



**2021-22**

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# THE YEAR IN REVIEW

**CURTIS INSTITUTE OF MUSIC**  
**ANNUAL REPORT**

# DEAR FRIENDS

The 2021–2022 season was an eventful one for Curtis by any standards, but especially after a year in which no live events were able to take place. Beyond the joy of seeing our students, faculty, and alumni back on stage, the year brought many additions to our stellar faculty, the formal launch of the Curtis Performance Innovation Lab, and the reopening of 1726 Locust Street after an exquisitely executed \$15 million renovation.

It was also a year that showcased innovative new ways of delivering music to attract new, diverse audiences. Curtis Opera Theatre's release of the opera/film *MERCY* proved the power of opera to transcend mediums, and the multimedia production *Immersive Scheherazade* featuring the Curtis Symphony Orchestra with guest conductor Osmo Vänskä allowed audiences to interact with orchestral music in entirely new ways.

Underscoring these milestones was the unwavering resilience and perseverance demonstrated by our students, staff, and faculty in the face of near constant change. Despite the various postponements, cancellations, and safety measures necessitated by the pandemic, the Curtis community came together once again to create memorable performances, strengthen its relationships with prominent guest artists, and engage audiences in Philadelphia and in the world at large.

Emerging from this period of transition, the future is full of possibilities for Curtis. That future would not be possible if not for the exceptional commitment of our donors, trustees, and friends, the dedication of our faculty and staff, and tenacity of our students and alumni. Thank you for bringing us where we are today.

With sincere gratitude,



Roberto Díaz

*President and CEO*

*Nina von Maltzahn President's Chair*

*James and Betty Matarese Chair in Viola Studies*

# CURTIS MUSICIAN LIFE CYCLE

## GOAL

Curtis will expand its focus and attend to every aspect of the musician life cycle—from entering Curtis, through the student experience, to alumni life after Curtis—to create a global network.

## IN 2021-22

- Curtis established the **Daniel W. Dietrich II Young Alumni Fund** to strengthen support for alumni in the years following graduation and assist those who may be experiencing obstacles in the pursuit of their musical careers.
- In January 2022, Curtis artist management added **Trio Zimbalist** to its roster. The ensemble, whose members are all Curtis alumni, is named for famed violinist Efrem Zimbalist, an esteemed faculty member and director of Curtis for a combined 40 years.
- Student life launched the **My SSP** free app, which provides Curtis students with mental health support 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, from anywhere in the world.

## AHEAD

Curtis will deepen engagement with alumni by formalizing a process for the previous year's Daniel W. Dietrich II Young Alumni Fund panelists and/or awardees to assist with mentoring potential grant applicants, and will provide additional and/or larger grants to alumni thanks to a generous grant from the Daniel W. Dietrich II Foundation to endow the program.

“ I see a need in my community and the Young Alumni Fund has made it possible for me to pursue my dream of meeting that need. I am so excited to witness the impact of all of the dreams that this fund has made possible. ”

—Tessa Ellis (*Trumpet '17, Community Artist Fellow '18*)

## ALUMNI

4,875

MUSICIANS HAVE  
GRADUATED FROM CURTIS  
SINCE ITS FOUNDING IN 1924.

OF THESE,

3,456

LIVING ALUMNI RESIDE IN

48

STATES  
(plus Washington, DC  
and Puerto Rico)

AND

40

COUNTRIES

## YOUNG ALUMNI FUND

22%

From a pool of 50  
applicants, 11 eligible  
alumni were selected to  
receive awards totaling

\$37,000

# GLOBAL MUSIC COMMUNITY

## GOAL

Curtis will broaden its reach to attract gifted students from around the world, and expand its base of support by sharing its excellence with local and global musical communities.

