

## The Philadelphia Orchestra Presents 2024 C. Hartman Kuhn Award to Violist Marvin Moon

*Retiring musicians Robert Cafaro, cello; Judy Geist, viola; Shelley Showers, horn, honored after more than 100 years of combined tenures*

*David Kim, concertmaster; Angela Zator Nelson, associate principal timpani and percussionist; Burchard Tang, viola; Matthew Vaughn, co-principal trombone, recognized for 25 years of service*

*Imasogie Storyteller, Narrator, and Host Charlotte Blake Alston recognized for 30 years of hosting Sound All Around*

(Philadelphia, June 1, 2024)—The Philadelphia Orchestra recognized nine members of the Orchestra family for their exemplary contributions to the organization in a ceremony during the June 1, 2024, concert in Verizon Hall at the Kimmel Center for the Performing Arts. Violist **Marvin Moon** was presented with the 2024 C. Hartman Kuhn Award. Retiring musicians **Robert Cafaro** (cello), **Judy Geist** (viola), and **Shelley Showers** (horn) were honored after dedicating over 100 years of combined service. **David Kim** (concertmaster), **Angela Zator Nelson** (associate principal timpani and percussionist), **Burchard Tang** (viola), and **Matthew Vaughn** (co-principal trombone) were each recognized for 25 years of service. Imasogie Storyteller, Narrator, and Host **Charlotte Blake Alston** was recognized for 30 years of hosting the Sound All Around series for young children and her retirement from that program.

Established in 1941 and named for a charter member of the Orchestra's Board of Directors who served from 1901 to 1933, the C. Hartman Kuhn Award is given annually to "the member of The Philadelphia Orchestra who has shown ability and enterprise of such character as to enhance the standards and the reputation of the ensemble." Music and Artistic Director Yannick Nézet-Séguin selected violist Marvin Moon, praising his dedication to connecting with local communities through music at home and abroad. Moon is an active and enthusiastic participant in the Orchestra's residency activities, regularly engaging in master classes, side-by-side concerts, and chamber performances in schools and community centers around the world. A previous member of the Orchestra's tour committee, Moon helped to ensure Orchestra travels ran smoothly and efficiently by participating in pre-tour planning sessions and by assisting the operations team on the ground. A true team player and natural leader, he also serves as captain of the Orchestra's softball team, the Firebirds, guiding the team to victory each summer in Saratoga Springs, NY, and elsewhere.

About the Kuhn Award recipient:

A native of Philadelphia, violist **Marvin Moon** joined The Philadelphia Orchestra in 2007. He was previously a member of the Boston Symphony, Chamber Orchestra of Philadelphia (serving as principal viola from 2000 to 2003), Haddonfield Symphony (now Symphony in C), the New York String Seminar Chamber Orchestra, and the Curtis Symphony (serving as principal viola in 2000). As a chamber musician, he has been a member of the Koryo String Quartet since 2001. He has participated in such festivals as Music from Angel Fire, Summerfest at La Jolla, the Fourth International Chamber Music Encounters in Jerusalem, the Kneisel Hall Chamber Music Festival, and the Sarasota Chamber Music Festival. As a soloist, Moon gave the world premiere of James Ra's Concertino with the Curtis Chamber Ensemble, played Bartók's Viola Concerto with the Temple University Symphony, and was viola soloist in Mozart's Sinfonia concertante for violin and viola with both the New Jersey Symphony, under Vladimir Spivakov, and the Kennett Square Symphony. Moon attended the Temple University Music Preparatory Division and the Curtis Institute of Music. He studied with Joseph dePasquale, former principal viola of The Philadelphia Orchestra, and with Choong-Jin Chang, current principal viola of The Philadelphia Orchestra.

#### About the retirees:

**Robert Cafaro** (Volunteer Committees Chair) played with the Metropolitan Opera Orchestra and was a member of the Baltimore Symphony before joining The Philadelphia Orchestra in 1985. He is an avid soloist and chamber musician and has performed recitals and appeared as a soloist in major cities of the world. An active teacher as well, he has been on the cello faculty of the University of Virginia, the Philadelphia College of Bible (now Cairn University), the College of New Jersey, the Hartwick Summer Music Festival in Oneonta, Strings International, and the Summer Strings Seminar in Rhinebeck. He has been a member of the Rachmaninov Trio since 2003. Cafaro was born in New York City and began cello studies at age nine. He entered the Juilliard Preparatory Division as a scholarship student and later enrolled in the Juilliard School, where he received Bachelor and Master of Music degrees. He is passionately involved in volunteer and outreach activities, and regularly plays at various community establishments.

