandemic.





WSJ

[Socially Distanced Sound: Amid the pandemic, some orchestras are experimenting with modified live concerts. With its smaller number of players, chamber music is ideally suited to the moment.](#)

Barbara Jepson, *The Wall Street Journal* | August 4, 2020

“Given the right conditions, more major orchestras should be taking similar steps. There’s a large and artistically rewarding repertoire on a smaller scale that could be played, where it is safe to do so, before mask-wearing, socially distanced listeners, from string quartets and other chamber music to opera overtures, serenades and symphonies. Doing so now would allow arts presenters to return to their core mission: putting on live concerts in front of audiences. And it would enable at least some orchestra members to perform and some concertgoers to re-experience the joys of live music-making. These events might also offer opportunities to experiment with alternative onstage placements before moving to the next phase with a full symphony orchestra.

“At the very least, orchestra members could play chamber music outdoors while the weather is good. Classical Movements, a concert tour organizer, has sponsored seven such events in Alexandria, Va., since June with no reported spread of the virus...”

[Alexandria Crichlow & V. Savoy McIlwain Headline ‘Songs of Hope & Harmony’ Concert This August](#)

David Salazar, *OperaWire* | August 19

“The Coalition for African Americans in the Performing Arts and Classical Movements will be joining forces to present a unique concert as part of the “Songs of Hope & Harmony” series on August 29, 2020.

“The showcase will feature soprano [Alexandria Crichlow](#) and baritone [V. Savoy McIlwain](#) alongside pianist Dr. Lester Green. Pamela Simonson will narrate the concert performance. The event is set to take place in Alexandria, Virginia in honor of the March on Washington back in the 1960s.”



[Outdoor classical music concert series finds a way forward for live performances](#)

Cody Mello-Klein, *Alexandria Times* | August 27, 2020

“The chance to see talented musicians up close in an intimate setting is also rare in the realm of classical music, where massive concert halls and pricy tickets are standard. Classical Movements is making music more accessible and, in the process, hopes to remind audiences why live performances are so valuable.”



Neeta Helms interviewed for “Voices of Change”

Nicole Lacroix, *WETA* | September 7, 2020

[Pandemic Forces Performing Arts Leaders to Rethink](#)

Richard Selden, *The Georgetown* | September 15, 2020

“While virtual programming has blossomed, there have been few attempts to return to live, in-person performance. Alexandria, Virginia, appears to be the area leader, with outdoor, small-ensemble performances by Alexandria Symphony Orchestra members planned for this fall and the 18-concert Sounds of Hope & Harmony series successfully launched in the Rectory’s secret garden by orchestra tour company Classical Movements.”

The Score: Seasons of Change

The League of American Orchestras, *Symphony Magazine* | Fall 2020

“With most orchestral touring on hiatus due to Covid-19, tour organizer **Classical Movements** looked closer to home for a suitable performance venue, and found one in its backyard: the garden outside its offices in Alexandria, Virginia. In July, Classical Movements President Neeta Helms launched “Sounds of Hope and Harmony,” a series of one-hour outdoor chamber concerts featuring musicians from the Alexandria Symphony Orchestra and National Symphony Orchestra, among others, in a wide range of music.”

“Sounds of Joy & Light”

[The world is loud. These upcoming classical music performances will give you some comfort.](#)

Michael Andor Brodeur, *The Washington Post* | October 14, 2020

Only live Classical Pick for October:

“With the new season comes another change as the Alexandria-based [Classical Movements](#) refreshes its series of socially-distanced chamber concerts with a new name and 22 more performances, starting on Halloween and continuing through December 19.

[...] That evening, they’ll clear the cobwebs for “[A Venetian Halloween](#),” featuring NSO musicians playing an autumnal chunk of Vivaldi’s Four Seasons as well as Puccini’s “Crisantemi.” (If this isn’t a perfect opportunity to step up your mask game, I’m not sure what is.)”

Also recommended in:

[The best things to do – virtually and in person – while quarantined in the D.C. area](#)



Going Out Guide Staff, *The Washington Post* | October 29, 2020



[Socially-Distanced Outdoor Concerts Selling Out in Alexandria, Virginia](#)

Grace Arnold, *The Zebra* | November 3, 2020

“Social distancing has affected every facet of life from work, to education, to entertainment. Classical Movements is countering that effect, introducing live classical music in a socially-distanced setting. As musicians perform underneath a pergola surrounded by lush foliage, the [Secret Garden at The Rectory](#) series is becoming the new social hub for all Alexandrians.”

“Music has the power to unite even the most uncommon of folks, and there is a poetic irony about unity during times of necessary separation, but that separation makes the power of music all the more relevant right now. Neeta Helms, Founder and President of Classical Movements, agrees, ‘We want to make the Covid winter as beautiful and happy as possible... We should just spread the joy and light that we can.’”

[Weekend Arts Round Up, December 10, 2020](#)

Richard Seldon, *The Georgetown* | December 10, 2020

“Classical Movements will present two afternoon performances of “Hallelujah! Gospel & Choral Favorites with Camerata Baltimore” on **Dec. 19** at 1 and 2:30 p.m. in the Secret Garden at the Rectory, 711 Princess St. in Alexandria, Virginia. The program of gospel music, spirituals and classical repertoire in celebration of Hanukkah, Kwanzaa and Christmas includes “Hallelujah” from Handel’s “Messiah,” Saint-Saëns’s “Christmas Oratorio” and works by John Rutter, Undine Smith Moore and Amy F. Bernon. Seating will be socially distanced and masks are required. Tickets are \$45.”



[“Creativity Abounds as Americans Mark Holidays in Times of COVID”](#)

Vero Balderas Iglesias, *Voice of America* | December 21, 2020

“Sounds of Hope & Harmony” 2021

[“Errin Duane Brooks, Joshua Blue, Elizabeth Barnes, Ashley Marie Robillard Headline Classical Movements Spring / Summer Slate”](#)

David Salazar, *OperaWire* | March 5, 2021



[Top Things to Do This Summer in Alexandria](#)

Caroline Secrest, *Visit Alexandria* | May 6, 2021

[“WORLD PREMIERE: Choral Arts Chamber Singers set to premiere “Stand Up” by B. E. Boykin”](#)

Patrick D. McCoy | Jun 3, 2021

“Classical Movements, a global presenter of concerts were among the many who had to make adjustments during the pandemic. One of its major contributions was the beginning of their outdoor concerts in The Secret Garden, which is an intimate space located at the organization’s headquarters in Alexandria, VA. It would be safe to say that President and Founder Neeta Helms and Classical Movements were the very first to begin presenting live concerts during the pandemic, when others were still quite reluctant to do so. What is special about this concert is the world premiere of B. E. Boykin’s “Stand Up.” Commissioned by Classical Movements’ Eric Daniel Helms New Music Program, the work is in honor of the activist and educator Mary Church Terrell, which will be given its world premiere with Scott Tucker and the Choral Arts Chamber Singers.”

[“Juneteenth 2021: DC region event, festival and exhibit guide”](#)

Luke Garrett, *WTOP* | June 19, 2021

[“Of Freedom We Sing: The First Juneteenth Concert in the Secret Garden Honors the New Federal Holiday”](#)

Kelly MacConomy, *Zebra* | July 5, 2021

“The 2021 musical series in the Secret Garden is aptly named “Sounds of Hope and Harmony.” Classical Movements has prevailed over COVID and cicadas, funding and feuding neighborhood challenges. The City granted Classical Movements a special use permit to continue offering live music to the community in a time of great strain financially, spiritually, politically, and creatively.”

“Kudos to Classical Movements and an encore standing ovation to CAAPA for a timely celebration in jubilation of the abolishment of enslavement and involuntary servitude. Let freedom sing!”

[“Music Venues May Be Open, but Outdoor Concerts Are Still Big”](#)

Sherri Dalphonse, *Washingtonian* | July 7, 2021

“You can enjoy Bach or Billie Holiday amid boxwoods at performances put on by Classical Movements in the Secret Garden of the Rectory on Princess Street in Old Town. The lineup includes choral music, cabaret, jazz, opera, tango, and more.”

