



**WASHINGTON  
PERFORMING ARTS**  
We make it happen

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## **WASHINGTON PERFORMING ARTS ANNOUNCES DATES AND DETAILS FOR ALL-ONLINE *HOME DELIVERY PLUS* SERIES FOR 2021**

**Streaming dates announced for virtual programs featuring cellist Alisa Weilerstein; tabla virtuoso Zakir Hussain; pianist Sir Andrés Schiff; mezzo-soprano J’Nai Bridges; jazz trumpeter Sean Jones and tap dancer/vocalist Brinae Ali in an Afrofuturist tribute to Dizzy Gillespie; jazz singer Veronica Swift; an all-star classical trio of pianist Evgeny Kissin, violinist Joshua Bell, and cellist Steven Isserlis; and more.**

***Home Delivery Plus* also includes newly announced, free-to-the-public artist conversations hosted by jazz trumpet icon Wynton Marsalis**

**Series launches December 11 with free preview performance by D.C. trio The String Queens**

(Washington, D.C.)—**Washington Performing Art today announced new program details, streaming dates, and subscription plans with on-sale dates for *Home Delivery Plus*, its forthcoming all-online series of paid-admission performances and companion experiences. A major expansion of Washington Performing Arts’s [Home Delivery](#) online programming—which began in spring 2020—the *Home Delivery Plus* series offers more than a dozen week-long packages of pre-recorded performances in high-quality audio/video, with complementary components like artist interviews, panel discussions, and behind-the-scenes artist footage—all custom-created for this new series.**

Running from January to June 2021—with a free preview performance by D.C. trio and Washington Performing Arts Resident Ensemble, The String Queens on December 11, 2020—*Home Delivery Plus* embraces Washington Performing Arts’s trademark artistic breadth with world-renowned performers and emerging talents presenting jazz, classical music, dance, gospel music, and more.

Prompted by this time of coronavirus, the series is designed with the digital future of the performing arts in mind—as an addition to (not a replacement for) live, in-person performance. In keeping with COVID-19 restrictions, the events are to be pre-recorded without live audiences in venues throughout the D.C. region—along with some national and international locations—and then professionally edited and premiered online. **At such point in the series as local health authorities and venue hosts judge it is safe for live audiences to gather for physically distanced performances, patrons may be welcomed to purchase separate tickets to attend in person.**

“In a time of enormous upheaval, we have focused on affirming our mission as strongly as ever, and we are excited about the creative frontiers that have opened up for us, for our artists, and for our patrons,” said **Jenny Bilfield, President and CEO of Washington Performing Arts**. “We have invited a truly dynamic cohort of creative artists and thinkers to partner with us and engage with our audience. We are all exploring new terrain, both through our performances and educational programs. Our goal has always been to provide a platform where artists can do their best, bravest work, and our plans for *Home Delivery Plus* amplify that commitment.”

A just-announced contributor to the *Home Delivery Plus* series is **Pulitzer-winning jazz composer, trumpeter, and longtime Washington Performing Arts collaborator Wynton Marsalis, who will host *The Arts, Undistanced***—a Washington Performing Arts only series-within-the-series of candid and free-ranging artist-to-artist conversation videos on the arts, society, and culture. Streaming free-to-the-public within *Home Delivery Plus*’s Soundcheck resources on the Washington Performing Arts website, *The Arts, Undistanced* will include dialogues between Marsalis and opera singer **J’Nai Bridges**, jazz singer **Veronica Swift**, and classical cellist **Steven Isserlis**.

### **HOME DELIVERY PLUS: THE FORMAT**

Each *Home Delivery Plus* package centers around a **Headline Artist** performance and includes a range of experiences beyond the artist’s set, including some that most patrons seldom experience during a traditional season. The range of companion components includes the following, with each package offering a different mix:

- **Soundcheck:** Advance preparation for the performance, with a range of assets on the Washington Performing Arts website including video links, artist profiles and background reading, deep dives into art and culture led by the featured artists themselves, and Washington Performing Arts-only interviews with thought-leaders from a variety of fields
- **Green Room:** An insider’s view on the production, featuring backstage “fly-on-the-wall” footage plus conversations with the artists and special guests
- **Opening Act:** A short set to open the package, performed by artists from the D.C. community, with support from Washington Performing Arts’s [Mars Arts D.C.](#) program
- **Lobby:** An opportunity before the show and between sets for viewers of the premiere stream to interact with Washington Performing Arts staff, special guests, and/or each other

