



MEANY CENTER  
FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS

# 2021-22 IMPACT REPORT



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## *Dear Meany Friends,*

**When we opened our doors** again in October, we weren't certain if we'd still be presenting live performances in May. Yet here we are, having completed a successful season after almost two years away! If nothing else, these past two years have taught me that the arts are truly essential — and they are a gift.

As I look back over the 2021–22 Season, certain moments both on and off our stage remain vivid in my memory: those few seconds of silence that followed Conrad Tao's stunning premiere of his own composition, just before the audience burst into rapturous applause; the infectious joy of STREB's remarkable dancers as they took to our stage for their first live performance in 18 months; the bonding between the 30 community cast members of Bill T. Jones/Arnie Zane Company's performance of *What Problem?* who started out as strangers and became allies.

In the pages of this year's Impact Report, we look back at some of the most memorable events that took place on our stage, our campus and in our community. Of course, for every story we tell in these pages, there are hundreds more that our artists, students, patrons and donors could share, as well.

In fact, the story of Meany will always be a work in progress, one that you, our friends and supporters, help us write. Your generosity in difficult times has kept us going, and for that we are forever grateful.

I hope you enjoy revisiting the 2021–22 Season and I look forward to sharing with you many more seasons to come!

With gratitude,



# On the MEANY STAGE

## CONRAD TAO

Pianist and composer **Conrad Tao's** premiere of *Keyed In* (co-commissioned by Meany) was, in Tao's words, "a dream premiere experience." We knew his playing was brilliant; and this important and completely original work expanded the sonic possibilities of the piano, together with our tech team and new sound system.

## DANISH STRING QUARTET

The return of the **Danish String Quartet** was nothing short of "magical." The Quartet's compelling classical string playing, coupled with their original arrangements of Nordic folk tunes, brought down the house and drew us into their unique and beautiful sound world seamlessly blending musical traditions.

## GABRIEL KAHANE

Meany Creative Research Fellow and composer/performer **Gabriel Kahane** shared his work-in-progress of *Magnificent Bird*, created from an experimental year away from the internet. Kahane shared personal stories in the context of the chaos of a nation and planet in crisis — and his belief that we need to learn to care about and love one another.

## STREB EXTREME ACTION

MacArthur "Genius" Award Winner **Elizabeth Streb** has been called the Evil Knievel of dance. We think of her as a movement poet, physicist, acrobat, daredevil and elegant designer who teaches us how to appreciate "the perfect move." We were incredibly lucky that STREB could step in when Australia's CIRCA tour was canceled.

## IMANI WINDS & CATALYST QUARTET

The dynamic players of **Imani Winds** and the **Catalyst Quartet** came together for *im(migration): music of change*, a special Meany event highlighting the experience of migration. This innovative performance featured a composition by the highly acclaimed composer Jesse Montgomery.

## SIMONE DINNERSTEIN

Pianist **Simone Dinnerstein** shared her first live public performance of Richard Danielpour's *An American Mosaic*, honoring first responders, front-line workers and others during the pandemic. Meany's own Taylor Freeman (UW student and usher) also narrated poetry by Langston Hughes set to music commissioned by Joseph C. Phillips. Both composers were in our virtual audience.

## WU HAN, PHILIP SETZER & DAVID FINCKEL

The beloved piano trio of **Wu Han, Phil Setzer and David Finckel** returned to Meany for a brilliant performance that reminded us of just how special these three musicians are. As the Emerson Quartet gets ready to retire next year, having both past and present Emerson members David and Phil on stage together felt extra special.

## GEORGE LI

It is extra special when a new artist to the Meany stage completely blows us all away — and this happened when the young pianist **George Li** performed a staggeringly difficult and demanding program including works by Robert Schumann, Franz Liszt and Qigang Chen. We will definitely be bringing him back!

## SHARON ISBIN

Long known as one of the most important figures in classical guitar, **Sharon Isbin** performed an exciting solo recital at Meany in advance of the collaborative project *Strings for Peace* coming next season. Isbin's playing is the perfect balance between focused technical mastery, powerful sound and wild abandon.

## BILL T. JONES/ARNIE ZANE COMPANY

The performance of the **Bill T. Jones/Arnie Zane Company** brought together 30 Seattle community members in a groundbreaking new collaboration that asked us to explore the nature of community, through the viewpoint of "Pip" in Herman

Melville's *Moby Dick*. This performance struck a very personal chord with participants and dancers alike.

