

Artis—Naples

*Home of The Baker Museum
and the Naples Philharmonic*

For Immediate Release

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ARTIS—NAPLES ANNOUNCES APPOINTMENT OF SEVEN NEW MUSICIANS TO NAPLES PHILHARMONIC FOR THE 2023-24 SEASON

Naples, FL (November 16, 2023) — Artis—Naples, home of The Baker Museum and the Naples Philharmonic, today announced the appointment of seven new musicians to the Naples Philharmonic for the 2023-24 season: Egor Antonenko, principal cello; Spencer Bay, principal horn; Catherine Gatewood, assistant principal clarinet; Katherine Kobylarz, violin; Beth Larsen, assistant principal flute; Alex Moore, associate principal/utility horn; and Michael Strauss, viola.

“We are excited to welcome these exceptional musicians to the Naples Philharmonic. Their diverse backgrounds and extraordinary talent bring a unique blend of new energy to our orchestra,” said Artis—Naples CEO and President Kathleen van Bergen. “We appreciate their choice to share their talents with our Southwest Florida audiences, and we look forward to hearing them perform on our stages and throughout our community this season.”

“The members of the Naples Philharmonic look forward to working with each of our new musicians,” said John Evans, principal timpani and chair of the Naples Philharmonic Players Committee. “The addition of new talents always brings a refreshing dynamic to the orchestra, and it has been a privilege to see our cultural community grow over the decades—and to be a part of that growth—and I eagerly anticipate many exciting collaborations to come.”

Egor Antonenko, acting principal cello

Egor Antonenko has gained global acclaim as an esteemed soloist, chamber musician and orchestral performer. He debuted as a soloist at 8 years old with the Kaliningrad Chamber Orchestra, and his musical journey led him since to collaborate with renowned Eastern European ensembles, including the Moscow and Ryazan chamber orchestras, as well as the Petrozavodsk, Yaroslavi and Volgograd symphonies.

Spencer Bay, acting principal horn

A native of Northern Kentucky, Spencer Bay began his musical studies on piano at age four and dabbled with various instruments before finally settling with horn by age 14. Bay received his Bachelor of Music degree from Rice University in 2019, where he studied with William VerMeulen, his Master of Music degree from the Eastman School of Music in 2021 under the tutelage of Peter Kurau and then spent the next couple of years as a fellow at the New World Symphony.

Catherine Gatewood, assistant principal clarinet

Originally from the Chicago area, Catherine Gatewood received her Master of Music from the University of Southern California and her Bachelor of Music from the University of Michigan. She was most influenced by teachers Yehuda Gilad, Fred Ormand and Dennis Smylie. In addition to summers at the Aspen Music Festival in Colorado, she has played in the Cabrillo Festival of Contemporary Music in Santa Cruz, California, as well as with the Missouri Symphony and the Utah Opera & Musical Theatre Festival Orchestra. Gatewood’s recordings

include the orchestral performance of William Bolcom's *Songs of Innocence and of Experience*, conducted by Leonard Slatkin, which was awarded four Grammy Awards in 2005, including Best Classical Album.

Katherine Kobylarz, violin

Katherine Kobylarz joined the violin section of the Naples Philharmonic in September 2023. She previously served as a member of the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra's second violin section for their 2021-22 and 2022-23 seasons. Before that, Kobylarz spent three years as a fellow with the New World Symphony in Miami Beach under the direction of Michael Tilson Thomas.

Beth Larsen, acting assistant principal flute

Beth Larsen enjoys an active career as an orchestral player, soloist, chamber musician and private teacher. She also plays second flute/piccolo with the Palm Beach Opera Orchestra and the Southwest Florida Symphony. With these ensembles, she has collaborated with some of the world's leading artists, including Renee Fleming, Plácido Domingo, Angela Gheorghiu, Frederica von Stade, Kathleen Battle, José Carreras, Andrea Bocelli, James Taylor and Gloria Estefan. Larsen received a Bachelor of Music degree from Florida State University and a Master of Music from the University of Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music.

Alex Moore, acting associate principal/utility horn

A native of Austin, Texas, Alex Moore began playing the horn at the age of 11. He has previously performed with the Houston Symphony and the Dallas Symphony Orchestra and, during the summer, has performed at the Round Top Music Festival, the Aspen Music Festival and the Tanglewood Music Center. Moore holds a Bachelor of Music from Northwestern University, where he was a student of Gail Williams and Jon Boen, and a Master of Music from Rice University, where he studied under the tutelage of William VerMeulen.