- **Linger Longer:** A post-performance artist conversation, panel discussion with special guests, or artist “listening party” (in which artists play and discuss favorite recordings by their major influences and new discoveries)

**Sales for *Home Delivery Plus* begin on Thursday, November 19**, with a two-week “Early-Bird” period offering discounted subscriptions to the entire series of 12 paid events and three free events. **Full-priced sales begin on Thursday, December 3**, with full-series subscriptions, partial-series “Pick 6” subscriptions, and single-event admissions on offer. All programs will stream for one week each from the Washington Performing Arts website, with purchasers logging in to access paywalled content. An additional suite of “Soundcheck” advance-preparation materials for each package will be offered free-of-charge on the site.

### ***HOME DELIVERY PLUS: THE SERIES***

All *Home Delivery Plus* packages have been developed by Washington Performing Arts programming staff in close collaboration with the artists themselves. Veteran producer Eric E. Richardson has joined the Washington Performing Arts team as Supervising Producer to help bring these programs to life. In its customized combination of performance and learning components, *Home Delivery Plus* offers an experience of the arts that is both unique and wide-ranging.

#### **FREE PREVIEW PERFORMANCE**

##### **The String Queens**

**Premiere: Friday, December 11, 2020, 8PM**

**Streaming through Thursday, December 17**

In this free preview of *Home Delivery Plus*, the adventurous and energizing D.C.-based trio and *Mars Arts D.C.* Ensemble-in-Residence, The String Queens, takes the stage at Sixth & I with a festive mix of holiday favorites and pop classics. The Queens are celebrated for a repertoire ranging from the Baroque to the Jazz Age to today’s *Billboard* “Hot 100.” Their members have collaborated with the likes of Ledisi, Solange, Leslie Odom Jr., Janelle Monáe, Jennifer Hudson, Ariana Grande, Demi Lovato, Common, and the late Aretha Franklin. All three are also frequent “collaborators” with dozens of local students as music teachers in the Washington, D.C. schools.

Package features a **Headline Artist** performance plus **Soundcheck:** instructional videos on the art of improvisation by each of the trio members; **Linger Longer:** The Queens discussing how they arrange music for string trio, focusing on a particular work in their repertoire; and more, to be announced.

*Mars Arts D.C.* is a partnership of [Mars, Incorporated](#) and Washington Performing Arts, with support from Jacqueline Badger Mars.

##### ***A Brief and Modern History of the Étude***

**Jenny Lin, piano**

**Premiere: Friday, January 29, 2021, 8PM**

**Streaming through Thursday, February 4**

One of today's foremost champions of the *étude*—a work balancing artistic expression with technical instruction—pianist Jenny Lin takes a fascinating and revealing look at the form. The program will be divided into several brief performance sets from the stage of the Kennedy Center Terrace Theater, each devoted to a specific composer. Lin will introduce most sets with a pre-recorded video story or composer interview before performing a selection of études. The repertoire will include classic works by Chopin and Liszt, George Gershwin standards arranged by Earl Wild, and études by two of America's greatest living composers, both National Medal of Arts honorees: Philip Glass and William Bolcom.

Package features a **Headline Artist** performance plus **Soundcheck**: new footage of Lin rehearsing one of the program's works in her home studio; and more, to be announced.

#### **FREE PERFORMANCE**

*Living the Dream...Singing the Dream*

**Washington Performing Arts Gospel Choirs**

**Michele Fowlin & Theodore Thorpe III, artistic directors**

**Choral Arts**

**Scott Tucker, artistic director**

**Premiere: Friday, February 19, 2021, 8PM**

**Streaming through Thursday, February 25**

The long-running choral tribute to the life and legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. moves online. In keeping with COVID-19 precautions, each singer will be recorded individually and all parts will be layered into a seamless whole. The program will also include inspiring archival performances from past years' concerts.

*Presented in partnership with Choral Arts*

*Performances by Washington Performing Arts's Children of the Gospel Choir are made possible by Jacqueline Badger Mars and Mars, Incorporated*

Ballet Folklórico de México de Amalia Hernández

Premiere: Friday, February 26, 2021, 8PM

Streaming through Thursday, March 4

Renowned for performances brimming with captivating rhythms and dazzling costumes, the iconic Ballet Folklórico de México de Amalia Hernández was founded in 1952 by its late, visionary namesake with a focus on championing the indigenous cultures of Mexico. Recorded in the company's home base of Mexico City, this *Home Delivery Plus* package includes brand-new footage and never-before-aired excerpts of the company's 2017 centennial tribute to Hernández.