## IN 2021-22

- Curtis's voice and opera department created **MERCY**, an original film inspired by Mozart's *La clemenza di Tito* and filmed with the singers mainly isolated from each other to maintain COVID safety protocols. Following its world premiere on November 4, 2021 on the mainstage of the Philadelphia Film Center, it was released digitally for streaming worldwide.
- **The Dover Quartet**, the Penelope P. Watkins Ensemble in Residence at Curtis, presented virtual concerts to audiences across the globe, including the quartet's first-ever tour to Latin America.
- Curtis became the first institution to own a Steinway Spirio, a high-definition player piano that recreates the experience of a live performance for Spirio owners and spectators anywhere in the world.
- **Curtis on Tour** resumed live performances including tours in Europe in September 2021 (Athens, Berlin, and Paris) and May 2022 (Prague, Munich, Berlin, and Bremen).

## AHEAD

Curtis will continue to enhance its visibility and reach new audiences through touring opportunities, recordings on the Curtis Studio label, the expansion of its artist management roster, and innovative digital media projects out of the Performance Innovation Lab, including those with the potential to export to locations beyond Curtis.

# PROGRAMS, TEACHING MODEL, AND EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING

## GOAL

Curtis will continue to foster the special relationship between its students and faculty. Its students will have rich opportunities to develop as artists of the very highest caliber and as artist-citizens who are well prepared to thrive as 21st-century musicians.

## IN 2021-22

- Numerous courses were devoted to Curtis's all school project, the Civil Rights Era and the Music of Change, including "Jazz and the Civil Rights Movement" and "Global Social Movements, Universal Music." Reflecting this theme, **Ensemble 20/21** collaborated with The Purple Project for Democracy on a program dedicated to music and civic engagement.
- Curtis's Community Artist Fellows helped lead **Rehearsing Philadelphia**, a city-wide public art project created by Ari Benjamin Meyers and jointly produced and presented with Drexel University's Westphal College of Media Art & Design. Major support was provided by The Pew Center for Arts & Heritage.
- **Imani Winds** joined Curtis as its first-ever faculty wind quintet. The ensemble is noted for its commissioning activity, socially conscious programming, and commitment to equity.

## AHEAD

Curtis strengthened its relationships with important artists like conductors **Yannick Nézet-Séguin** and **Osmo Vänskä**, both in pedagogical roles and performing roles. In fall 2022, the Curtis Symphony Orchestra and Curtis Opera Theatre performed with Mr. Nézet-Séguin in a combined concert uniting the instrumental and vocal departments.

## LEARN BY DOING

123  
PERFORMANCES

90  
STUDENT RECITALS

13  
NEW FACULTY MEMBERS

33  
GUEST ARTISTS

3:2  
STUDENT TO FACULTY RATIO

“We want to bring the creativity and the awesomeness of these students out into the community. In the years to come, Curtis will be more a part of the fabric of the community of Philadelphia at large, and we'll be happy to be at the forefront of that.”

—Toyin Spellman-Diaz,  
*Imani Winds oboist*

# FINANCIAL FUTURE

## GOAL

Curtis will ensure that the institution has a stable and sustainable financial future, including sufficient funds to realize the ambitious goals of the strategic direction.

## IN 2021-22

- A rare **1575 Gaspar de Salò violin** that was promised to Curtis but missing since 2016 was found behind a bathroom wall in the late intended donor's home, which was being prepared for demolition. It was returned to Curtis's rare instrument collection after being refurbished and appraised at a value of **\$800,000**.
- Curtis received major endowment gifts totaling **\$27 million** to support the organ department and student financial aid, establish the **Liu Fine Stringed Instrument Collection**, and **Daniel W. Dietrich II Young Alumni Fund**.

## AHEAD

In preparation for its centennial in 2024, Curtis will launch an exciting series of new projects and programs for alumni, students, patrons, and supporters to deepen their engagement with the school.

# ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

## GOAL

Curtis will design a dynamic and flexible organizational structure to support its strategic direction and fulfill its bold intentions.

