



**WASHINGTON  
PERFORMING ARTS**

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

**January 27, 2021**

**WASHINGTON PERFORMING ARTS WELCOMES  
EIGHT NEW BOARD MEMBERS TO ITS LEADERSHIP TEAM**

**Introducing Sunny Jung Scully Alsup, Michele Cober, Lynn Parseghian, George Rush,  
Arjun Shah, Naboth van den Broek, Gary Yacoubian, and Alyssa O'Connor**

(Washington, D.C.)—Washington Performing Arts announces the appointment of seven new members to its Board of Directors and one new chairwoman to its Junior Board. In their new roles, each Board member will support Washington Performing Arts's longstanding mission to bring wide-ranging artistic programs to stages, schools, and neighborhoods throughout the nation's capital.

"Washington Performing Arts has a dynamic and deeply engaged Board, Junior Board, and Women's Committee, and we are thrilled to announce eight avid arts lovers—seven who are new to our Board and one who is stepping into the leadership role of our Junior Board," said Jenny Bilfield, President and CEO of Washington Performing Arts. "Each is committed to Washington Performing Arts's mission and to the health and vibrancy of this treasured organization. When our Boards and Committees comprise members of varied backgrounds, generations, professional expertise, and life experience, we can best ensure that our most crucial conversations are rich and consequential. I am grateful for their partnership and look forward to working with them in the time ahead."

Washington Performing Arts's Board of Directors serve three-year terms with no term limits.

**The new members of Washington Performing Arts's Board of Directors are:**

- **Ms. Sunny Jung Scully Alsup** – Founder, LSG, Inc.
- **Ms. Michele Cober** –Director, External Affairs & Strategic Alliances at Verizon
- **Ms. Lynn Parseghian** – Executive Director, Tregaron Conservancy
- **Mr. George Rush** – Software Engineer
- **Mr. Arjun Shah** – Vice President, The Carlyle Group, Inc.
- **Mr. Naboth van den Broek** – Partner, Wilmer Cutler Pickering Hale and Dorr LLP
- **Mr. Gary Yacoubian** – President, CEO & Managing Partner, Specialty Technologies, LLC (SVS)

In addition, Washington Performing Arts’s Junior Board—which engages young professionals and arts enthusiasts who seek to impact the future of the arts through a commitment to philanthropy, leadership, and advocacy—has a new chairwoman steering its efforts:

- **Ms. Alyssa O’Connor** – Attorney, The Federal Reserve System

Regarding these appointments, Thomas P. Gallagher, current Chairman of Washington Performing Arts’s Board of Directors, stated, “We are so pleased to have added seven new directors and a new chair to the Junior Board—which is particularly significant in this time of pandemic and political division. The new Board members are diverse, capable, and enthusiastic, and they come to us from varied backgrounds in the worlds of business and philanthropy. I am excited to welcome them, and I also express my gratitude to our remarkable Governance Committee and our staff support team.”

The newly announced members join 36 members of Washington Performing Arts’s Board of Directors. A full listing can be found at [washingtonperformingarts.org/aboutus/board-of-directors/](https://www.washingtonperformingarts.org/aboutus/board-of-directors/).

#### **QUOTES FROM THE NEW BOARD MEMBERS**

“Washington Performing Arts suits my eclectic tastes by offering a variety of excellent programs, featuring renowned and emerging performers. Supporting this organization is the best way I can ensure the future of music in Washington.” –**Ms. Sunny Jung Scully Alsup**

“As a performer myself, I know firsthand the highs and lows of a career in the arts. The COVID-19 pandemic presents challenges for artists that we could have never anticipated. It is my honor to serve on the Board of Washington Performing Arts as we navigate the challenges ahead to ensure that the arts continue to thrive in Washington, D.C.” –**Ms. Michele Cober**

“Now, more than ever, our community needs the arts for connection, inspiration, and growth. I look forward to helping Washington Performing Arts continue its work creating innovative and exciting programs, in collaboration with a wide array of artists and partners.” –**Ms. Lynn Parseghian**