[“Where to Celebrate Bastille Day Around DC”](#)

Maya Pottiger, *Washingtonian* | July 12, 2021

[“Tenor Errin Duane Brooks to Tribute Enrico Caruso and Mario Lanza in Recital”](#)

Logan Martell, *OperaWire* | July 29, 2021

Concerts in the Secret Garden at the Rectory on Princess Street



Concerts in the Secret Garden at the Rectory on Princess Street



Weddings in the Secret Garden at the Rectory on Princess Street



Weddings in the Secret Garden at the Rectory on Princess Street



[EXTERNAL]In Support of Classical Movements' SUP Application #2021-00119

JEFFREY SNAVELY <jsnavely@verizon.net>

Thu 1/27/2022 1:46 PM

To: PlanComm <PlanComm@alexandriava.gov>; Gloria Sitton <Gloria.Sitton@alexandriava.gov>

[You don't often get email from jsnavely@verizon.net. Learn why this is important at <http://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification>.]

Please allow Classical Movements to continue their outdoor concerts.

Live classical music is an asset to Alexandria and a wonderful way to build community.

We attended one concert last summer and it was not loud and would certainly not bother anyone nearby — in fact it is free professional concerts for the neighbors if they want to listen, if not they can simply go inside their houses.

Please don't let the complaints of one grumpy man ruin this wonderful concert series!

Jeff Snavely

1111 N Pitt St #1C

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[EXTERNAL]Special Use Permit #2021-00119 711, Princess Street

David Fritz <davidfritz@gmail.com>

Thu 1/27/2022 8:49 PM

To: PlanComm <PlanComm@alexandriava.gov>; Sue Fritz <schultsud01@yahoo.com>

 1 attachments (1 MB)

LTR_Planning_220127.pdf;

You don't often get email from davidfritz@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

City of Alexandria Planning Commission

Dear Sir or Madam,

Please find attached a PDF file containing a letter I would like to enter into the record for the upcoming Planning Commission being held on Tuesday, February 1, 2022 for the Special Use Permit #2021-00119 711, Princess Street, that is scheduled to be on the docket for next week's evening meeting. Please confirm receipt and let me know if there will be any issues getting this correspondence into the record for each Alexandria Planning Commissioner to review prior to the meeting. Thank you for your time and I look forward to your quick response to my inquiry.

David Fritz

409 N Columbus St, Alexandria, VA 22314

davidfritz@gmail.com

(703) 915-6878 (Cell)

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Alexandria Planning Commission
February 1, 2022 Meeting

Subject: Special Use Permit #2021-00119, 711 Princess Street

Dear Planning Commissioners,

I am writing this letter to express my objection against the Special Use Permit Application #2021-0019, 711 Princess Street, filed by Classical Movements to extend its indoor/outdoor live entertainment hours, expand its current seating from 50 to 181 people, to permit amplified sound, and to allow a parking reduction for all of its events. Please accept this correspondence into the record and take it into consideration when deliberating on the permit application.

I am the adjacent resident and property owner of 409 N Columbus Street. I have owned my home for 13 years that includes raising a family with 2 young daughters. I currently object to the request as proposed due to the following reasons and the issues witnessed over the past year since the grant of the initial SUP permit:

1. As an adjacent residential property owner with two young children (ages 2 and 6), outside live entertainment and dining noise has exceeded ordinance levels of 60 dB(A) and disrupted my children's bedtime of 7 PM. The Alexandria Planning Commission staff report confirms (Section III. SUP condition compliance) this fact as well with measurements, citations, warnings, and adjacent resident complains provided over the past year. The report even states, "Again, the results from the applicant's consultant also indicated that the median noise readings for these two concert events exceeded the permissible level of 60 dB(A)." My children's bedrooms are located on the 2nd floor of our home adjacent to the outdoor event space. No amount of sound mitigation on the ground level will reduce the impact of the event noise on my home's back rooms including the 2nd floor bedrooms. The increase of seats from 50 to 181, extending operations to every day of the week (vs. Thursday, Saturday, & Sunday) with an hour extension on time from 9PM to 10PM, and the allowance of amplified noise will only exasperate the noise issues further.
2. Ingress and egress of event participants is not restricted to the properties front entrance or the side of the building adjacent to Sunrise Assisted Living commercial building. The primary access during Classical Movement outdoor events is in the rear of the property along shared driveways adjacent to my property line. The event access is located at one of the furthest distances within their property footprint from the public streets. During the past year when Classical Movements held outdoor events, attendees waited in lines along my property with a visual line of sight into my kitchen and other rear structure windows of my home. Attendee ingress and egress to the backyard entrance from the public street includes attendees walking on adjacent property driveways not owned by the Classical Movements from N Columbus Street vs. access to the event from Princess Street. Outdoor event attendees tend to loiter post event creating group noise along

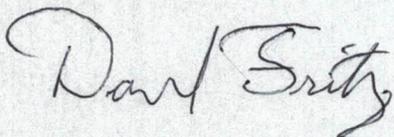
my east and southern fenced property lines. Post event loitering also includes ride share pickups for those patrons not parking on the street. The increase of seats from 50 to 181 will exasperate these issues as well.

3. The property on 711 Princess Street has two parking spots at the rear entrance of the outdoor event space. During outdoor events over the past year, these owned spots or any other portion of the property's shared driveway (715 Princess Street) in which the applicant counts as 2 additional off street parking spaces, were not used to park event patrons. In fact, the applicants parking spots were cleared to allow ingress and egress to the event by attendees and at times an event check-in tent was placed in these property parking locations. My observations over the past year have been all attendees, if driving, park on the public street. No marketing literature or event staff pointed attendees to the 10 required off street parking spaces required in the conditions under last year's SUP approval. As previously stated, street parking by attendees has exacerbates foot traffic along my (409 Columbus) southern and eastern property lines to gain access to the rear of the property's outdoor space. The increase of seats from 50 to 181 will exasperate these issues and street parking after standard business hours as well.
4. Lastly, only two single family homes are immediately adjacent to the property's outdoor event space. All other surrounding properties are commercial businesses with normal "9 AM to 5 PM" daytime operating hours for heavy business foot traffic. Both single family homeowners (409 & 411 N Columbus) object to this special use permit application as an outdoor event space due to its negative impact on the quality of life in our home living spaces. All letters submitted by the applicant in support don't live immediately adjacent to it (feet away) as their primary home.

As a long-time office structure, I request that the Alexandria Planning Commission deny the 711 Princess Street Special Use Permit #2021-00199 changing its function from a "9 AM to 5 PM" indoor office space to an indoor/outdoor restaurant and event venue.

Thank you for your time considering my objection. If you have any questions regarding this matter, please do not hesitate to ask.

Sincerely,



David Fritz
409 N Columbus Street
Alexandria, VA 22314
davidfritz@gmail.com

[EXTERNAL]Classical Movements--SUP Application #2021-00119

George White <george@4whites.com>

Fri 1/28/2022 12:28 AM

To: Gloria Sitton <Gloria.Sitton@alexandriava.gov>; PlanComm <PlanComm@alexandriava.gov>

Some people who received this message don't often get email from george@4whites.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Dear Members of the Alexandria City Council and Members of the Alexandria Planning Commission,

I am writing in support of Special Use Permit Application #2021-00119 submitted by Classical Movements in relation to 711 Princess Street, also known as the Old Rectory.

I am a proud resident of Old Town Alexandria and a strong supporter of the arts in general and music in particular. My wife and I first became aware of the concerts being organized at the Old Rectory in the summer of 2020. It was such a joy to be able to experience live music in the darkest days of the pandemic. The concerts at the Old Rectory uplifted everyone who was able to attend them.

Between April and December of 2021, my wife and I attended twelve events at the Old Rectory. We have both been impressed by the depth and diversity of talent that Classical Movements has been able to bring to Alexandria. We have enjoyed everything from classical chamber music and opera to African-American spirituals, Argentine tango, folk music, Broadway musicals, Spanish flamenco, North African music—the range and quality of the performances has been incredible. The work that Classical Movements is doing at the Old Rectory has been instrumental in reinforcing Alexandria's reputation as a center for the arts. Classical Movements has developed collaborations with other organizations such as the Alexandria Symphony Orchestra and the Coalition of African-Americans in the Performing Arts and has become a recognized force in the music scene in the Metropolitan area. The Old Rectory is not just a precious amenity for the residents of Alexandria, but also contributes to making Alexandria a vibrant cultural destination.

