

## Cleveland Orchestra Musicians’ “Summer Salute to Healthcare Workers”

by Mike Telin



Never has it been more important to thank a healthcare worker than the present. And for the past four-plus months, people have expressed their gratitude to workers on the frontline of the Coronavirus Pandemic in a multitude of ways, from banging on pots to flyovers by the U.S. Navy Blue Angels.

For the past six weeks, more than 40 members of The Cleveland Orchestra have shown their appreciation with a “Summer Salute to Healthcare Workers.” The idea for the concerts came from Lynne Ramsey, the Orchestra’s first assistant principal viola.

“During the early part of the shutdown, Lynne saw military planes doing flybys over hospitals as a salute to healthcare workers,” violinist Isabel Trautwein said during a telephone conversation.

“So she thought, what if musicians would do ‘playbys’?”

In addition to Trautwein and Ramsey, violinists Chul-In Park and Katherine Bormann spearheaded the administrative duties. “The Orchestra management has been so supportive,” Trautwein said. “They helped with the public relations piece that we did early on and worked with the hospitals on social media, so it’s been a nice collaboration.”



The Orchestra’s organizers approached the Cleveland Clinic, University Hospitals, and MetroHealth Systems, and each institution decided what would work best for them.



Trautwein noted that the concerts were not for the public. “For us the most important thing was to make sure the performances would reach the people that we are calling our healthcare heroes.”

With that goal in mind, the hospitals suggested that the one-hour concerts take place during shift changes in locations

where the staff routinely enter and exit. They also wanted to accommodate musicians who only wanted to play outdoors. “It was about finding a suitable location where people felt safe and were still able to reach the people we wanted to reach.”

Everyone’s safety was the number one concern. “It quickly became clear that we could not include any wind or brass instruments,” Trautwein said. “That was sad, but we did need to limit it to strings. And everyone would be required to wear a mask from their car and back to their car, and we had our temperatures taken.”



In the end, the hospitals and musicians decided there would be six concerts per week for four weeks. “That brought us to 24 concerts. We sent an email to all the string and keyboard players and literally within a few days all the dates were taken.”



The final week of salutes were presented at the Cleveland Clinic’s Main and Hillcrest Campuses, University Hospitals’ Main Campus, and at MetroHealth System’s Main, Parma, and Cleveland Heights locations.

On behalf of all her colleagues, Trautwein extended a huge thank-you to the hospitals. “Each one provided us with people who would meet us and help us find the locations.”

*Photos by Roger Mastroianni.*

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