“Over the past decade, many of my most memorable experiences have been Washington Performing Arts’s concerts. My respect for Washington Performing Arts’s values, and friendship with the staff, make me excited to become more involved with my favorite organization. I look forward to continuing to encourage everyone to take advantage of the unparalleled opportunities Washington Performing Arts provides to see and hear the world’s finest performers.” –**Mr. Gordon Rush**

“I am looking forward to helping Washington Performing Arts navigate this uncertain time. COVID-19 presents both challenges and opportunities for arts organizations, and I believe the mission of Washington Performing Arts is as important now as ever.” –**Mr. Arjun Shah**

“Music has always played a tremendously important role in my life. It is truly an honor to help Washington Performing Arts make music accessible to everyone around the D.C. area, and to share the joy and pleasure that it brings.” –**Mr. Naboth van den Broek**

“I am honored to join Washington Performing Arts’s Board, an organization whose mission I have supported and believed in for more than 20 years. That mission couldn’t be more important and relevant than it is today, and I look forward to working with my fellow Board members and Washington Performing Arts’s staff to further it in any way I can.” –**Mr. Gary Yacoubian**

#### **QUOTE FROM THE NEW JUNIOR BOARD CHAIR**

“I have enjoyed being involved with Washington Performing Arts for the past three seasons and am looking forward to engaging young patrons with this season’s reimagined and innovative programming.” –**Ms. Alyssa O’Connor**

#### **BIOGRAPHICAL DETAILS AND PHOTOS OF THE NEW BOARD MEMBERS**



##### **SUNNY JUNG SCULLY ALSUP**

***Founder, LSG Inc.***

Sunny Jung Scully Alsup trained as a landscape architect and helped found an award-winning design firm, LSG, where she practiced for 25 years. Her talent and dedication to the profession were recognized when she was named a Fellow in the ASLA in 2000. She participated in making art and music, acting, and designing before channeling her focus on her chosen profession. She served 10 years and chaired the board of the Woolly Mammoth Theatre Company and remains a staunch supporter. As a longtime member of the National Advisory Board at the National Museum of Women in the Arts, she raised funds and facilitates art acquisitions. Her tastes are eclectic, demonstrated by her and her husband Bill Alsup’s longtime support and subscriptions to the opera, symphony, ballet, and a variety of theaters. A love of community motivates her involvement and leadership in an array of organizations, such as the boards of The Potomac Conservancy, NARAL, NFTE (National Foundation for Teaching Entrepreneurship), and NOMA Parks Foundation. For N Street Village, a local women’s shelter, she co-founded the Ambassadors Council to raise awareness and funding. Due to her early public-school inspiration, her goal at Washington Performing Arts is to make possible further funding for music education and appreciation in the schools.



##### **MICHELE COBER**

***Director of External Affairs & Strategic Alliances, Verizon***

Soprano and attorney Michele Cober graduated with honors from the University of Maryland, College Park with a B.M. in Vocal Music Performance and an M.M. in Opera Performance. Prior to the pandemic, she was a regular performer with the Washington National Opera and made her company debut as a Handmaiden in *Turandot*. As a finalist in the international competition of Operalia, Ms. Cober was selected for the inaugural class of Washington National Opera’s Young Artist Program of the Americas. She performed the role of Frankie in *Carmen Jones* with the National Symphony Orchestra and appeared with opera sensation Bryn Terfel on the nationally broadcast Kennedy Center Honors. Ms. Cober has performed the roles of Clara and Bess in *Porgy & Bess*, Pamina in *Die Zauberflöte*, and Adina in *L’Elisir D’Amore*, wowing audiences in both the United States and abroad. Although she is no longer a full-time performer, she frequently performs in the

Washington-Metropolitan area, appearing in recitals and most recently with the Washington National Opera in *Otello* and *Don Giovanni*.