I was interested to review the discussion of noise compliance testing in the staff report accompanying the application. I should say that in my experience over twelve events, the sound volume has never been loud. In any case I believe it is misguided to treat the sound of beautiful music in the same way that one treats traffic noise or construction noise, as the subjective experience is completely different. I note that one of the three concert events tested was the concert on July 23, 2021. I was present at that concert and personally witnessed the malicious attempt by a neighbor to disrupt the concert by playing his own loud music during the performance. I was then shocked to see that the noise measurements for July 23rd, which were heavily influenced by the neighbor's disturbance, were included in the staff report without qualification. This is highly misleading, and I believe it substantially undermines the staff's conclusions. In fact, it seems to me that the most reasonable conclusion from the data presented is that in virtually all cases the concerts at the Old Rectory generated noise levels below the new limit of 65 decibels, except for occasional brief periods of audience applause.

I strongly support the SUP application submitted by Classical Movements, including the changes in conditions being requested. Permitting the larger audience size will allow more people to enjoy the concerts and make it economically viable to further expand the range of programming. Similarly, extending the permitted hours and allowing limited use of amplification will provide greater flexibility in programming. This will benefit both artists and audiences. I consider the existing conditions imposed in the 2021 special use permit to be excessively onerous and completely inappropriate for an arts venue in an urban setting located half a block from one of the busiest streets in the city. I think it is time for the City Council and the Planning Commission to recognize what an important resource the Old Rectory has become for the city and to do everything they can to support and promote its success.

Sincerely yours,

George H. White
Holland House
415 Wolfe Street
Alexandria, VA 22314

george@4whites.com

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[EXTERNAL]Classical Movements Special Use Permit #2021-00119

Tanya Lervik <tanyalervik@gmail.com>

Fri 1/28/2022 10:51 AM

To: PlanComm <PlanComm@alexandriava.gov>; Gloria Sitton <Gloria.Sitton@alexandriava.gov>

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Good morning:

I strongly support Classical Movements' application for a Special Use Permit. One of the reasons Alexandria was named a Top 3 Best Small City in the U.S. 2021 by the Condé Nast Traveler Readers' Choice Awards and one of the South's Best Cities 2020 by Southern Living, is because it is a vibrant arts and culture hub. Classical Movements' events strongly support the arts community which makes Alexandria such a gem to live in and such a welcome escape for visitors.

Attending concerts at Classical Movements over the course of the pandemic has been a true oasis for me personally. When it has been all too easy to get caught up with concerns of survival, they have been an important reminder of what it is to *live* and to appreciate the beauty of the world around us. As we adjust to the new normal and struggle with the fatigue of living amidst this extended pandemic, such reminders are even more important. I feel sure that the many neighbors and other people who have had the good fortune to enjoy these Secret Garden concerts and events would agree.

It is true that one of their neighbors seems to have a vendetta against the concerts. The pandemic seems to have severely damaged the norms of common courtesy and behavior. I have witnessed examples of this during some of the concerts with the neighbor shouting, and turning on a stereo with the speakers pointed out their window while playing loud rock music. Though they claim to be sensitive to noise, they certainly aren't averse to making it. Also, the building is located at the crux of a busy intersection and under the flight path of Regan National Airport. There is quite a lot of ambient noise from traffic, car stereos, and planes, so they can't have hoped to live in bucolic silence when they moved there.

To close, there are three provisions outlined below that Classical Movements is particularly hoping to achieve. The logic of their requests is reasonable and consistent with norms accepted at similar venues. Therefore, I urge you to approve this application out of fairness and in view of the potential benefit to the community as a whole.

- 1) Change of hours for our outdoor live entertainment to be permitted **daily between 10am and 10pm. (The current noise ordinance allows us 65 decibel limits for commercial properties such as ours until 11pm daily and you can use power lawn equipment every day from 7am to 9pm daily.)****

*This extension would be consistent with outdoor music at two similar venues within a block of the Rectory – Lloyd House and Lee-Fendall House (both of which also have outdoor hours that extend until midnight and 11pm respectively) – and will allow us to schedule concerts at more convenient times and to avoid the hottest part of the day during the summer. This extension will also allow us flexibility for more substantial and imaginative programs. **Our current hours are limited to 8pm on weekdays and 10am-9pm on Fri and Sat, which makes scheduling concerts prohibitive and allows very little flexibility if a concert runs late or must be delayed due to weather***

2) Increase the maximum number of seats we are allowed

Similar venues Lloyd House and Carlyle House have capacities of 100, and Lee-Fendall is allowed 125. We can fit in 181 but we were limited to only 50 seats. We would be glad to get to 125. Increasing our audience capacity will not only improve the financial viability of the concert series, but it will also allow us to offer more free and discounted tickets to underprivileged children, disabled veterans, senior citizens, first responders and others), and to consider longer, more ambitious programs that preclude two seatings. We have monitored the street parking throughout our concert series and documented ample empty spots.

3) Remove the prohibition on amplification

No other venue is subject to such a restriction. Allowing light amplification will allow us to more easily and clearly address the audience using a small microphone – including delivering safety instructions. Spoken remarks are often hard to hear, especially with a mask and particularly due to other noise from airplanes, traffic, birds, and so on. Most of our artists will continue to perform without amplification, but in some instances, amplification will make it easier to hear certain instruments – such as the lute and viola da gamba – and make it possible to present programming that depends on amplification, such as some jazz ensembles or contemporary compositions. We will still operate under the 65 decibel limit within the property line.

Respectfully,

Tanya K. Lervik

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[EXTERNAL]In Support of Classical Movements' SUP Application #2021-00119

Douglas Rosenthal <trombonedoug@gmail.com>

Fri 1/28/2022 7:34 PM

To: PlanComm <PlanComm@alexandriava.gov>; Gloria Sitton <Gloria.Sitton@alexandriava.gov>

Cc: Adam Jackson <Adam@classicalmovements.com>

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To Whom it May Concern,

I am an Alexandria City resident who is in strong support of the ability of Classical Movements to thrive and provide us with unparalleled artistic experiences. While most arts organizations had to close their doors throughout most of the pandemic thus far, Classical Movements has given our city the live art that our souls have so desperately needed. Moreover, it's been great for nearby shops, restaurants, and bars; many of us concert-goers go out for a night in Old Town after performances! Not to mention, arts and culture account for a significant amount of middle class jobs. We all like to say we support the middle class; this is a way for us to show it!

It's my understanding that there are three revisions in particular that they seek. First, to change the hours for outdoor live entertainment to be allowed between 10am and 10pm. Second, to increase the maximum number of seats. And third, to remove the prohibition on amplification. I am in favor of all of these revisions! Classical Movements could expand their artistic operations and hire more artists, and more of us could attend performances.

It is in the entire city's best interest to approve every item of this application. Thank you!

Sincerely,
Douglas Rosenthal

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[EXTERNAL]Support for Special Use Permit #2021-00119 - Classical Movements Outdoor Concerts

Larry Milask <lmilask@ideatech.com>

Sat 1/29/2022 11:00 AM

To: Gloria Sitton <Gloria.Sitton@alexandriava.gov>; PlanComm <PlanComm@alexandriava.gov>

Cc: Sharron Milask <SMilask@ideatech.com>

Some people who received this message don't often get email from lmilask@ideatech.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Dear Gloria,

Larry Milask and Sharron Milask (IDEA*TECH owners) would like to contribute our full support for the subject outdoor concert application.

We have been avid classical music enthusiasts and participants in the Classical Movements (CM) concerts and have also been business associates with CM for over 10 years. We have seen how important their concerts have been to the cultural enhancement and enrichment of the Alexandria community.

We certainly support the requested modifications to the CM operational conditions such as extended hours to 10 PM, increased seating capacity, and reasonable amplification levels to 65 db. As a business owner in the city, we also will contribute 4 parking spaces we have available at our office parking lot at 820 Gibbon Street for concert participants.