**Judy Geist** joined The Philadelphia Orchestra under the baton of Riccardo Muti in 1983. Her arrival marked a milestone in the Orchestra's history as she was the first woman in the viola section since the ensemble was founded in 1900, attained the position of fourth chair in 1992, and served as acting assistant principal under former Music Director Christoph Eschenbach. Geist is a Curtis Institute of Music graduate; her principal teacher was Joseph dePasquale. Prior to joining The Philadelphia Orchestra, she played *A Little Night Music* and *How to Marry a Millionaire* before they continued to Broadway, toured with Burt Bacharach and Chick Corea, toured as principal viola with the National Ballet of Canada, and performed with additional ballet orchestras and legendary dancers from around the world. In addition, she recorded and premiered new music with Parnassus, the American Composer's Orchestra, the Philadelphia Composer's Forum, the Composer's Conference, and at the International Woman's Music Festival. After joining The Philadelphia Orchestra, she performed chamber music in collaboration with guest artists Chantal Juillet, Emanuel Ax, Pamela Frank, Jean-Yves Thibaudet, and Christoph Eschenbach, and as a member of the Society Hill String Quintet. Geist is a visual artist as well. She has given dual presentations of paintings and chamber music in galleries and has exhibited locally.

**Shelley Showers** became a member of The Philadelphia Orchestra in 1997 after serving as acting principal horn of the Cleveland Orchestra. She began her career with the New Jersey Symphony and also previously served as principal horn and soloist of the Utah Symphony and acting associate principal horn of the Cincinnati Symphony. A native of Lancaster, PA, she earned her Bachelor of Music degree from the Curtis Institute of Music. Her teachers included Mason Jones, Myron Bloom, Nolan Miller, Randy Gardner, and Stephanie Fauber. She has performed with the Pennsylvania Ballet, Concerto Soloists of Philadelphia (now the Chamber Orchestra of Philadelphia), American Ballet Theatre, Solisti New York, and the New Haven Symphony, among others. She has participated in the Deer Valley International Chamber Music Festival, the Nova Series, the Utah Music Festival, the Aspen Music Festival as principal horn and faculty member, and the Kent/Blossom Music Festival as a faculty member and chamber musician. She has served on the faculties of the Cleveland Institute of Music, Philadelphia Biblical University (now Cairn University), and the Temple University School of Music.

About the anniversary celebrants:

**Charlotte Blake Alston** (Imasogie Storyteller, Narrator, and Host) is an internationally acclaimed storyteller, narrator, and librettist. She has appeared as host and narrator on The Philadelphia Orchestra's School and Family concerts since 1991 and was the host of Sound All Around, the Orchestra's concert series for young children, since 1994. She has also appeared on each of the Orchestra's Martin Luther King, Jr., Tribute Concerts since 2003. Committed to keeping alive African and African-American oral traditions, she has performed at the Smithsonian Institution, the National Museum of Women in the Arts, and the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, among others. She has performed at presidential inaugural festivities and the Pennsylvania Gubernatorial Children's Inaugural Celebrations. She was one of two storytellers selected to present at the opening of the National Museum of African American History and Culture. Alston has produced several commissioned texts for orchestras and choirs including original narrative texts for Saint-Saëns's *The Carnival of the Animals* and Rimsky-Korsakov's *Sheherazade*. Her honors include a Pew Fellowship in the Arts, the Circle of Excellence Award from the National Storytelling Association, the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania's Artist of the Year Award, and the Zora Neale Hurston Award, the highest award bestowed by the National Association of Black Storytellers. In 2023 she received the Distinguished Artist Award at the New Jersey Governor's Awards for Excellence in the Arts in Education.

