

Point of Departure



PHOTO: LEE MOSKOW

It was only five years ago that Curtis outlined a strategic plan to carry the school securely into its future. The plan set forth ambitious goals; some seemed quite audacious at the time. Every year since, we have evaluated ourselves on our progress, adapted to changing circumstances, and as new opportunities and challenges rose before us, set forth new goals.

The result? We are now celebrating the latest of many milestones. In December we met the Faculty Chair Challenge (see page 3), raising a total of \$34 million to endow eleven faculty chairs. We have lived our way into Lenfest Hall, and are learning to make the most of the residential, dining, and state-of-the-art learning facilities there (see page 21). Curtis On Tour is ever-expanding in scope, and will reach its fourth continent with performances in Brazil and Costa Rica this spring.

Our “learn by doing” curriculum continually broadens to encompass the full menu of skills that our young musicians need to lead in today’s evolving musical landscape. New uses of technology have enhanced learning for Curtis students in multiple ways (see page 23). And we are rapidly nearing the completion of a \$157.9 million campaign in support of the strategic plan we envisioned in 2008.

I could go on. Broadly, Curtis is much better positioned today to meet its future. Its global influence, long unquestioned, is increasingly matched with global support. Its graduates, always musical leaders, are re-engaging with Curtis in new and adventurous ways (see sidebar, page 16).

But nothing is ever static; all is evolution. As we mark this point of arrival, we can only call it a point of departure as well. Our trustees and senior leadership recently met to ponder the questions that will set our strategic direction through Curtis’s centenary in 2024. The overseers, too, will be engaged in this planning process.

Our questions are multifaceted, and there are no easy answers. Here are just a few:

How will we equip our students fully for versatile 21st-century careers? How will we help them define success?

How will we leverage our new facilities, programs, and technology to share Curtis with a broader public? How will we increase awareness of the international treasure that is Curtis?

How will we grow the endowment to ensure that Curtis remains tuition-free, continues to attract the best students and faculty, offers the best programs, and meets student needs for financial assistance?

These are big, broad questions and their discussion will determine our future course. At this point of departure, I look forward not only to the destination, but to our journey together. ♦

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Roberto Díaz". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Roberto Díaz, President