We hope that the proposed sound proofing and other noise mitigation efforts being undertaken by CM will help persuade the commission's approval of the permit and allow CM to continue their wonderful and enriching series of concerts.

Thank you for your consideration of this endorsement for the Classical Movements special permit.,

Larry and Sharron

Laurance J. Milask



Laurance J. Milask | CEO, General Manager

IDEA*TECH Associates

820 Gibbon Street, Alexandria, VA 22314

Office: 703-838-0200; Cell: (571) 455-6509

Email: lmilask@ideatech.com

Web: www.ideatech.com

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[EXTERNAL]In Support of Classical Movements' SUP Application #2021-00119

Nicole Batts <nicolebatts@fitnesstogether.com>

Sun 1/30/2022 11:27 AM

To: PlanComm <PlanComm@alexandriava.gov>; Gloria Sitton <Gloria.Sitton@alexandriava.gov>

Cc: Adam@classicalmovements.com <Adam@classicalmovements.com>; Johan van Zyl <johan@classicalmovements.com>

You don't often get email from nicolebatts@fitnesstogether.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Dear Alexandria City Council and Planning Commission,

As a local business owner of Fitness Together in Alexandria, a small, women and minority owned business that has served the Alexandria community for more than 16 years, I would like to express my support for Classical Movements approval for a Special Use Permit (SUP). The SUP will allow Classical Movements to expand its business offerings, during these challenging business conditions, while also bringing support to local businesses, income to the City of Alexandria, and offering a safe outdoor weekend of entertainment and beauty in the Secret Garden, for the Alexandria community to distract from and cope with life's challenges.

Classical Movements is proving to be an integral and important part of the City of Alexandria. Classical Movements has my support because during these challenging and unprecedented times they continue to support and lend a helping hand to their community, the local music organizations and musicians, its partners, and local businesses.

Over the past 2 years, I have developed a partnership with Classical Movements since they began their unforgettable concerts and fundraising events in the beautiful Secret Garden. I have personally attended events and will attend more in 2022. In 2022, I also plan to attend with my colleagues for opportunities to enhance collaboration and teamwork and to unwind and de-stress. There is not a better event to share with my community to enhance morale and provide a fun work environment.

Partnering with Classical Movements has also added value to my business and theirs. I've had the opportunity to sponsor concerts and donate complimentary personal training sessions for an auction. These opportunities provided Fitness Together visibility in the Alexandria community as well as thousands of dollars in additional business and multiple new members. Maintaining a friendship and partnership with Classical Movements is invaluable. I look forward to this partnership continuing in 2022 to continue to grow our businesses.

Furthermore, in order to maximize the numerous advantages that Classical Movements concerts provide, it is imperative that more of the community has access to these exceptional and rare experiences and events in Old Town Alexandria. Allowing an increase in seating capacity to their available 125-seats, extending their live entertainment daily hours to between 10am and 10pm, and removing the prohibition on amplification can only enhance the experience for those in attendance and provide increased brand visibility for businesses like mine, Fitness Together Alexandria.

Additionally, my support for and belief in the importance of Classical Movements to this community, I will continue to offer and give consent for the use of 4 of Fitness Together Alexandria's parking spaces. The four spaces are authorized for use during any and all events organized by Classical Movements. The four spots are located in front of Suite 106, Fitness Together Alexandria's main entrance, at 300 N. Washington Street building.

Again, I strongly support Classical Movements and their Special Use Permit. I am extremely grateful for their support and look forward to our continued partnership.

Sincerely,

Nicole

--

 [Fitness Together - Alexandria](#)

Nicole Batts / Owner

nicolebatts@fitnesstogether.com / (c) 704.905.6947

Fitness Together - Alexandria

(o) 703.683.0777

300 N. Washington Street, Suite 106, Alexandria, VA 22314

fitnesstogether.com/alexandria

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[EXTERNAL]In Support of Classical Movements' SUP Application #2021-00119

Leyla Johnson <leylacjohnson@gmail.com>

Sun 1/30/2022 5:02 PM

To: PlanComm <PlanComm@alexandriava.gov>; Gloria Sitton <Gloria.Sitton@alexandriava.gov>; Neeta Helms <Neeta@classicalmovements.com>; Johan van Zyl <Johan@classicalmovements.com>

Some people who received this message don't often get email from leylacjohnson@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

To Whom It May Concern,

We are writing in support of Classical Movements and their Sounds of Hope and Harmony concert series. We live one block away, near the corner of Princess and Alfred, and one of the reasons we bought the house last May (403A N. Alfred St) was that we discovered this amazing concert series a short walk away. Neeta and Johan have built up their touring business over decades, building connections with world-class musicians, and Alexandria can now benefit from these connections with this amazing concert series, one that probably would never have started without the pandemic but which could now become one of the jewels of Alexandria's cultural scene. The musicians who perform at the Rectory are accustomed to playing to much larger crowds and in much larger venues, so this concert series is truly one-of-a-kind. We have never seen artists of this caliber perform for such small audiences across a diversified program.

We attend every concert that we are able to and often turn it into a night out by walking down to King St for dinner either before or after the show. One of the absolute highlights of 2021 for us was seeing The Magic Flute performed as part of their Young Artists program, and we have the first weekend of June circled on our calendar right now for The Marriage of Figaro. Every time we have out of town visitors, we walk with them to a performance as part of a night out on the town - a good reason to help them also discover the restaurants and shops that are all within walking distance of the Rectory.

Over the course of multiple shows, we grew to know Neeta and Johan better and were surprised to learn that they have been having to fight for the right to keep doing performances and to have more flexible times. (The starting times for the concerts are uncomfortably early for people on regular working hours.) It's an amazing boon for the local community and will certainly bring in visitors from outside Alexandria as their reputation grows. The performances we have attended have all been at moderate volumes typical for classical music ensembles so it is hard to believe that there have ever been complaints about noise.

We hope that their Special Permit is approved, and we hope that the concerts become an important cultural institution for the City of Alexandria.

Best,

Leyla Johnson

CEO/Creative Director

mohawkgames.com

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[EXTERNAL]In Support of Classical Movements' SUP Application #2021-00119

Davidson Family <davidson_family@comcast.net>

Sun 1/30/2022 8:05 PM

To: PlanComm <PlanComm@alexandriava.gov>; Gloria Sitton <Gloria.Sitton@alexandriava.gov>

Cc: Adam@classicalmovements.com <Adam@classicalmovements.com>

You don't often get email from davidson_family@comcast.net. [Learn why this is important](#)

Dear Planning and Zoning staff of the Planning Commission and City Clerk for the City of Alexandria,

We are writing in support of Classical Movements' application for a Special Use Permit #2021-00119. We attended four concerts this past season and found them to be quite wonderful. The level of performance was extremely high and the setting in the patio area was beautiful and really contributed to our enjoyment of the musical program. Our typical pattern was to attend a concert and then cap-off the experience with a delicious dinner on (or near) King St. With all the restrictions and prohibitions so common since the start of the pandemic, we found this outlet to be a unique joy indeed.

We live just two blocks up from Classical Movements, on the 500 block of North Columbus Street. Honestly the background noise level in this part of Old Town is extremely high! Between airplanes, fire trucks, buses and other normal traffic noise, residents here are constantly exposed to the cacophony of modern life. We have found that the low level of additional sound provided at the Classical Movements concerts we attended to be soothing in comparison.

We are aware that Classical Movements is seeking three revisions to the Special Use Permit under which they have operated, and we believe that all of them are worthwhile and justifiable. We hope they will get your approval. It only seems fair that the regulations under which Classical Movements' operates would mirror those of other outdoor music venues located close by, these being Lloyd House and Lee-Fendall House. We believe their hours should be extended and that light amplification should be allowed, especially if they agree to abide by the 65 decibel restriction. Finally, there is pretty of room in Classical Movements' outdoor space for additional seating and we support the idea of increasing the maximum number of seats allowed from its current limit of 50.

