

Playing to the World



PHOTO: PETE CHECCHIA

Each fall, superb young musicians from around the world step through the doors of Curtis. They come from different cultures, different traditions, different continents. But they have two things in common: They have chosen to put music at the very center of their lives. And they are gifted in extraordinary ways. To quote the legendary cellist and onetime Curtis faculty member Mstislav Rostropovich, I think of our students as nothing less than “soldiers for music.”

Over the summer, our students were superb soldiers for music. The night before Commencement, our orchestra played for a crowd of 4,400 at the Mann Center for the Performing Arts (page 3). Within 24 hours they were on a plane bound for their residency at the Dresden Music Festival (page 6). Then they dispersed—some to join Curtis On Tour in Europe, others to festivals worldwide. Their activity over the summer, like the performance culture that shapes their semesters at school, models the impact they will have after their graduation.

And Curtis graduates have a profound and disproportionate impact on the world of music. A select group numbering no more than 4,000 since the school’s founding in 1924, they include solo artists in the most

important venues in the world—from Berlin to Beijing and beyond. They play in ensembles around the globe. They hold principal chairs in every major American orchestra and several overseas. They are on the rosters of the Metropolitan Opera, La Scala, Covent Garden, the Vienna Staatsoper, and the San Francisco Opera, among other world-renowned companies. They have won Pulitzer Prizes, Guggenheim Fellowships, Avery Fisher Awards, Grammys, Tonys, and countless other musical honors. They are entrepreneurs, creating innovative programs to inspire the next generation of musicians in their communities and around the world.

Scan the post-Commencement plans of the Class of 2012 (page 30) and you will see the first stages of this process at work. Already our 2012 graduates are winning prestigious awards, launching inventive projects and programs, earning positions with leading orchestras and roles with major opera companies, and studying and performing internationally. We are proud of their global reach, and we are constantly seeking ways to ensure that it continues, given the rapidly changing musical environment in which our young artists are destined to become leaders.

In every time zone, on the most revered stages around the globe and in their own communities, Curtis graduates are making and motivating music—composing, playing, singing, teaching. And the world is listening. ♦

Roberto Díaz, President