## IN 2021-22

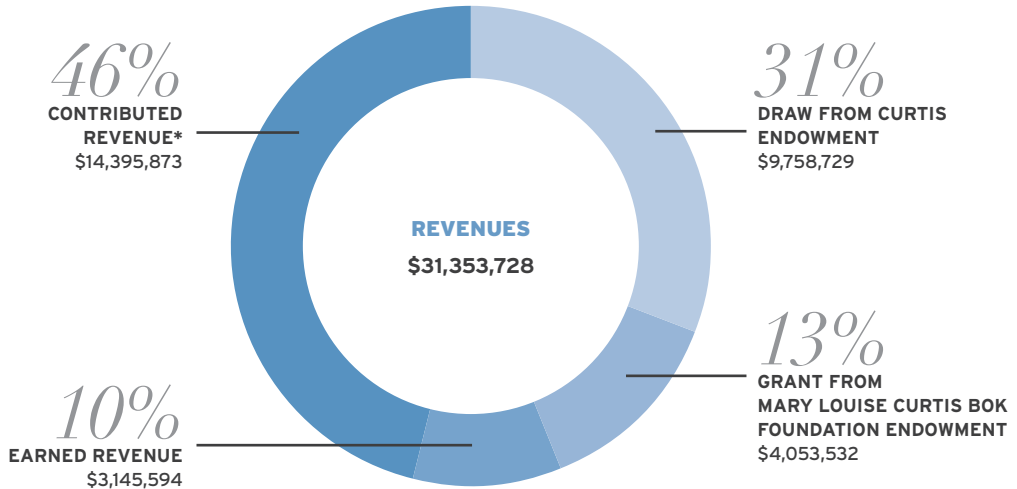
- Curtis launched a weekly internal e-newsletter for faculty and staff to convey important news, solicit feedback, and increase camaraderie.
- Curtis completed the process of recertifying all staff and faculty to maintain compliance with Pennsylvania Act 153, which ensures that employees who come into contact with children complete a comprehensive criminal and child abuse background check.

## AHEAD

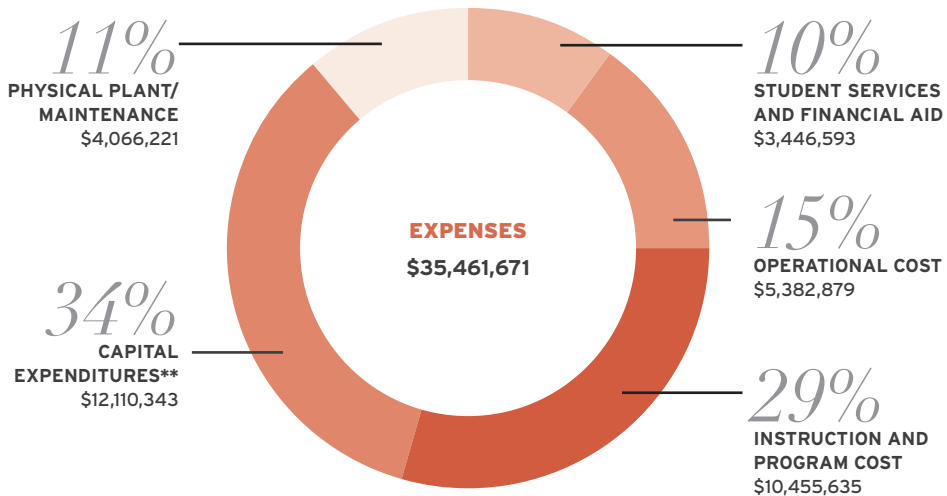
Curtis will continue working to establish a cross-divisional **Office of Institutional Equity** to create opportunities and resources for training, programming, and initiatives in the areas of diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging.

# FINANCIAL SUMMARY

2021-22



\* Includes annual, capital, and in-kind gifts



\*\* The \$12 million in capital expenditures earmarked for the 1726 Locust Street modernization project was also funded, in part, by a construction line of credit.

# CURTIS INSTITUTE OF MUSIC BOARD OF TRUSTEES

2021-22

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