We chose to live in Alexandria for the many benefits it offers; we now consider the concert series at Classical Movements among those benefits. We are enthusiastically supportive of the SUP Application #2021-00119 in hopes that it will get your support as well.

Most sincerely,
Steve and Erica Davidson
535 N Columbus Street
Alexandria, VA

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Re: Special Use Permit #2021-00119 - corrected address

Hertzmf <hertzmf@gmail.com>

Mon 1/31/2022 8:01 AM

To: PlanComm <PlanComm@alexandriava.gov>; Gloria Sitton <Gloria.Sitton@alexandriava.gov>

Cc: Anne Carlucci <carlucciam@aol.com>

[Some people who received this message don't often get email from hertzmf@gmail.com. Learn why this is important at <http://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification>.]

Please see attached correcting Classical Movements' address to 711 (not 611) Princess Street.

Mitchell Hertz

202-841-1111

Sent from my iPad

> On Jan 30, 2022, at 3:02 PM, Mitchell Hertz <hertzmf@gmail.com> wrote:

>

>

> Dear Members of the City Council and the Planning Commission:

>

> We are writing in support of Classical Movements' Special Use Permit to allow concerts to continue in the Rectory Garden at 711 Princess Street. We also support the increase in available hours, increase in seating capacity and allowing use of amplification.

>

> We had not been to Alexandria in more than a decade even though we live in DC. With concert halls and other performing arts venues shuttered due to the pandemic, we started attending Classical Movements' concerts. Not only have they provided a welcome dose of extraordinary music, they have caused us to reconnect -- and fall in love with -- Alexandria. Every concert has become a night on the town as we enjoy restaurants, shopping and a walk along the waterfront. We have now started frequenting Alexandria even on non-concert days.

>

> Classical Movements is an extraordinary organization, providing access to world-class music. That alone is something we urge the City of Alexandria to support. But Classical Movements is so much more. It supports young artists, promotes opportunities for underrepresented voices and helps make our community more equal and more inclusive. Through these concerts, we have had the opportunity to support a young Venezuelan refugee (and music prodigy), Afghan classical musicians and many others who have come to live in our community. Classical Movements' work embodies the values of our community. As an aside, it is always a pleasure to see the residents of Sunrise Assisted Living sitting in front of their open windows to enjoy the concerts.

>

> We appreciate that governmental decisions require a balancing of interests. In this case, Classical Movements is doing so much good for so many people while causing no disruption to the community. The balance clearly favors continuation and expansion of these concerts. Please continue to support the growth of this extraordinary community resource.

>

> Thank you for your consideration.

>

> Mitchell Hertz and Anne Carlucci
> 202/841-1111

[EXTERNAL]Special Use Permit 2021-00119 Classical Movements

guyvl <guylamolinara@gmail.com>

Mon 1/31/2022 10:31 AM

To: PlanComm <PlanComm@alexandriava.gov>

 1 attachments (16 KB)

In re Special Use Permit 2021 2-1-22 Meeting.docx;

Dear Members of the Planning Commission:

Please see my attached letter and acknowledge receipt.

Thank you,
Guy Lamolinara
411 N. Columbus St.

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In re Special Use Permit 2021-00119

711 Princess Street, Classical Movements

Dear Members of the Planning Commission:

I am writing to express my objection to the continuance of the Special Use Permit for Classical Movements and ask that the zoning be returned to its proper designation, as it has for as long as I have lived in my home, which is since 1987.

This property has always operated as a business office, and its current use as an entertainment space/party venue is not in keeping with the residential character of this neighborhood in which the other surrounding businesses operate on a daytime schedule and produce no external sound that infringes on the property rights of others. Classical Movements' property is simply too small to accommodate what they are trying to do.

My neighbors David and Sue Fritz at 409 N. Columbus and my wife and I at 411 N. Columbus are the only property owners directly affected by the frequent concerts and other events that make it impossible for us to enjoy our home and patio when these concerts -- all of which exceed allowable decibel levels -- occur.

None of the other supporters of these concerts are directly affected by them. Their comments should therefore be discounted. These people from as far away as the District of Columbia have every reason to be in favor of these events. What they say is therefore irrelevant.

The issue before you is not one related to the merits of this music; the issue relates directly to the rights of homeowners adjacent to 711 Princess who must endure the disturbance of these frequent concerts, weddings and other gatherings that sound as if they are taking place inside our homes.

Classical Movements often sets up its players next to our adjacent fence. That means these concerts take place 15 feet from our homes. It is impossible to sit in our nearby rooms to read a book, watch television or simply just have a conversation. We are forced to move to the front of the house, but even there, the sound interrupts our space. In fact, these concerts can be heard when one is outside on North Columbus Street. And, we can't even think of sitting outside to have dinner and a conversation. The sound is simply too loud.

Classical Movements has repeatedly violated the stipulations of the SUP, both in decibel levels as well as the time when these concerts are allowed. They frequently run later than allowed, and the weddings often use amplified music.

Classical Movements has embarrassed me in front of my friends by holding up signs during their concerts telling us to keep our voices down when we are conversing on my patio.

They will say or do anything to get what they want, as evidenced by their past errant behavior.

For example:

- They have falsely accused me in the local paper of purposely disturbing the concerts because, perhaps, I am sweeping my patio and the movement of chairs disturbs their concerts.
- They claim I play my music just to interfere with theirs.
- They wrote in their newspaper letter that my neighbor at 409 N. Columbus supports their concerts when this is obviously not true.
- They claim there is still ample parking in the neighborhood when their events occur.
- None of this is true. There is, in fact, no parking for residents returning to their homes during these events. Attendees are not taking public transportation. The closest Metro station is a mile away. Classical Movements' claims to the contrary defy logic: Who would take Metro and walk a mile to these concerts (and back) when they know they can use residential parking without fear of ticketing? The closest public parking, which accommodates no more than 30 cars, is at the corner of St. Asaph and Cameron – nowhere near 711 Princess.

What Classical Movements objects to is that I am simply using my property as I have every right to. If you read between the lines of what Classical Movements is saying it is this: The property owners at 409 and 411 N. Columbus should cede their rights to Classical Movements whenever Classical Movements is holding an event. No amount of noise abatement will ameliorate this situation.

So far, Classical Movements has violated their special status without consequence. For you to renew their permit – and even extend it to ridiculous levels in terms of numbers of attendees, lateness of activity and use of amplifiers – would only serve as a “reward” for their utter disregard for the rights of their neighbors and serve as an invitation to go even further.

I respectfully ask that you deny their request.

Guy Lamolinara

411 N. Columbus St.

January 31, 2022

Dear Nathan Macek, Chair, Alexandria Planning Commission,

This email is City staff's response to the concerns and suggestions raised by the Chair in your letter to the City Council as a result of the Classical Movement SUP discussion at the Planning Commission.

With respect to your first concern regarding a 60 decibel standard for commercial uses being too low, this issue was addressed in the revised noise code by increasing the commercial standard to 65 decibels for the hours between 7 AM to 11 PM and retaining the 60 decibel standard between 11 PM and 7 AM.

Regarding your concerns with the Administration of the Existing Noise Ordinance and the difference between Classical Movements and similar outdoor events at places such as Carlyle House, Lloyd House and the Lee-Fendall House, the main difference is that Classical Movements requested an SUP where the primary use is an outdoor live entertainment concert venue, while the house museums hold occasional concerts and weddings with music, which are considered accessory zoning uses, as they often occur no more than once a month. Also in most cases, they do not request a noise permit from the City to allow them to exceed the noise standard. The museums do not have SUPs as they existed prior to zoning ordinance changes that would have required one or, later, did not permit the use. Nonetheless, the three reported that they regularly self-monitor the noise levels at outdoor music events and inform performers that noise levels must be reduced if they exceed the noise code. Although outdoor concerts have not occurred since March 2020 and may cease altogether moving forward at the Lloyd House, any musician not complying with the noise code was asked in the past to cease their performance. Perhaps the self-monitoring of the house museum operators and the infrequency of events has resulted in staff having not received noise complaints about the museums' events. Had noise become an issue with nearby residents, staff would have initiated appropriate enforcement which may include a noise mitigation plan with them in the absence of SUP conditions.

