



Embassy
of the Federal Republic of Germany
Washington



WASHINGTON
PERFORMING ARTS
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WASHINGTON PERFORMING ARTS AND THE GERMAN EMBASSY IN WASHINGTON, D.C. PRESENT *LIGHT, HOPE & JOY* A FREE VIRTUAL HOLIDAY CONCERT

Featuring the Gewandhausorchester, D.C.'s The String Queens,
and The United States Air Force Band with special guest Die Big Band der Bundeswehr

Premiering December 20 via Facebook and available on-demand through December 31

(Washington, D.C.)—At the end of a difficult year, **Washington Performing Arts** and the **German Embassy** are coming together to present *Light, Hope & Joy*, a free virtual holiday concert that offers an inclusive message of uplift and seasonal festivity to audiences worldwide. The concert premieres on **Sunday, December 20 at 4 p.m. ET** on the Facebook pages of both [Washington Performing Arts](#) and [the Embassy](#), and will remain available to view on-demand through Thursday, December 31. The program features a mix of German and D.C.-based artists in recognition of the longstanding partnership between Washington Performing Arts and the Embassy, dating back to the founding of Washington Performing Arts's Embassy Adoption Program more than 40 years ago and its long legacy of presenting superlative German artists in the nation's capital.

“For decades we have enjoyed our partnership with the German Embassy,” said Elizabeth Racheva, Chief Advancement Officer at Washington Performing Arts and Executive Producer of *Light, Hope & Joy*. “Together—whether on stage, in the classroom, or now in the virtual space—we cherish the chance to foster cultural diplomacy as a platform for our shared values and to champion the arts as a unifying force. Our world needs the voices of artists more than ever, and our lineup of outstanding artists for *Light, Hope & Joy*—all longtime partners of Washington Performing Arts—showcases across a range of styles and ensembles some of the best talent we have to offer here at home in Washington and overseas in Deutschland.”

The concert program includes selections from the second movement of Tchaikovsky's *The Nutcracker* performed by the **Gewandhausorchester**, recorded at the Gewandhaus in Leipzig; a

medley of carols performed by Mars Arts D.C. Ensemble-in-Residence and *Home Delivery Plus* Headline Artists **The String Queens**, filmed at Sixth & I; and a swing arrangement of the “Ode to Joy” from Beethoven’s Symphony No. 9, presented by **The United States Air Force Band** with their colleagues from **Die Big Band der Bundeswehr** as special guests; alongside other holiday fare.

German Ambassador to the United States Emily Haber, Washington Performing Arts President and CEO Jenny Bilfield, and United States Air Force Band Commander and Conductor Colonel Dan Schofield will introduce segments and share holiday greetings to viewers across the globe.

“This holiday season, many of us will not be able to gather together with family and friends. This especially goes for the seniors citizens and veterans in our communities—a generation that has done so much for all of us. So, in the spirit of German-American friendship, we joined forces with Washington Performing Arts and are thrilled to present this concert of joyful music not only to our American friends online, but also to several nursing homes in the D.C. area,” added Emily Haber, German Ambassador to the United States.

In acknowledgment of a particularly isolating year for elderly citizens in nursing homes the Embassy is also providing gift boxes to more than 600 seniors across the DMV region, in conjunction with the broadcast. The packages will include traditional German holiday treats like *Stollen* and *Lebkuchen*, as well as ornaments and other festive items.

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.

ABOUT THE EMBASSY ADOPTION PROGRAM

Established in 1974, the Embassy Adoption Program is a partnership program of Washington Performing Arts and DC Public Schools. Through direct interactions with embassies and other global entities—including consular offices, government offices, representative offices, and others—fifth

and sixth grade students attending DC Public Schools have the opportunity to learn about the arts, language, customs, and history of their partner's home country and culture.

Diplomats give students a personalized understanding of their nation's positions on various world issues. Classes in the Embassy Adoption Program also have the opportunity to work with Washington Performing Arts mainstage and Teaching Artists to gain greater insight into the art forms of different nations and their cultures. Artist visits are also provided through our partnership with the United States Air Force Band and its official chorus, the Singing Sergeants as well as the United States Army Voices and the United States Navy Sea Chanters, to teach students to perform their partner nation's anthem in its traditional language. Capstone events, including a mini-United Nations simulation, hosted (virtually) by the Ronald Reagan Building and International Trade Center, and a presentation for embassy staff are integral parts of the curriculum.

In the 2020-2021 school year, the Embassy Adoption Program is delighted to continue all of these elements of the program over virtual platforms, and continues to provide enhanced support to teachers, embassy and global partners, and Teaching Artists to navigate an all-virtual year.

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