### JEREMY DENK

In his return to Meany, pianist **Jeremy Denk** performed an astonishing program that delved into the counterpoint between music of Black American composers Scott Joplin and "Blind Tom" Wiggins, among others, with music from classical Europe. Culminating with Ludwig van Beethoven's final piano sonata, this program simply knocked our socks off.

### THIRD COAST PERCUSSION/MOVEMENT ART IS

**Third Coast Percussion** along with **Lil Buck and John Boogz** of Movement Art Is, developed *Metamorphosis*, commissioned by Meany Center. Blending street dance and percussion with new music by Jlin, Tyondai Braxton and Phillip Glass, they lead the way in next generation performance.

### MARK MORRIS DANCE GROUP & MUSIC ENSEMBLE

Seattle's **Mark Morris** and his Dance Group gave an electrifying performance of *Grand Duo for Violin and Piano*, which pairs Mark's choreography with the music of Lou Harrison. Also performing *Songs Without Words* and *Rock of Ages*, they reminded us of just how much we missed them.

### JOYCE YANG

A true storyteller through music, pianist **Joyce Yang** wowed us with her performances of Rachmaninoff, Tchaikovsky and Schumann among others. She brings to life the essence of music through "painting" colors, sounds and forms through her artfully crafted phrases ... and we were there with her at every brush stroke.

### JERUSALEM QUARTET

The **Jerusalem Quartet** elevates quartet playing to another level and this was clear at their Meany performance. Their warm sound, sensitive interpretations and almost mind-meld quality of ensemble playing was a climactic ending to the chamber season. There wasn't a dry eye after their encore — the national anthem of Ukraine.

### MEKLIT

Meany Creative Research Fellow **Meklit Hadero** collaborated with three Seattle-area immigrant artists — Kiki Valera (Cuba), Momma Nikki (Haiti/US) and Dakota Camacho (Guáhan) — through virtual residencies during 2021–22 to develop the world premiere of *Movement LIVE*. Meklit's ability to weave the stories into a multi-layered tapestry, along with her own Ethiopian American immigrant experiences, was masterful.

### MOMIX

**MOMIX** brought joy, imagination and wonder to the finale of the Meany Center season. *Alice* highlighted their unique sense of humor, insight, artistry and design into a fabulous tale of discovery and selfhood. We heard from audiences that they loved and appreciated their whimsical sense of fun.



SHARON ISBIN

J. HENRY FAIR



DANISH STRING QUARTET

CAROLINE BITTEN COURT



MOMIX

JAMIE KRAUS



## Supporting our **ARTISTS**

RALPH ALSWANG

STREB EXTREME ACTION.

Ticket sales are vital to performing artists' ability to make a living — but not the only way. Through fellowships, residencies and commissions, we offer artists money, space and the luxury of time to dedicate to their own creative process.

### *Commissioning the Future*

**For every artist** we present on our stage, there is a corresponding line item in our budget labeled “Artist Fees,” the amount we pay for the actual performance. Artist fees are essential for keeping the roof over artists' heads, and food on their tables, and they work incredibly hard to earn it. But for every dollar they earn on stage, many artists spend hundreds more unpaid hours on their own creative process — developing new work for which they may — or may not — be paid sometime down the road. Commissions help underwrite that time, allowing artists to take a break from performing to concentrate on creating.

Part of Meany's mission is to support artists as both performers and creators. In the 2021–22 Season, we were co-commissioners on Conrad Tao's *Keyed In*, which he premiered during the opening concert of the season. Co-commissioning Meklit Hadero's *Movement LIVE* not only provided support to Meklit, but also to the three Seattle-area artists who performed with her.



WARREN WOO

Kiki Valera, Meklit Hadero, Dakota Camacho, Momma Nikki.

*“Thank you so much for bringing me back to Meany. Last night was such a meaningful concert, finally performing An American Mosaic on a stage. The whole concert felt like a meditation on our collective experience.”*

— Simone Dinnerstein

## Good Fellows

### Singer/songwriter Gabriel

Kahane wanted to explore the intersection between technology and how we all see ourselves and each other. Meany Center supported Gabriel’s project through the University of Washington’s Mellon Creative Fellowship Initiative.