Staff regularly requests applicants of noise permits to notify and reach out to neighbors prior to the issuance of a noise permit. In the case of Classical Movements, staff did apparently request that signatures be collected as part of the notification process, due to the fact that there had already been noise complaints and there was an SUP application filed. Staff agrees the collection of signatures may be overly burdensome and will not request such documentation in similar situations in the future.

The issuance of noise permits is specifically intended to allow for temporary activities whether for construction or for an event where compliance with the standard or hours cannot be achieved or maintained. In the case of Classical Movements, staff was willing to issue a permit to allow for their events to continue, while the SUP was pending. However, staff continues to believe that a regular occurring primary use activity such as the outdoor live entertainment in the case of Classical Movements, should comply with the noise code and not be issued a long-term permit to routinely exceed permitted decibel standards.

During the noise code revision process staff did make every effort to research noise codes in other jurisdictions and did incorporate changes where appropriate, such as increasing the commercial noise standard and utilizing a plainly audible standard for residential areas after 11 PM.

Finally, I can assure you that from an administration and noise enforcement perspective, City staff applies and enforces the code equitably and consistently, regardless of the property ownership.

Sincerely,

Bill Skrabak, Deputy Director

Department of Transportation & Environmental Services

Messages of support re: Classical Movements Special Use Permit #2021-00119

Adam Jackson <Adam@classicalmovements.com>

Mon 1/31/2022 4:55 PM

To: PlanComm <PlanComm@alexandriava.gov>; Gloria Sitton <Gloria.Sitton@alexandriava.gov>

Cc: Neeta Helms <Neeta@classicalmovements.com>; Johan van Zyl <Johan@classicalmovements.com>; Sara Casar <Sara@classicalmovements.com>

Dear Planning Commission and Ms. Sitton,

In support of our SUP Application (#2021-00119), which will be reviewed by the Planning Commission on February 1 and by the City Council on February 12, we wanted to share the following selected personal messages sent to Classical Movements' Founder and President Neeta Helms.

These are excerpted from approximately 600 comments and messages made on a number of occasions with relevance to our concert series, including the nomination of Neeta in December 2021 as one of Musical America's Top 31 Professionals of 2021 – an honor granted to her in large part due to her innovative leadership of this concert series in Alexandria and tireless advocacy for live music during the pandemic:

Name	Title	Comment
Ann Stahmer	<i>Former Executive Director, City Choir of Washington, Singer, Concert Presenter and Producer</i>	Neeta, the music community is stronger because you and Johan, in you for everything you have done and continue to do for all of us.
Alexandria Crichlow	<i>Soprano Soloist, Opera Singer, Secret Garden Concert Artist</i>	The organization that's allowed me the incredible experience to see Movements🎻🎷🎹🎸!!!
Steve Houk	<i>TV Show Host, Journalist, Zebra TV, Living on Music</i>	You deserve every second of the recognition my sweet friend! Here, your accomplishments! https
Amy Frost Baumgarten	<i>Principal Cello, Kennedy Center Opera House Orchestra</i>	A community treasure- both the people and the setting!!
Sara MacKimmie	<i>Singer, Secret Garden Concert Artist</i>	Congratulations on all the success you've built! I feel honored to get
Rick Barber	<i>Double Bass player, National Symphony Orchestra, Secret Garden Concert Artist</i>	Love everything you do and happy to have been along on a little bit
Anna Bergman	<i>Opera & Broadway Singer, Made Alexandria Debut at the Secret Garden</i>	Neeta Helms, Scott and I are over the moon thrilled that you have b Johan for giving me my first live concert engagement during Covid.
Carolyn Fuller	<i>Board Member, Alexandria Symphony Orchestra</i>	Congratulations! We look forward to many, many more years with y the world would dim without CM and you two.
Anne Midgett	<i>Former, Chief Music Critic Washington Post</i>	So well deserved; so proud of you! Congratulations
Aaron Janse	<i>Musician Minnosota Orchestra</i>	Congrats! You have definitely made the world a better place - many
Cynthia Steele	<i>Former Director of Operations, National Symphony Orchestra</i>	It was so wonderful! I had tears in my eyes when I heard live music I had brought with me in the car. Thank you!
Grace Cho	<i>Pianist, Organist, Executive Director New Orchestra of Washington</i>	This looks absolutely amazing. Your imagination has no limits!
Norma Dugger	<i>Choral Singer, Former Board Member Choral Arts Society, regular audience member of the Secret Garden Series</i>	You deserve every word of this recognition and I am thrilled to be cl
David Wilson	<i>President, Morgan State University</i>	Congratulations Neeta! You're the best! And this recognition is so v
Rémie Christ	<i>Yale University Alumna</i>	You have done a beautiful thing for so many people with these conc
Deborah Norris Mello	<i>Choral Director</i>	Congratulations to you and the fantastic company you have built!! I Movements so wonderful!
Dhilanthi Fernando	<i>Choral Conductor and Pianist, Teacher of Music</i>	What a lovely and creative idea you had with these outdoor concerts
Rémie Christ	<i>Yale University Alumna</i>	Brava! Your setting looks so heavenly!
Dhilanthi Fernando	<i>Choral Conductor and Pianist, Teacher of Music</i>	A testament to vision and grit.
Doreen Rao	<i>Multi-Grammy Award-Winning Choral Conductor, Arranger, Professor of University of Toronto</i>	This is GREAT news, and completely appropriate and well deserved
Elize Vd Merwe	<i>South Africa</i>	Congrats you all are amazing truly a wonderful force of joy around t
Ellen Dinwiddie Smith	<i>Musician, French Horn Minnesota Orchestra</i>	Well deserved! You are my hero!
Grace Cho	<i>Executive Director, New Orchestra of Washington</i>	This should be a book. Thank you for all you do!
Mark Alberta	<i>President, Yale Alumni Chorus, Board member, Washington DC Legal Affairs Office</i>	There has been quite a buzz about all the wonderful and daring and Wasteland! Kudos Neeta!

Melynda Dovel Wilcox	<i>President of the Board, Alexandria Symphony Orchestra</i>	It was a spectacular way to end the season!
Grace Cho	<i>Executive Director, New Orchestra of Washington</i>	You built a legacy and a movement through Classical Movements. C
Howard Spendelow	<i>Professor Georgetown University, Choral Singer</i>	Don't forget the concert I attended was the first choral live performa
Jan Childress	<i>Choral Singer</i>	Love the Secret Garden and looking forward to more beautiful event
Janet Horvath	<i>Former Principal Cellist, Minnesota Orchestra, Author, Journalist</i>	Neeta you have already my undying admiration. This adds layers of
Jen Keavy	<i>Marketing Manager Orchestra</i>	Yes! Congrats, Neeta! Totally deserved--I've admired all you've done
Joan Stockton	<i>Alexandria resident</i>	You are amazing!!! Making such a difference in the lives of others
John Nardolillo	<i>Director of Orchestras , University of Kentucky and Artistic Director, Prague Summer Nights Young Artist Festival</i>	Neeta Helms, we could not be more thrilled to be heading back to be Festival!! Thanks for everything you have done to make this amazin
Jon Eisenberg		Wow. Amazing stuff. Congratulations on such work in a very diffic
Kelly MacConomy	<i>Culture Editor, The Zebra Magazine</i>	Neeta Helms wow!
Laura Colgate	<i>Concert Mistress, National Philharmonic Orchestra and Artistic Director Boulanger Initiative</i>	CM has added so much joy and beauty to the world, even when it's e
Linda Moxley	<i>Former Executive Director, Baltimore Choral Arts, Baltimore Symphony Orchestra</i>	It looks beautiful, magical, warm and toasty, with everyone getting t
Malabika Shaw	<i>Therapist</i>	You guys are so brilliant, so creative and so industrious. Absolutely :
Marianna Prjevalskaya	<i>Concert Pianist, Secret Garden Concert Series Artist</i>	It was memorable, thank you for inviting me to perform!!
Mimi Rottiers	<i>Audience member, Secret Garden Concert Series</i>	So wonderful! Thank you Neeta, Johan & Alessandra! We have enjo
Nicolette Driehuys Oppelt	<i>Principal Flute-National Philharmonic and Maryland Symphony and Washington Concert Opera and Amadeus Orchestra and Virginia Chamber Orchestra</i>	It was a magical evening, thank you so much!!
Ann Stahmer	<i>Former Executive Director, City Choir of Washington, Singer, Concert Presenter and Producer</i>	Neeta and Johan, a mere thanks is inadequate for all you and your s during the pandemic. Giving artists the opportunity to do what they
zNirupama Rao	<i>Former Indian Ambassador to the United States, Singer, Founder and Artistic Director of the South Asian Symphony Orchestra</i>	Heartiest Congratulations, Neeta on this recognition of the work do
Norma Dugger	<i>Choral Singer, Former Board Member Choral Arts Society, regular audience member of the Secret Garden Series</i>	They were wonderful!!
Patricia Silver	<i>Artist Management</i>	Fabulous!
Preeti Reddy	<i>CEO Market Analytics and Research Firm</i>	Well deserved ! Congratulations
Rémie Christ	<i>Yale University Alumna</i>	Congratulations! The world is a better, richer place because you all e
Dietlinde Maazel	<i>Owner and Artistic Director Castleton Festival, Virginia and Professor of German Lieder, Rutgers</i>	You could not have said it better, Neeta! Over the thousands of year "Götterdämmerungs-Phase"! Keep doing the beautiful work you do
Scott Mello	<i>Opus 3 Artists</i>	Congrats!
Simon Woods	<i>President, The League Of American Orchestras</i>	!!!! Wonderful news and much deserved!
Sri N Srivatsa	<i>Choir Member</i>	Heartiest congratulations and best wishes for this recognition and y
Chantal Balestri	<i>Classical Pianist, Artistic Director of a festival</i>	You absolutely deserve it. We never met, but I follow you quietly he do. Greetings from Italy
Thomas C. Duffy	<i>Yale University</i>	The might of right prevails! Congrats!

