

A TEMPO



Dover Quartet Finds Its New Violist in Boston Symphony Violin Section

Julianne Lee returns to the viola—and her alma mater.

THE DOVER QUARTET THIS past winter reached into the Curtis family tree and plucked Julianne Lee (Violin '05), a longtime member of the Boston Symphony Orchestra, as its next violist. She replaces the founding violist Milena Pajaro-van de Stadt (String Quartet '14, Viola '11, '10), who departed last August.

Ms. Lee has served as assistant principal second violin of the Boston Symphony Orchestra and principal second violin with the Boston Pops since 2006. Additionally, she was the BSO's acting assistant concertmaster from 2013 to 2015.

Ms. Lee arrives at an auspicious moment for the Dover, which was founded in 2008 and in 2020 became Curtis's Penelope P. Watkins Ensemble in Residence. In March, Ms. Watkins, a member of the Curtis board of trustees, donated \$10 million to endow the residency





in perpetuity. The new funds will support performing, touring, and possibly recording, as well as the Dover’s ongoing teaching role on the faculty.

Like a switch hitter in baseball, Ms. Lee has pursued both the violin and viola ever since her third year at Curtis, when she discovered a course called Viola for Violinists. She proved a fast study on the viola. “During my last year at Curtis, I was principal viola of the Curtis [Symphony] Orchestra, so it really forced me to learn the alto clef and to read quickly,” she notes. Her viola studies continued with Kim Kashkashian at the New England Conservatory (NEC), where she earned a master’s degree.

At Curtis, Ms. Lee studied violin and chamber music with Joseph Silverstein, later a teacher to Joel Link (String Quartet ’14, Violin ’11) and Bryan Lee (String Quartet ’14, Violin ’11), the Dover’s first and

The Dover Quartet

second violinists, respectively. “That similar language from our training definitely shapes us as players,” Ms. Lee says, alluding to their shared sound concept and approach to matters such as fingerings.

For her Dover audition, Ms. Lee sat with the group to perform works by Mozart, Beethoven, Brahms, Dvořák, and Ravel. She returned for a second session, but by then, it was clear “how easy things felt,” she said. Over dinner, the musicians discussed their shared enthusiasm for the Guarneri String Quartet, whose members coached the Dover. “It felt so easy to talk about different topics. I immediately felt at home.”

Ms. Lee will move to Philadelphia and step down from her teaching posts at NEC and the Berklee College of Music. The Dover, meanwhile, will finish its summer season with violist Hezekiah Leung, who has been temporarily filling in.

“To say it was ‘love at first sound’ might sound silly, but that’s exactly what we experienced when we first read with Julianne,” said Dover cellist Camden Shaw (String Quartet ’14, Cello ’11, ’10). “There was the uncanny feeling that we had already played together for years; and yet at the same time, the group sounded uniquely fresh and inspired.”



Faculty and Staff Anniversaries



50 YEARS

Ford Mylius Lallerstedt



35 YEARS

Joan Patenaude-Yarnell



30 YEARS

Paul Bryan
Meng-Chieh Liu



25 YEARS

Nitzan Haroz



20 YEARS

Jeffrey Curnow
Edgar Meyer



10 YEARS

Julie Landsman
Andrew Lane
Yoni Levyatov
Eric Millstein



5 YEARS

Midori
Ashley Hsu
Patricia McCaffrey
Eric Owens
Peter Williams
Christine Witkowski



Osmo Vänskä leads the Curtis Symphony Orchestra

Tour de Force

Curtis undertakes its first-ever west coast orchestra tour.

How many trunks does it take to carry the Curtis Symphony Orchestra's instruments across the United States?

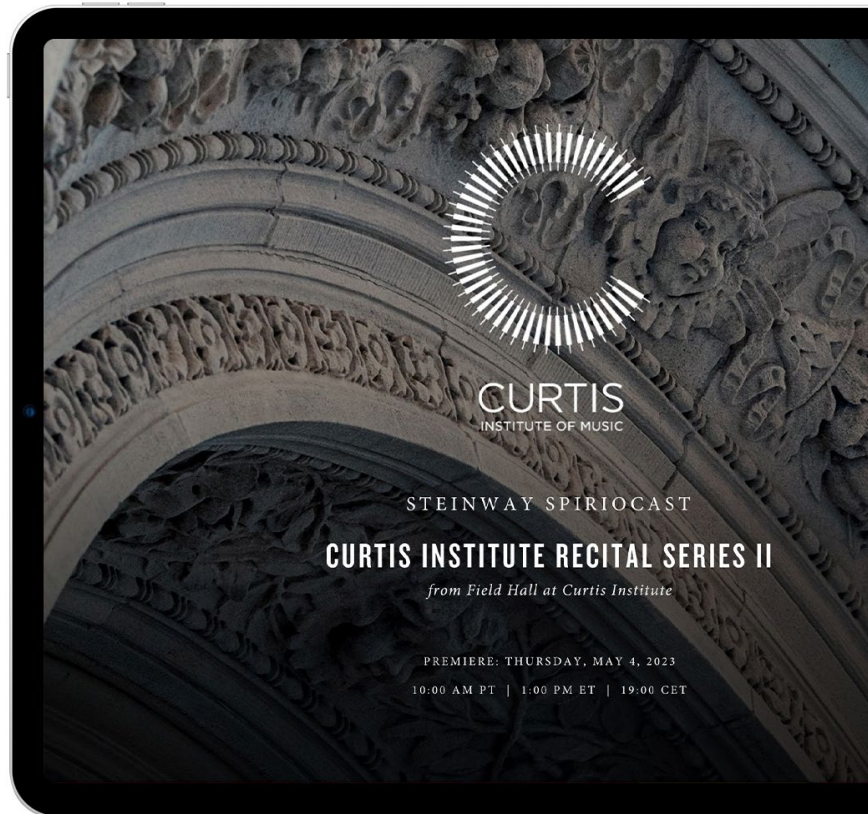
Twenty-eight, to be exact, and that doesn't include the 11 wardrobe trunks, and two more for scores, sheet music, and other supplies (small instruments were hand-carried). Altogether, the cargo traveled some 6,000 miles in a 53-foot, climate-controlled truck, with two drivers trading shifts to ensure an on-time delivery.