Meklit Hadero’s world premiere of her project, *Movement LIVE*, on May 7, 2022 was the culmination of a three-year project

during which she and her team developed the model for touring the live performance and podcast in other communities.

And Mellon Fellows Third Coast Percussion’s work with choreographers and co-founders of Movement Art Is, Lil Buck and Jon Boogz, received support for a virtual residency when initial plans for in-person work at Meany fell through due to the pandemic.

## In Their Own Words



BRANTLEY GUTIERREZ

Conrad Tao.

**“A dream premiere** experience all around last night.” — **Conrad Tao**

**“Movement LIVE was** a huge new experience for me. I had never written a script before, and certainly never brought a performance experience so massive to the stage. Having the space to experiment was essential to taking this leap as an artist. We were able to experiment with process, learn, make mistakes, grow and ultimately, to understand the nature of this very new type of platform for migration stories. We plan to continue this blueprint across the country and world as we take the show to different communities.” — **Meklit Hadero**

**“I can’t even** find the words to express what an extraordinary experience we ALL had at Meany. We loved every minute...and your audience too...thank you so much for this huge gift.” — **Elizabeth Streb**



# *Supporting our* **CAMPUS**

PETER NGUYEN

Aerial photograph of the University of Washington campus.

Meany's mission is to provide opportunities for diverse artists, community, students and faculty to connect, discover and explore the boundless power of the arts to create positive change in the world. Good thing, since many of the students on our campus today will be the artists, audiences and civic leaders in our community tomorrow.

## *Backstage Pass*

**As a requirement** for her dance degree, double-major Alicia Moore needed "crew experience" — i.e., working backstage — so she asked Meany Center Technical Director Tom Burke if she could volunteer to work on a show. He hired her — with pay! — to help with the pre-hang and tear down of *What Problem?*, Bill T. Jones/Arnie Zane Company's latest work.

Alicia was also selected to be in the community cast; fortunately, performance and tech schedules didn't overlap, so she was able to do both.

Working with the Meany tech crew was a positive experience — "everyone was so kind and welcoming," but the highlight for Alicia was working with Bill T. Jones. "What a legend!" she said.

"It was terrifying. But I'm glad I did it. It really made me appreciate how vulnerable Bill T. Jones allows himself to be every day to do this kind of work."



## Seven Minutes



CYNTHIA MULLIS

UW Junior Taylor Freeman and Simone Dinnerstein.

**In January**, pianist Simone Dinnerstein played contemporary composer Joseph C. Phillips Jr.'s *Never Has Been Yet*. This seven-minute piece takes its title from a line in Langston Hughes' *Let America Be America Again* and incorporates a portion of that poem into the work. Simone asked Meany to find the right person to narrate the poem and we were lucky enough to discover that person within our own ranks — UW theater major Taylor Freeman, one of our student ushers!

Though the UW junior only rehearsed with Simone for a few hours over two days preceding the performance, she had already spent several weeks combing over the poem, researching and applying her knowledge and training to it. Taylor

was nervous at first — this would be her first time performing in a professional production and with an artist of Dinnerstein's caliber — but she found Simone to be kind, welcoming and supportive, allowing and encouraging Taylor to fully embrace her own artistry in interpreting Hughes' words.

As for the impact those seven minutes had on her, Taylor says: "I can't begin to put into words what this experience meant and did for me; as a student, this was rewarding because it gave me first-hand experience performing professionally, while still having the educational setting to support me. It was a dream that I will carry with me and reflect on in my future work."

## Expert Witness

**While preparing for the** world premiere of her new live show and podcast, *Movement LIVE*, Ethiopian American musician Meklit visited students in the Jackson School's African Studies program to discuss francophone music. She also joined the class *Art, Music and Feminist Resilience*, offered through the Department of Women, Gender and Sexuality Studies, to discuss how musicians and artists transform feminist traditions throughout and beyond the US borderlands. Meklit's lived experience as a woman artist of color born in Africa and raised in the United States brought a unique perspective to both these subject areas, raising the conversations far above the merely academic.

*"Dear Meklit and everyone, thank you so much for making this happen. It was an invaluable experience for my students who had much to say afterwards. I would love to get students more involved with Meany. Those who attended Movement LIVE! were so blown away by the experience. I'll definitely be on the lookout for things that would go well with my courses."*

— Professor Maya Smith,  
Chair, African Studies



# Supporting our COMMUNITY

KRISTEN KOSMAS

*What Problem?* community cast.