Cynthia Steele	<i>Acoustician, Threshold Acoustics and Concert Production</i>	Your work will be so important as the world resumes travel and per
Vijay Venkatesh	<i>Concert Pianist, Secret Garden Concert Series Artist</i>	Congratulations !! So happy for you
Catherine Clarke Nardolillo	<i>Professor of Voice, Head of Voice Programs Prague Summer Nights</i>	Thank you, Neeta, for all you and your team do to make this happen again this summer!
Suzanne Stephan Neely	<i>Doug Sheldon Concert Artists</i>	Happy birthday Classical Movements!Neeta, I love following your c work!
Aaron Jensen	<i>Music Director-Schitts Creek TV Show, Composer, Singer, Song-writer,</i>	I wish I could raise a toast to you and your team in person. Classical touched so many lives, and will continue to do so. Here's to all the e
Ann Stahmer	<i>Former Executive Director, City Choir of Washington, Singer, Concert Presenter and Producer</i>	YAY!!! You have been recognized for your hard work for the DC music concerts during this challenging time.

Thank you for including with the other additional materials. If you have any questions or problems, please don't hesitate to be in touch.

All best,

Adam Jackson

Artistic Planning & Executive Assistant to the President, Ms. Neeta Helms

1-703-683-6040, ext. 201

Classical Movements

Moving the Music, Changing the World

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[EXTERNAL]Messages of support of Classical Movements' SUP Application #2021-00119, received from Sunrise residents and staff

Adam Jackson <Adam@classicalmovements.com>

Mon 1/31/2022 5:04 PM

To: PlanComm <PlanComm@alexandriava.gov>; Gloria Sitton <Gloria.Sitton@alexandriava.gov>

Cc: Neeta Helms <Neeta@classicalmovements.com>; Johan van Zyl <Johan@classicalmovements.com>; Sara Casar <Sara@classicalmovements.com>

Dear Planning Commission and Ms. Sitton,

We have previously submitted an older version of this document of messages from residents and staff at Sunrise in support of our SUP Application #2021-00119, but have since received several additional messages that are incorporated in the attached version.

Would you please include this updated version in the materials for the Planning Commission and City Council hearings?

Please let me know if you have any trouble with the file or any questions.

Thank you very much for your attention and assistance!

All best,

Adam Jackson

Artistic Planning & Executive Assistant to the President, Ms. Neeta Helms

1-703-683-6040, ext. 201

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In addition to notes from Sunrise Senior Living staff, Classical Movements has received expressions or messages of support and appreciation from the following **Sunrise residents**:

- Winifred and Jim Anderson (attended our November 9, 2021 concert)
- Jane Christ
- Carla Dulaney
- Cynthia Ford
- Norman Mausoff (attended our November 9, 2021 concert)
- Candace Thomas and her children Troy & Paula Thomas (who have attended concerts often)
- Jill Tracey
- Bernadette Troy

See selected messages, attached.

Dear Neeta,

On behalf of the entire Sunrise team, we wanted to express our most joyful congratulations on being named one of Musical America's Top 30 Professionals of the Year! We are so grateful for our lovely partnership with you. Your team is full of incredible talent. This special reward and recognition is more than well deserved! Team Sunrise is for you 100%!

Congratulations!

Julie, Lisa, Stephany & Maya



OLD TOWN

Just a note to tell you
a number of your senior
neighbors at Sunrise enjoy
your concerts from our rooms.
We look forward to a new
season.

Judith Tracey

Mrs. David C. Tracey

Dear Neeta and Johan,
The concert last night of
French Horn players was
an absolute delight. The
four men so obviously were
having fun and it was
contagious with the audience!

Jim, my husband, and I
are fortunate ones at Sunco
whose windows overlook your
courtyard. To go to sleep
hearing your music.
Thank you for a lovely
evening. Sincerely yours
Ann Andersen

1 2012

As a resident of the
Sunrise of Old Town
I totally enjoy your
musicians giving us
the best quality music
as a neighborhood. Looking
forward to 2022, Carla

Winifred G. Anderson

To: Johan van Zyl
Sr. Vice-President

Dear Mr. van Zyl,

I write on behalf of my husband, James, and me in support of your ongoing musical presentations. One of the most enjoyable evenings we have had since moving to Sunrise was the quartet of French horns from the National Symphony. In addition, many nights when we are unable to attend your presentations in the Courtyard, the music floats up to us in our bedroom.

Thank you for your work to bring fine music to Old Town, Alexandria.

Sincerely yours,

Winifred Anderson

As a resident of the Sunrise of Old Town, I totally enjoy your musicians giving us the best quality music as a neighbor. Looking forward to 2022,

Carla

Dear Mr. Van Zyl,

I write on behalf of my husband, James, and me in support of your ongoing musical presentations. One of the most enjoyable evenings we have had since moving to Sunrise was the quartet of French horns from the National Symphony. In addition, many nights when we are unable to attend your presentations in the courtyard, the music floats up to us in our bedroom.

Thank you for your work to bring fine music to Old Town, Alexandria.

Sincerely yours,

Winifred Anderson

Dear Neeta: On behalf of the entire Sunrise team, we wanted to express our most joyful congratulations on being named one of Musical America's Top 30 Professionals of the Year! We are so grateful for our lovely partnership with you. Your team is full of incredible talent. This special reward and recognition is more than well deserved! Team Sunrise is for you 100%!

Congratulations!

Julie, Lisa, Stephany & Maya

Just a note to tell you a number of your senior neighbors at Sunrise enjoy your concerts from our rooms. We look forward to a new season.

Jill T. Tracey

From: Jane Christ
Date: January 17, 2022 at 8:03:23 PM EST
Cc: Carla Dulaney
Subject: Thank you note to Johan van Zyl

I am a resident at Sunrise , Old Town and would like to thank you for the summer concerts that we all enjoy from our patio next to your concert hall. I hope they will continue next summer.

As a college student I used to be an usherette at the Robin hood Dell in Philadelphia in the patrons section of the Dell and saw at that time how wonderful outdoor concerts can be.

Unfortunately I could not get the e/mail address directed to Mr. van Zyl in person.