Package features a **Headline Artist** performance plus **Soundcheck**: exclusive rehearsal footage that demonstrates how dance companies are able to safely gather during the pandemic; **Linger Longer**: an original panel discussion featuring the Ballet's senior artistic and costume staff; and more, to be announced.

**FREE EVENT**

**Steven Banks, saxophone**

**With Xak Bjerken, piano; Omer Quartet**

**Premiere: Friday, March 5, 2021, 8PM**

**Streaming through Thursday, March 11**

Classical saxophonist Steven Banks awed audiences at the 2019 Young Concert Artists (YCA) international auditions, and it was no surprise that he was named one of that year's laureates. Banks boasts an expansive talent—as a superlative performer, an evangelist for the saxophone in the world of classical concert music, a committed educator, and a compelling speaker. His performance will include the world premieres of three compositions, including a new work by Carlos Simon, jointly commissioned by YCA and Washington Performing Arts.

Package features a **Headline Artist** performance plus **Linger Longer**: panel discussion among Steven Banks, composers Carlos Simon and Saad Haddad, Washington Performing Arts President and CEO Jenny Bilfield, and YCA President Dan Kellogg; and more, to be announced.

*Presented in partnership with Young Concert Artists*

***Dizzy Spellz***

**Sean Jones and Brinae Ali**

**Premiere: Friday, March 19, 2021, 8PM**

**Streaming through Thursday, March 25**

Jazz and hip-hop music and dance unite at Sixth & I in this innovative program led by trumpeter and former Jazz at Lincoln Center Orchestra member Sean Jones and virtuoso tap dancer, choreographer, and vocalist Brinae Ali. *Dizzy Spellz* offers an Afrofuturist lens on the intersection of cultural and spiritual dilemmas within the African Diaspora through the music of Dizzy Gillespie. From his coming of age through racial and social dynamics in the Deep South, creating and curating the bebop movement in New York, to his spiritual journey to Africa and his immersion in Afro-Cuban music and the Baha'i Faith, Dizzy was very much ahead of his time. Jones and Ali present a new perspective on his music and on the social vernacular of the African American experience for *our* time.

Package features a **Headline Artist** performance plus **Linger Longer**: panel discussion on "What is Afrofuturism?" featuring Jones, Ali, and special guests (TBA); and more, to be announced.

***Rising, Together***

**J'Nai Bridges, mezzo-soprano**

**Premiere: Friday, March 26, 2021, 8PM**

**Streaming through Thursday, April 1**

J'Nai Bridges is among the most captivating singers of her generation—"a rich-toned mezzo-soprano with a calmly commanding stage presence" (*The New Yorker*). A star of the Metropolitan Opera and Washington National Opera, she also became an instant Washington Performing Arts

favorite thanks to her headline appearance in our March 2020 Virtual Gala. For her *Home Delivery Plus* performance, to be recorded at Sixth & I, she has crafted a very special program on the themes of uplift and community, focusing on composers who have been her close collaborators, including Richard Danielpour, Damien Sneed, Patrice Michaels, and Shawn Okpebloho. The program will also feature well-known works from classical and other genres and multidisciplinary collaborations, along with incisive conversations on the topic of “Rising, Together” (details TBA).

Package features a **Headline Artist** performance plus **Soundcheck: The Arts, Undistanced:** Wynton Marsalis in conversation with J’Nai Bridges; and more, to be announced.

### ***Lift Ev’ry Voice***

#### **Sphinx Virtuosi**

**Premiere: Friday, April 2, 2021, 8PM**

**Streaming through Thursday, April 8**

Five musicians drawn from the renowned Sphinx Virtuosi perform on the Sixth & I stage in a tribute to the *American* sound of classical music, with selections ranging from a movement from Dvořák’s “American Quartet” to Andrea Casarrubios’s *SEVEN*, a work composed in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Founded in 1997 with the goal of addressing the underrepresentation of people of color in classical music, The Sphinx Organization annually presents programs benefiting more than 100,000 students and artists and performs for audiences of more than two million.

Package features a **Headline Artist** performance plus **Linger Longer:** panel discussion on strategies and resources for systematic change in arts organizations (panelists TBA); and more, to be announced.