Michael Strauss, viola

Michael Strauss' love for the concert setting has led to appearances on concert series and live radio broadcasts across Europe, North America, Japan and China. He served as principal violist of the Indianapolis Symphony Orchestra for 20 years, and, for the last eight, he has performed as a member of the ProMusica Chamber Orchestra in Columbus, Ohio, and as principal violist of the Youngstown Symphony. He is a founding member of The Indianapolis Quartet, in residence at the University of Indianapolis.

ARTIS—NAPLES

Home of The Baker Museum and the Naples Philharmonic, Artis—Naples is unique among cultural institutions nationwide, equally dedicated to both the visual and performing arts featuring artists of global distinction.

KIMBERLY K. QUERREY and LOUIS A. SIMPSON CULTURAL CAMPUS

Led by CEO and President Kathleen van Bergen and, beginning in the 2024-25 season, Sharon and Timothy Ubben Artistic and Music Director Alexander Shelley, Artis—Naples offers more than 800 paid and free events annually across its 8.5-acre Kimberly K. Querrey and Louis A. Simpson Cultural Campus. Artis—Naples welcomes thousands of visitors each year for a broad array of artistic and educational opportunities perfect for audiences of all backgrounds and interests. The cultural campus is home to five buildings, including two performance halls (Frances Pew Hayes Hall and Myra J. Daniels Pavilion), The Baker Museum, the Toni Stabile Education Building and the Kohan Administration Building.

NAPLES PHILHARMONIC

The Naples Philharmonic has long been recognized as one of the cornerstones of Southwest Florida's arts community. As part of Artis—Naples, the Naples Philharmonic performs more than 140 orchestral and chamber music concerts, as well as opera and ballet, education, community and special event concerts annually between September and June in the 1,477-seat Hayes Hall, the 283-seat Daniels Pavilion and around the Southwest Florida region. The Naples Philharmonic has enjoyed a history of working with world-class music directors and recently

announced the appointment of Artistic and Music Director Alexander Shelley, who immediately assumes the role of Artistic and Music Director Designate through the 2023-24 season. Renowned violinist James Ehnes continues as artistic partner through the 2023-24 season, working with Naples Philharmonic musicians in a variety of settings with a focus on inspiring and embodying a high level of artistry. Podium leadership includes Principal Pops Conductor Jack Everly, celebrating 14 years in this role in the 2023-24 season and bringing pops performances that celebrate music in its many forms. Radu Paponiu serves as associate conductor of the Naples Philharmonic and director of the Naples Philharmonic Youth Orchestra, and Alvin Ho serves as assistant conductor of the Naples Philharmonic.

THE BAKER MUSEUM

The Baker Museum is the foremost fine art museum in Southwest Florida, presenting an ambitious slate of exhibitions annually to complement installations of works from its permanent collection. Comprising more than 4,000 objects, the museum's broad holdings of 20th- and 21st-century art reflect particular strengths in modern art of the United States and Mexico. The Baker Museum's collections reflect the generosity and commitment of area collectors, including significant gifts from the collection of the late Olga Hirshhorn.

With more than two decades of collecting and exhibiting, the museum is committed to the stewardship and scholarship of its collections and to fostering inspiring and transformative experiences with the visual arts. At the same time, The Baker Museum partners with the world's leading arts institutions to make extraordinary exhibitions accessible to the Southwest Florida community—including recently the National Portrait Gallery, London and the Helen Frankenthaler Foundation. In 2020, Artis—Naples celebrated the opening of an 18,000-square-foot expansion of The Baker Museum, designed by Weiss/Manfredi Architecture/Landscape/Urbanism, which created new spaces for multidisciplinary exploration and social interaction.

EDUCATION AND COMMUNITY

In addition to creating and presenting visual and performing arts, Artis—Naples provides robust education and community activities for students of all ages in Collier and counties. Each season, thousands of Collier County Public Schools interact with Artis—Naples education programming, both on its cultural campus and in their classrooms. Beyond our commitment to youth education, the Lifelong Learning program provides engaging lectures and study opportunities for adults seeking to engage more deeply with the arts.

The Friends of Artis—Naples, comprised of more than 3,500 donor households, offers activities, travel experiences and events designed to foster a deeper relationship between patrons and the arts.

In 2017, Artis—Naples acquired the Naples International Film Festival (NIFF), expanding its film offerings and providing a platform for the festival's continued excellence and growth. In 2023, the festival's 15th anniversary year, NIFF was named one of *MovieMaker Magazine's* "20 Great Film Festivals in Vacation Destinations."

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