With sincere appreciation,

Jane Christ

From: Jane Christ
Sent: Thursday, January 13, 2022 10:59 AM
To: Johan van Zyl
Subject: Enjoyment of the out door concerts

Many of us at Sunrise Senior Living enjoy and look forward to the concerts next door to our Senior residence . We hope you can continue in the next program year.

I used to be (in my younger years,) an usherette for the Philadelphia Orchestra during their summer concerts at the Robin Hood Dell in Philadelphia. There was a small paying section for orchestra benefactors and a large section for the public on the hill who could enjoy with publicly obtainable free tickets. Needless to say this was much appreciated and well-attended.

Your concerts offer us much the same Benefit.

Jane Christ
Sunrise Senior Living, Old Town

From: Carla Dulaney
Sent: Friday, January 14, 2022 10:27 AM
To: Johan van Zyl
Subject: Re: Jan 11

Jan 14

I wanted to let you know that there's 2 note cards at our front desk for you to pickup when convenient. I have made contact with a few other residents so there might be more.

We have a lot of new residents who may not even know about the Secret Garden, and we have a very small directory, as well as a very limited number of people who are computer savvy!

Just wanted to give you a update, Carla

Sent from Carla's iPad

From: Carla Dulaney

Sent: Tuesday, January 11, 2022 10:09 PM

To: Johan van Zyl

Subject: Jan 11

Again, how can I help keep your license, any address that I can write to? Whatever, please let me know.

It's Carla, a Sunrise resident, who enjoys your performances, even the private ones from the other side of the fence. 😊

I did sign up for your emails...if it didn't work please add me: carladulaney6@gmail.com

Sent from Carla's iPad

Dear Neeta and Johan,

The concert last night of French Horn players was an absolute delight. The four men so obviously were having fun and it was contagious with the audience!

Jim, my husband, and I are fortunate ones at Sunrise whose windows overlook your courtyard. We go to sleep hearing your music.

Thank you for a lovely evening.

Sincerely yours,

Win Anderson

Re: Classical Movements SUP for Live Concerts at 711 Princess Street, Alexandria VA
(Special Use Permit #2021-00119)

Remy Vallerand-Parisi <remymvp@gmail.com>

Mon 1/31/2022 7:38 PM

To: PlanComm <PlanComm@alexandriava.gov>; Gloria Sitton <Gloria.Sitton@alexandriava.gov>

Cc: adam@classicalmovements.com <adam@classicalmovements.com>

Some people who received this message don't often get email from remymvp@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Dear City Planning Commission,

Re: Classical Movements SUP for Live Concerts at 711 Princess Street, Alexandria VA
(Special Use Permit #2021-00119)

1. In 2020 as soon as the pandemic started I was lucky when **I was occasionally hired to help with production of the Concerts presented by Classical Movements. This was the only work I could find.** I saw how carefully the concerts were planned, how we had to clean and sanitize the chairs, wipe the equipment, the door knobs inside the rooms in the entire building, housed the musicians in clean rooms, cleaned the bathrooms, put out tarps for the sunshine, put sings all over the walkway and entrance about COVID protocol, sentencing and hand sanitizing stations all over. We took temperatures, we wore masks, we made sure the musicians and audience had a good and safe experience.
2. **The musicians did not have any chance to perform anywhere else**, many said they had played live music with others and for others for the first time in 3 months, 6 months, later even 15 months.
3. I could not believe that after using a keyboard for the concerts (easy to drag out in the rain and move around), not needing tuning, suddenly in 2021 we had to have a big and heavy piano for concerts. More than anyone else I was always helping move the piano. **It is a heavy piano and required three of us to do this and an expensive piano tuner each time we moved it. As a pianist myself I can tell you that one can moderate a keyboard and keep it soft.** There is no reason to limit amplification in this arbitrary way.
4. I enjoyed the jazz, opera, chamber music, cabaret, small choirs, American banjo music and all the other **varieties of music during each concert. But some instruments are so soft, they need amplification. Spanish guitar**, for example, in the outdoors. I made recordings and videos (one of my jobs was to be a cameraman) and one could not even hear some of the instruments.
5. **As a young person not allowed to visit anyone's homes, during the pandemic, this was the only time I met people for several months.**
6. **On hot summer days last year, with concerts stopping at 8pm, we had to then spend hours putting sun sails up.** All one needed to do was start a bit later as normal concerts do.
7. Sometimes with **thunderstorms** and floods even, the audience and musicians concerts were under potential threat **and we had no option to delay much because of the early end time.**

I hope you will continue these concerts and make some basic changes. Thank you for your consideration.

R. Vallerand
6125 Stegen Drive, Alexandria VA

Student, Violinist, Pianist and Cellist

[EXTERNAL]Re; Classical Movements SUP

Max Parisi <maxvparisi@gmail.com>

Mon 1/31/2022 8:31 PM

To: PlanComm <PlanComm@alexandriava.gov>; Gloria Sitton <Gloria.Sitton@alexandriava.gov>; Adam@classicalmovements.com <Adam@classicalmovements.com>

Some people who received this message don't often get email from maxvparisi@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Dear City Planning Commission,

Re: Classical Movements SUP for Live Concerts at 711 Princess Street, Alexandria VA
(Special Use Permit #2021-00119

In 2020 when the pandemic started I was a senior in High School in Alexandria and the last three months of my school years were spent indoors and away from all my friends. We had a drive-by graduation! In June 2020 I started helping out at The Rectory on Princess Street and helped put up the concerts, clean the garden, prune bushes, paint and fix up the area to start hosting concerts. These were the first live concerts in the entire country. I have studied Violin and piano and played in an Orchestra for years and years and it was great to listen to these amazing musicians, the best in the world, play here for a few people who suddenly had one place to go to when everything was shut down all over the world.

I write to support these concerts. In fall 2020 I moved to College and now live out of State at University for 9 months of the year. When I came back home in May 2021, I saw that Classical Movements no longer could use a keyboard, and now we're forced to use a piano even for jazz and Broadway music concerts. There was a day in summer 2021 when three of us had moved the piano out, under the tarp and the skies opened up and there was an enormous thunderstorm. It was not predicted. The artists had arrived and the audience started to come so the concert was moved indoors at the last minute in a tight space. Two of us then spent an hour pushing rain off the tarp so it did not collapse and ruin the piano which we were incapable of moving by ourselves. We finally managed to get this done when a third person was able to help. It made no sense that they could not use a keyboard for a Jazz Concert in June. Apparently, this is because of an arbitrary rule that no amplification is allowed. Of course, a keyboard cannot be played without being connected to some electrical outlet and has a speaker. Honestly please remove such random rules in the permit.

As a young person when I go around King Street and all over Old Town now, there are many buskers, out-of-tune bands, and rock and roll music coming out of every corner. I cannot understand why classical music is controlled and other people who are truly loud can do whatever they want. When I come back this summer of 2022, I am hoping to be able to help out again and hear beautiful music again.

I hope you will continue these concerts and make some basic changes to unreasonable rules. And by the way, it is shocking that the neighbor who caused all the trouble in the first place plays loud music during all concerts. Thank you for your consideration.

Max Parisi

703 679 0997, Alexandria VA

University Student and former Violinist and Pianist

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[EXTERNAL]Special Use Permit #2021-00119

Linda Bunce <lindabunce@aol.com>

Mon 1/31/2022 11:06 PM

To: PlanComm <PlanComm@alexandriava.gov>

You don't often get email from lindabunce@aol.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Dear Planning & Zoning Staff,

I am writing on behalf of Classical Movements and their request for a Special Use Permit which would allow concerts to continue in the Secret Garden. I have attended many of the concerts beginning in June 2020 and I cannot think of any one thing which has made more of a difference in my life than being able to hear some of the very best musicians in the Washington DC area in a lovely garden setting. The concerts have been a real highlight in my life and even though other venues are now opening up, they cannot compare to the unique setting which the Secret Garden offers.

I know Classical Movements has requested an extension of hours, an increase in the number of seats allowed, and the removal of the amplification prohibition. I support their request wholeheartedly. The Secret Garden is a special gift to Alexandria and we can all be grateful for the high quality of music it brings to our community.

Sincerely,
Linda Bunce

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