COVID made community outreach challenging during the 2021–22 Season. Public schools canceled off-site field trips so we were unable to offer K–12 student matinees this year, and many artists were understandably hesitant to risk additional exposure beyond what touring already demanded. Still, we found ways to bring people together, in person, online and on stage.

## *There Is No “I” in We*

**Bill T. Jones/Arnie Zane Company’s** latest work, *What Problem?*, required participation by a “community cast” in every location where the evening-length piece was performed. In Seattle, that cast comprised 30 local residents of diverse ages, ethnicities, orientations and life experiences.

Over several days of intense rehearsals with members of the Company and with Bill himself, followed by three nights of performances, these 30 strangers became, in the words of one participant, “a great example of the power of intergenerational or co-generational dance, art and social justice and the power of connection.”

Over 60 people attended a community town hall co-presented and hosted by Langston and featuring Bill T. Jones in conversation with Deputy Director at the Office of Planning & Community Development Lauren Flemister, UW Vice Provost and Dean of Undergraduate Academic Affairs Ed Taylor and moderator Vivian Phillips. The topic, “Is There a We,” sparked deeply personal stories from panelists and audience about exclusion, gentrification, racism, resistance — and, for many, art as a thing that saved their lives.

## Move(ment) On!



*Movement* post-show Q&A facilitated by Berette Macaulay.

**The world premiere** of Meklit Hadero's *Movement LIVE*, was set for April 2020 at Meany Center. Co-commissioned by Meany, this combination live performance and podcast would focus on global migration and invite immigrant artists from every community where Meklit performed to join her on stage to share their own experiences.

## Hearing Voices

**At Meany**, we are committed to presenting a greater diversity of voices across our classical music series, both the artists appearing on our stage and the composers whose work they perform. We launched our 2021–22 Season piano series with Conrad Tao playing works by contemporary composers Felipe Lara, Tania Leon, Ruth Seeger Crawford and his own composition, *Keyed In* (co-commissioned by Meany Center). Only one composer on the program that night — Ludwig van Beethoven — was born before the 20th century.

Simone Dinnerstein followed in January with a program dedicated to contemporary composers

The pandemic hit pause on everything; but via the miracle of Zoom, Meklit and the three Seattle-area artists she chose to participate — Kiki Valera (Cuba), Momma Nikki (Haiti) and Dakota Comache (Guåhan) — spent the ensuing 18 months engaged in virtual residency work during which they honed their story-telling and podcasting skills.

With only eight days of in-person rehearsals, *Movement LIVE* finally premiered on our stage on May 7, 2022. The performance that night was meaningful to the many people in the audience who saw themselves represented, and there were smiles and tears of appreciation during and after the lively Q&A with the artists. The podcast is available on PRI's *The World*.

J.C. Phillips and Richard Danielpour, while in April, Jeremy Denk presented an eclectic mix of Beethoven and Schubert alongside Scott Joplin and Thomas "Blind Tom" Wiggins.

Jeremy, Conrad and Simone each spoke about their programs with Dr. Quinton Morris, host of Classical King FM's *Unmute the Voices*, a program dedicated to introducing audiences to compositions and performances by classical musicians of color. You can find these conversations and more on our website. [meanycenter.org/engage/exploring-creative-process](https://meanycenter.org/engage/exploring-creative-process)

*"This was a life-changing experience for me. I will never forget it. I will never forget all the wonderful people I met, all the aha moments, the heart-expanding moments, the life-affirming moments. A thousand thank you's!"*