The tour, which was the orchestra's first-ever to the west coast, opened May 12 at Longwood Gardens in suburban Philadelphia, and continued with concerts from May 16 through 21 in Prescott, Ariz. and Santa Barbara and Davis, Calif. Audiences experienced the efforts of 88 students, 15 staff members, three guest artists—conductor Osmo Vänskä, pianist Janice Carissa ('22), and piano faculty member Yefim Bronfman ('78)—and composer Dai Wei ('19), whose *Awakening Lion* was commissioned for the tour.

For behind-the-scenes staff, the journey was a highly choreographed exercise involving hotel assignments, bus connections, catered meals, concert recordings, and the occasional Walmart run. Mr. Vänskä, who is conductor laureate of the well-traveled Minnesota Orchestra, led works by Bartók, Schumann, Tchaikovsky, Rimsky-Korsakov, and the commission by Ms. Dai.

Along with the concert programs, Curtis traveled with *Immersive Scheherazade*, its 360-degree video installation, which was staged over two days at the Mondavi Center for the Performing Arts in Davis.

ZOART PHOTOGRAPHY



Play Us a Song, You're the SpirioCast

Steinway's high-tech player piano arrives at Curtis.

→ **STEINWAY PIANOS HAVE** filled the halls of Curtis since its founding in 1924, but the piano maker's presence took a technological leap forward when the school acquired its first Steinway Spirio in 2020. A high-tech player piano, it has been used in two live events, dubbed SpirioCasts, which highlighted Curtis pianists, and it has inspired student composers to write original works incorporating the instrument's technological capabilities.

A SpirioCast allows Spirio users to instantly stream live performances to other owners of the instruments. Performances by six piano students were captured on March 30 in Field Concert Hall and beamed out in real-time to Spirio owners in North America, Europe, and Africa (a synced video feed of the performance accompanied the Spirio transmission). The pianists were Charmhee Han, Yangyang Ruan, Zhu Wang, Nachuan Tao, Adrian Zaragoza, and Avery Gagliano.

The Spirio differs in significant ways from old saloon-style player pianos. Instead of rolls of perforated paper, it uses an embedded sensor system that

connects to the piano's hammers and pedals. Though the instrument looks like a conventional Steinway Model B or D, the interior sensors connect to software that captures the nuances of touch and tone, producing a high-resolution sound. It also comes with an iPad to control the system and provide access to a growing catalogue of thousands of live performances by Steinway artists; anyone with the app can download and replay those performances on their Spirio.

Just as Aaron Copland and Igor Stravinsky were inspired by the original player piano, Curtis composers have written works for the Spirio. Composition student Maya Miro Johnson has created *bruises; yellow, green, & purple*, which got its premiere by Katelyn Bouska on April 29 in Gould Rehearsal Hall. It follows a Spirio-focused piece by Alistair Coleman, which premiered in 2021. Curtis is also the only institution with a dedicated channel on the Spirio app, which features recordings by select students, faculty, and alumni.

Amy Yang ('06), associate dean of piano studies and artistic initiatives, and provost and artistic director Ed Gazouleas, oversaw the initiative, having brought Curtis and Steinway together for the groundbreaking collaboration. She hopes that the technology can broaden the reach of Curtis. "Collaborations with Steinway provide us with new ways of highlighting the hard work of our students and faculty as we seek to reach both a local and global community," she commented. "Plus, we are proud for the artistry of each student's voice to be heard around the world."



Quick Hits



The sumptuous restoration of 1726 Locust Street (see the Spring 2022 issue of *Overtones*) was recently selected by the Preservation Alliance for Greater Philadelphia to receive its Grand Jury Award for the highest achievement in historic preservation. The award ceremony took place on June 6 at Vie in Philadelphia.



Curtis Studio, Curtis's house recording label, on May 5 released its second recording: *Revival*, Music of Price & Bonds, featuring performances by faculty member Michelle Cann ('13). The recording features Florence Price's prize-winning Piano Sonata in E minor, three of her *Fantasia nègre*, and Margaret Bonds's magnum opus for piano, *Spiritual Suite*. The album is available on all major streaming platforms.



The All-School Project for the 2023–24 season will focus on "Music of the Earth." The initiative will bring together coursework, performance projects, and archival studies to examine "the music that emanates from the earth and its inhabitants." Specific areas of focus might include ancient percussion traditions, music of the spheres, and Messiaen's fascination with birdsong. These will provide a framework to understand contemporary issues involving climate change and global justice. The All-School Project is an annual initiative that began in 2007 and in the past two academic years focused on "Civil Rights and the Music of Change."