

## M.U.S.i.C. - Stars in the Classics to host backyard garden concert Aug. 15

by Mike Telin



Over the past few weeks, area musicians and performing arts organizations have presented concerts on front porches, parking lots, and even at a baseball field. Another obvious place would be a spacious backyard — should you be lucky enough to have one.

When everything shut down, M.U.S.i.C. - Stars in the Classics began posting archival videos and later employing

their musicians to create new ones. “We’re still doing that,” M.U.S.i.C.’s Artistic Director Jodi Kanter said by telephone. “Then one of our musicians asked, ‘Why can’t we create an outdoor performance where everyone can be socially distanced?’” As luck would have it, Kanter happens to have a large backyard.

On Saturday, August 15, M.U.S.i.C. invites you to spend “A Musical Summer Evening in the Garden.” The outdoor event will be held at the artistic director’s house in Orange Village, where audiences can enjoy a live program while maintaining social distancing. Seating will begin at 6:30 pm and the concert starts at 7:00 pm. The audience will be limited to 40 people. Click [here](#) for tickets and location information. The rain date is Sunday, August 16 at 7:00 pm.

“We had a trial run back in July for invited patrons and it was very successful,” Kanter said. “It felt almost like a Blossom event. We set up little cocktail tables for people to use for their food and beverages. People did feel comfortable and the musicians were excited to be able to perform for a live audience.”

The event will include widely spaced seating, prepackaged food, and canned beverages — patrons are invited to bring their own wine. Disinfecting wipes and hand sanitizer will be on-hand and a handicapped-accessible restroom is available. Masks must be worn when arriving and leaving but may be removed when seated.



Before Kanter decided to plan the performances, she wanted to find out how the music would project in her backyard. “I invited a couple of violinists to play back there and the acoustic is remarkable. You could hear it quite well from anywhere in the garden.”

As with all M.U.S.i.C.S.’s concerts, the program for the 15th was chosen by the players. “I asked them for suggestions, although I told them that I wanted the music to be French, Spanish, and Latin American.”

The program will begin with the first two movements from Ravel’s *String Quartet* and Granados’ *Danza Española No. 5*, performed by Maria Beyens and Victor Beyens (violins), Esther Nam (viola), and Brandon Phelps (cello).

Movements four and five from Albéniz’s *Cantos de España* will feature pianist Alex Kostritsa, who will team up with violinist James Thompson for de Falla’s “Danza Española” from *La Vida Breve*.

Phelps will return with pianist Arseniy Gusev for Debussy’s *Cello Sonata*. The pianist will later join Thompson for Ravel’s *Tzigane*. And clarinetist Shihao Zhu and pianist Meng Yuan will play movements one and two of Saint-Saëns’ *Clarinet Sonata*.

Kanter said that she always tries to program music by student composers, and Saturday's concert will feature Arseniy Gusev's *Black Salamander* for piano and xylophone, played by Gusev and Torrell Moss.

The evening will be capped off when jazz trumpeter Eric Levine joins Victor Beyens, Moss, Gusev, and bassist Henry Samuels for Kenny Dorham's *Blue Bossa*.

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