Violinist **David Kim** (Dr. Benjamin Rush Chair) was born in Carbondale, IL. He started playing the violin at the age of three, began studies with the famed pedagogue Dorothy DeLay at the age of eight, and later received his bachelor's and master's degrees from the Juilliard School. He gives concerto and recital appearances across the US and around the world. This season he also led master classes at the Curtis Institute of Music, Dartmouth College, Georgetown University, the Manhattan School of Music, and more. He appears as concertmaster of the nine-time Emmy Award-winning All-Star Orchestra on PBS stations across the US and online at the Khan Academy. He is a frequent touring guest of famed modern hymn writers Keith and Kristyn Getty at venues such as the Grand Ole Opry House in Nashville, the Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, and Carnegie Hall. Kim serves as distinguished artist at the Robert McDuffie Center for Strings at Mercer University in Macon, GA. He frequently serves as an adjudicator at international violin competitions such as the Menuhin and Sarasate. His first book, *The Audition*

*Method for Violin*, was published by GIA Publications and released in 2022. Kim has been awarded honorary doctorates from Eastern University, the University of Rhode Island, and Dickinson College. His instruments are a J.B. Guadagnini from Milan, ca. 1757, on loan from The Philadelphia Orchestra, and a Francesco Goffriller, ca. 1735. He exclusively performs on and endorses Larsen Strings from Denmark.

**Angela Zator Nelson**, associate principal timpani and section percussionist, was the first female percussionist ever hired by The Philadelphia Orchestra. Along with performing classical music, she is an active chamber musician with a forte in new music. Nelson also performs regularly with the Network for New Music and the Philadelphia Orchestra Percussion Group. As a marimba soloist she has performed with the Temple University, Bay-Atlantic, Main Line, and Philadelphia Classical symphonies. She joined the faculty of Temple University as adjunct professor in 2001. She has given master classes to students of all ages and has presented classes at the Percussive Arts Society International Convention, the Oberlin Percussion Institute, and at the annual Alan Abel School of Orchestral Studies. Along with her husband, Nelson performs recitals and educational concerts for children and adults, and they are members of the Bob Beach Trio, performing blues, folk, and rock music. A native of the Chicago area, she graduated with a Bachelor of Music degree from Northwestern University's School of Music, where she studied with James Ross and Patricia Dash of the Chicago Symphony and marimba virtuoso Michael Burritt. While in Chicago she was principal percussion of the Civic Orchestra for three years. She then earned a Master of Music degree from Temple University, where her principal instructor was former Philadelphia Orchestra member Alan Abel.

A native of Maryland, **Burchard Tang** received a Bachelor of Arts degree in May 1999 from the Curtis Institute of Music, where he studied with Joseph dePasquale, former Philadelphia Orchestra principal viola, and Choong-Jin Chang, the Orchestra's current principal viola. Tang has served as principal viola with the Curtis Symphony and the New York String Seminar, and he has performed with the Brandenburg Ensemble. A 1993 winner of The Philadelphia Orchestra's Albert M. Greenfield Student Competition, he performed with the Orchestra as a soloist in a Student Concert in November 1993. His other honors include the Temple University Preparatory Division Concerto Competition and second prize in the Senior Division of the Fischhoff Competition in 1996.

**Matthew Vaughn** has been co-principal trombone since 2014. He previously served as principal trombone of the San Antonio Symphony and served in the United States Air Force Concert Band in Washington, DC. He has performed with the National Symphony, the Israel Philharmonic, and the Super World Orchestra in Tokyo, Japan. He is active as a soloist, having performed much of the standard trombone concerto repertoire with orchestras and bands around the country. He has also given frequent solo recitals and master classes in the Philadelphia area and worldwide. Born in Dallas and raised in Richmond, IN, Vaughn earned a Bachelor of Music degree with high distinction and a Performer's Certificate from Indiana University in 1992, continuing with graduate work in education and conducting at Indiana University and George Mason University. An accomplished music educator, he teaches trombone and coaches brass chamber music at the Curtis Institute of Music and Temple University, and he is the founder of the Bar Harbor Brass Week, an intense summer festival for high school and college brass players. His former teachers include David Brumfield, M. Dee Stewart, and Milton Stevens.

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Yannick Nézet-Séguin holds the Walter and Leonore Annenberg Chair.

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[Our Commitment to Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, and Access Strategies \(IDEAS\)](#)

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