### **Damien Sneed and Friends**

**Premiere: Friday, April 16, 2021, 8PM**

**Streaming through Thursday, April 22**

A master of musical genres ranging from gospel to jazz to classical and beyond, Damien Sneed also wears an impressive number of hats as an artist—as pianist, organist, vocalist, conductor, composer, producer, arranger, and music educator. The headliner of a fun-filled Washington Performing Arts holiday performance at Sixth & I in December of 2019, Sneed takes the stage at Strathmore for a *Home Delivery Plus* program with an emphasis on gospel. He will be joined throughout the performance by a number of special guests (TBA).

Package features a **Headline Artist** performance plus more components, to be announced.

### **Sir Andrés Schiff, piano**

**Premiere: Friday, April 23, 2021, 8PM**

**Streaming through Thursday, April 29**

*Home Delivery Plus* travels to Europe, where a living legend of classical piano, Sir Andrés Schiff, will record a program uniting performance and pedagogy. Focusing as ever on finding fresh and

revealing nuances in the piano repertoire, Schiff begins with a **Headline Artist** recital of Mozart, Beethoven, and Schubert.

Package features a **Headline Artist** performance plus **Linger Longer**: Sir András Schiff presents an all-new lecture on Mozart's stately and contemplative Adagio in B minor, K. 540; and more, to be announced.

***Story of the Tabla***

**Zakir Hussain and Masters of Percussion**

**Premiere: Friday, April 30, 2021, 8PM**

**Streaming through Thursday, May 6**

Tabla virtuoso and longtime Washington Performing Arts audience favorite Zakir Hussain is an artist who has not only taken his instrument to its limits within its original discipline, Indian classical music, but who has vastly expanded the presence of both his instrument and musical heritage within other genres—including jazz, rock, and Irish and American folk music. In his *Home Delivery Plus* set on the Strathmore stage, joins regular collaborators and one special guest from the D.C. scene—to be chosen by Hussain himself—in a musical exploration of “The Story of the Tabla,” from the drum’s origins to its leading-edge expressions.

Package features a **Headline Artist** performance plus **Soundcheck**: a pre-recorded Q&A session with Hussain; **Opening Act**: a D.C.-based artist (TBA) selected by Zakir Hussain opens the show before joining Hussain for the headline set; **Linger Longer**: “Zakir Hussain Listening Party,” in which the maestro plays and discusses some of the most important recordings in his life, from childhood to today; and more, to be announced.

**Alisa Weilerstein, cello**

**Premiere: Friday, May 7, 2021, 8PM**

**Streaming through Thursday, May 13**

Performing in the beloved chamber-music setting of the Kennedy Center Terrace Theater, MacArthur “Genius Grant”—winner Alisa Weilerstein’s *Home Delivery Plus* recital includes Bach’s immortal Suite No. 3 and Kodály’s exhilarating and technically daunting solo sonata.

Package features a **Headline Artist** performance plus **Linger Longer**: a juvenile diabetes survivor and an ardent advocate for the type 1 diabetes community, Weilerstein joins a panel of experts to discuss living with the disease, medical advances in treatment, (details TBA); and more, to be announced.

**Evgeny Kissin, piano**

**Joshua Bell, violin**

**Steven Isserlis, cello**

**Premiere: Friday, May 21, 2021, 8PM**

**Streaming through Thursday, May 27**

Three masters of classical music unite in the magisterial space of the Kennedy Center Concert Hall for an emotionally powerful and musically diverse presentation focusing on themes of vibrant Jewish life, memory, and loss. The first half of the Headline Artist program includes works inspired by Jewish folk songs and liturgical melodies. It will feature stirring performances by Bell and Isserlis of duo works by Russian Jewish composer Joseph Achron and two evocative pieces by Ernest Bloch: *Suite from Jewish Life* and the *Baal Shem Suite*. Evgeny Kissin will then offer readings of Yiddish poetry memorializing a lost way of life. The program's second half addresses the loss of the Holocaust. It begins with Piano Trio, Op. 63, by Mikhail Gnessin and concludes with an unforgettable classic by Shostakovich, the Piano Trio No. 2 in E Minor, Op. 67, inspired by the loss of a great friend and by the world's discovery of the horrors of the Nazi concentration camps.

Package features a **Headline Artist** performance plus **Soundcheck: *The Arts, Undistanced***: Wynton Marsalis in conversation with Steven Isserlis; **Linger Longer**: Panel discussion on "Lost Culture," featuring Evgeny Kissin and a number of experts on Jewish history and culture; and more, to be announced.

