

Cleveland Orchestra plans a packed week of activities during its Lakewood Residency



Charles Bernard and Mary Lynch at Mahall's (Photo: Roger Mastroianni)

by Mike Telin

Beginning on Saturday, May 17 and continuing through Saturday, May 24, The Cleveland Orchestra will bring a variety of musical activities to Lakewood during its second annual Northeast Ohio neighborhood residency.

Residency events include performances in a wide range of venues by Cleveland Orchestra musicians, ensembles from the Cleveland Orchestra Youth Orchestra and Youth Chorus, a Cleveland Orchestra concert preview, a kickball match between Cleveland Orchestra musicians and YMCA youth, and extensive educational programs for local students, all culminating in a free concert by The Cleveland Orchestra at Lakewood Civic Auditorium. All of the events are free and open to the public.

The Lakewood residency follows last season's highly successful Gordon Square residency — although Julie Kim, director of operations at The Cleveland Orchestra, points out that this residency is considerably different because of two important factors.

“The Lakewood Schools music program is very robust and therefore we are able to do a lot more in terms of [educational activities](#) and can touch on children at every grade level. But as opposed to Gordon Square, which is a neighborhood, Lakewood is a city and it was a little challenging in terms of selecting which venues to go to and the types of activities that are most appropriate for those venues.”

Meetings with community partners began back in September and Kim said it was a fantastic process because the community completely embraced the idea of the residency. However, it was a very difficult task to narrow down the very long list of sites that wanted to participate. “What people will see when they look at the schedule of events is a very thoughtful list of venues that we, and primarily the community partners, felt had significant relevance to their neighborhoods and the City of Lakewood.”

Kim adds that she certainly enjoyed discovering the diversity of communities within the city, citing the Lakewood Baptist Church as one example. “The church is home to the largest ethnically diverse mainline congregation within Lakewood, 45% of which are Karen refugees from Burma. And because of this it has become an important resource within the community that provides a service to a very specific demographic which does not necessarily exist anywhere else in Northeast Ohio.”

On Sunday, May 18 from 10:00 am until 11:30 am, Cleveland Orchestra violinist Elayna Duitman and Sae Shiragami, violists Lisa Boyko and Lembi Veskimets, and cellist Alan Harrell will present *The Mosaic of Music*, a morning of worship and fellowship with particular emphasis on the power and persuasion of music, especially in an intercultural context.

Another community partner is Nature's Bin, which was founded in 1975 as a produce market and training site for adults with disabilities. “They really are providing a community service and it was important to everyone to find these types of places that are giving back.” Kim said. On Saturday, May 17, a “special music-related event” will take place there at 11:30 a.m.

One event that particularly excites Julie Kim is PORCHestra, an afternoon of music on Lakewood's front porches sponsored by Charter One. The community-wide event will take place on Sunday, May 18 from 4:00 pm to 5:00 pm and will be followed by special community performances at the Lakewood Public Library beginning at 5:15.

“The idea came from the Lakewood library, which presents a concert series on their front porch. But as I was having meetings with community partners and visiting areas of Lakewood, I noticed immediately that every house on just about every block has a front porch. So we thought, how great it would be to engage the community to be more than just an observing patron of a concert by asking them to be part of making music together.” Kim pointed out that everyone who plays an instrument of any kind is invited to join in the city-wide jam session.

Lakewood residents are encouraged to register their porch event [online](#). Each participating registrant will receive two free tickets to a Cleveland Orchestra concert at this summer’s Blossom Music Festival. Participating porches will appear on a Google map indicating the “musical” porches and neighborhood performances.

“PORCHestra is also a partnership with Lakewood Alive,” Kim added. “One of their activities is housing development and repair and they identified two homes, one on the east and one on the west end of Lakewood where Cleveland Orchestra musicians, staff and Charter One volunteers have worked side by side to repaint the porches.”

The residency will conclude on Saturday, May 24 at 7:30 p.m. with a free community concert by The Cleveland Orchestra under the direction of Franz Welser-Möst at Lakewood Civic Auditorium. The performance continues a long tradition of Cleveland Orchestra appearances in Lakewood — the first was in 1920 when Nikolai Sokoloff brought the Orchestra to Lakewood High School. The Orchestra continued performing at Lakewood High School through the early 1930s, and then performed at Hilliard Square Theater in 1933 and 1934. In April 1955, music director George Szell began leading concerts at the Civic Auditorium, and performances continued there until 1985 under music director Christoph von Dohnányi.

A complete listing of residency activities can be found on the ClevelandClassical [concert listings](#) page or by visiting the Cleveland Orchestra Lakewood Residency [website](#).

Published on ClevelandClassical.com May 13, 2014.