— *What Problem?* Community Cast Member

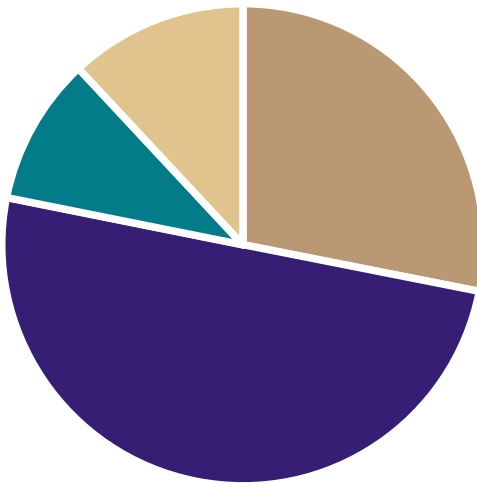
# Meany Center

## VISITING ARTISTS PROGRAM

# FINANCIALS

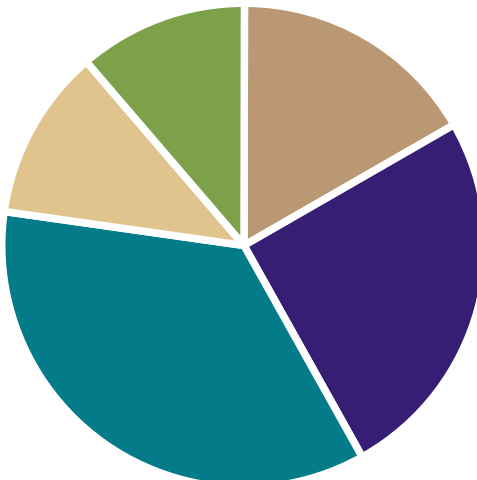
The extraordinary generosity of our patrons and donors allowed us to meet our contributed revenue goal for this fiscal year. However, ticket sales were down roughly 35% compared to pre-pandemic levels, as audiences were hesitant to return to live performances, particularly in the fall. For this reason, we scheduled fewer performances in the 2021–22 Season, and were encouraged to see attendance numbers steadily increase as the season progressed.

FY22 OPERATING INCOME



Ticket Sales	\$666,000	28%
Contributions	\$1,186,000	50%
University Support*	\$235,000	10%
Endowment Distribution	\$283,000	12%
<b>Total FY22 Income</b>	<b>\$2,370,000</b>	<b>100%</b>

FY22 OPERATING EXPENSES



Performing Artists	\$395,000	17%
Production Expenses	\$597,000	25%
Marketing & Outreach	\$838,000	35%
Fundraising	\$272,000	12%
General Administration	\$268,000	11%
<b>Total FY22 Expenses</b>	<b>\$2,370,000</b>	<b>100%</b>

NOTE: Dollar amounts rounded to the nearest thousand.

\*University Support of \$334,000 is reported net of a 15.6% administrative overhead fee on self-sustaining revenue, or approximately \$99,000 for FY22.

# Meany INDEX

"There is divinity in odd numbers ..."  
— William Shakespeare

## Meany by the Numbers — Some Exceedingly Odd



**17** artists and/or ensembles performed live on the 2021–22 Season



**16** artists and/or ensembles whose performances were livestreamed on the 2021–22 Season



**13,873** tickets sold for the 2021–22 Season



**10,587** people attended live performances at Meany Center in the 2021–22 Season



**3,274** people watched Meany performances via livestream



**6,733** paper tickets mailed to patrons by the Ticket Office



**7,120** digital tickets printed at home or on patrons' phones



**226** tickets donated back to Meany Center by patrons totaling \$26,660.50



**1,027** individuals who donated to Meany Center in 2021–22



**287** first time donors to Meany Center in 2021–22



**750** face masks ordered in the 2021–22 Season



**4.3** gallons of hand sanitizer ordered in the 2021–22 Season



**10,765** proofs of vaccination checked for audience, staff and artists during the 2021–22 Season

## 2021–22

# PLANNED GIFTS & ENDOWMENTS

Total Market Value: **\$8,846,000** (as of July 1, 2022)

New Contributions to Principal: **\$202,000**

Endowment Distribution: **\$283,000**

### Planned Gifts

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Katharyn Alvord Gerlich\*

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\*Endowment founder

†Deceased

NOTE: Dollar amounts rounded to the nearest thousand.

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\*Deceased

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### **EXCELLENCE**

We are dedicated to the pursuit of excellence and the expansion of human potential through arts and learning.

### **INNOVATION**

We encourage artistic risk-taking and collaboration to advance new creative expressions and engage important issues of our time.

### **CONNECTION**

We bring diverse artists, community, students and faculty together in transformative experiences that promote the exchange of ideas and perspectives from around the world.

### **INSPIRATION**

We cultivate the capacity to find joy and meaning through creativity and artistic exploration.

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Meany Center for the Performing Arts at the University of Washington fosters innovative performances that advance public engagement, cultural exchange, creative research and learning through the arts. Meany Center provides opportunities for diverse artists, community, students and faculty to connect in the discovery and exploration of the boundless power of the arts to create positive change in the world.