*Presented in partnership with Pro Musica Hebraica*

**Veronica Swift**

**Premiere: Friday, May 28, 2021, 8PM**

**Streaming through Thursday, June 3**

With a repertoire running the gamut from swing to bebop to the Great American Songbook, Veronica Swift is a young but fully-fledged star on the international jazz scene. Boasting a clear and lilting tone and radiant stage presence, Swift is also a master of rigorous vocal techniques like vocalese and scat. Having first gained widespread attention in high-profile collaborations with the likes of Wynton Marsalis and Chris Botti, she has developed a devoted following among Washington Performing Arts audiences with the U.S. Air Force Band (in Washington Performing Arts's April 2019 tribute to Glenn Miller), and on Washington Performing Arts's 2019 Gala stage. She demonstrates her accomplishment as a leader in this *Home Delivery Plus* set at Sixth & I, performing her forthcoming (March 2021) recording, *This Bitter Earth*, in its entirety, which explores themes of racism, sexism, and loneliness.

Package features a **Headline Artist** performance plus: **Soundcheck: *The Arts, Undistanced***: Wynton Marsalis in conversation with Veronica Swift; **Linger Longer**: Veronica Swift takes viewers on a tour of a Spotify playlist she has curated especially for *Home Delivery Plus*; and more, to be announced.

**Schaghajegh Nosrati, piano**

**Premiere: Friday, June 4, 2021, 8PM**

**Streaming through Thursday, June 10**

Making her Washington Performing Arts debut, German pianist Schaghajegh Nosrati comes to *Home Delivery Plus* from the stage of the Kennedy Center Terrace Theater, performing a cornerstone of her repertoire, *The Art of Fugue* by J.S. Bach. Following an attention-getting second prize award in 2014's International Bach Competition in Leipzig, Nosrati made her CD debut in 2015 with *The Art of Fugue*, and her 2017 recording of Bach keyboard concertos took the German Record

Critics' Award. No less an authority than her ongoing mentor (and fellow *Home Delivery Plus* headliner) Sir András Schiff has praised the “astonishing clarity, purity, and maturity” of her Bach performances.

Package features a **Headline Artist** performance plus: **Linger Longer**: Schaghajegh Nosrati and Sir András Schiff discuss the history and intricacies of J.S. Bach's *Art of Fugue*; and more, to be announced.

### **FREE HOME DELIVERY ONLINE PROGRAMMING: A 'SECULAR BLESSING'**

As Washington Performing Arts prepares to debut the (mostly) paid-admission *Home Delivery Plus* series, the organization continues to offer free “regular” [Home Delivery](#) programming, streaming from its website. A powerful new highlight is “**Tomorrow I See**,” an inspiring original spoken word/music video and “secular blessing” for the new season by well-known D.C.-based hip-hop artist and educator **Konshens The MC**, commissioned by Washington Performing Arts President and CEO Jenny Bilfield.

“‘Tomorrow I See’ is a powerful meditation on hope, connection, and community,” Bilfield said. “Konshens The MC is an eloquent writer and performer and was the natural go-to person for this project. Ultimately, creativity is an expression of hope for the future, and in turn, I hope that people will be warmed by the beauty and spirit of ‘Tomorrow I See.’”

### **ABOUT WASHINGTON PERFORMING ARTS**

One of the most established and honored performing arts institutions in America, Washington Performing Arts has engaged for more than half a century with artists, audiences, students, and civic life. The city is truly our stage: for decades, in venues ranging from concert halls and clubs to public parks, we have presented a tremendous range of artists and art forms, from the most distinguished symphony orchestras to both renowned and emerging artists in classical music, jazz, international genres, and more. We also have an ever-expanding artistic and educational presence on the internet, addressing the programming challenges of this time of pandemic while envisioning ongoing opportunities for online connection and community in a post-COVID world.

Washington Performing Arts deeply values its partnerships with local organizations and other arts institutions. Through events online and in myriad performance venues and neighborhoods, we engage international visiting artists in community programs and introduce local artists to wider audiences. We place a premium on establishing artists as a continuing presence in the lives of both young people and adults through residencies and education programs.

Our achievements have been recognized with a National Medal of Arts and with three Mayor's Arts Awards from the DC Government. We have now embarked upon our second half-century, ever inspired by the motto of our founder, Patrick Hayes: “Everybody in, nobody out.”

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