Ms. Cober is also an accomplished attorney, who has been practicing law for over a decade. She graduated *cum laude* from Howard University School of Law, where she was Executive Publications Editor of the *Howard Law Journal*. After graduating from law school, she served as a law clerk in the United States District Court for the District of Maryland and went on to join the litigation groups at Kirkland & Ellis LLP and Hogan Lovells LLP. Her wide-ranging practice included complex commercial disputes, construction law, healthcare and health insurance conflicts, education matters, and employment discrimination claims. From 2014-2018, she was named one of Super Lawyer's Washington D.C. "Rising Stars" in civil litigation.

Ms. Cober is now Director of External Affairs & Strategic Alliances at Verizon, where she manages strategic relationships with certain third-party organizations representing various civil and human rights interests. Prior to this role, she was an attorney in Verizon's Federal Regulatory & Public Policy Group, advocating on behalf of the company at the Federal Communications Commission and focusing on wireline telecommunications, cable, and media issues. She also represented Verizon in court, defending the company in litigation.

She continues to maintain an active pro bono practice, with a focus on criminal justice reform. Ms. Cober also enjoys volunteering to help serve the needs of children, advance the arts, and diversify the legal profession. She is on the Executive Board of the Twelve Days of Christmas, the Coalition for African Americans in the Performing Arts, and is Co-Chair of the Judicial Practice Committee of the Federal Communications Bar Association.

Ms. Cober is the wife to Brandon and mother to Laila and Maya. She is an avid Peloton user and you can find her daily on the Leaderboard.



**LYNN PARSEGHIAN**

***Executive Director, Tregaron Conservancy***

Lynn Parseghian is the Executive Director of the Tregaron Conservancy, a nationally landmarked woodland park in Northwest Washington, D.C. Before joining the Conservancy, Ms. Parseghian practiced law in Washington for 20 years in a range of practice areas, including environmental regulatory counseling and class action litigation. As part of her pro bono practice, she served for many years as outside counsel to the Corcoran Gallery of Art, advising the museum on a wide range of matters, including exhibitions, publications, special events, and operational issues.

Ms. Parseghian has held a number of leadership roles in D.C.'s nonprofit and philanthropic communities. She served on the Board of Directors and as Interim Executive Director of Cultural Tourism D.C. She also served for many years on the Boards of Adventure Theatre MTC and the Young Women's Project. Ms. Parseghian was a member of the Rainmakers Giving Circle of the Washington Area Women's Foundation for nine years. For two years she co-chaired the Circle, managing all of its grant-making, assessment, and educational activities.

Ms. Parseghian has long been an enthusiastic patron of Washington Performing Arts. She lives in Cleveland Park with her husband Nat and their two children, a guitarist and an oboist.



**GORDON RUSH**  
***Software Engineer***

Gordon Rush grew up in Baltimore, received degrees in Petroleum Engineering and Applied Mathematics from Penn State University, and is a software engineer in Southern Maryland. He is a mandolinist, woodworker, and collector of Asian art and historical maps of Maryland. Mr. Rush is married to Lisa Wainger Rush, a Research Professor at the University of Maryland Center for Environmental Science, Chesapeake Biological Lab.



**ARJUN SHAH**  
***Vice President, The Carlyle Group***

Arjun Shah is a Vice President at The Carlyle Group, focused on investment opportunities in the technology sector. Prior to joining Carlyle, Mr. Shah was with Tinicum Incorporated and Blackstone, both located in New York.

Mr. Shah received his M.B.A. with high distinction from Harvard Business School, where he was a Baker Scholar. He graduated *summa cum laude* from the Jerome Fisher Program in Management and Technology at University of Pennsylvania, where he received a B.S. in Economics from The Wharton School and a B.S. in Engineering.



**NABOTH VAN DEN BROEK**  
***Partner, Wilmer Hale***

Naboth van den Broek is co-chair of the firm’s International Group and a member of the Government & Regulatory Affairs Department. He advises companies and governments on issues at the intersection of international law, policy, government, and strategy, and is widely recognized as one of the leading trade, market access, and investment lawyers in the world.

Ranked by *Chambers*, *The Legal 500* and *Best Lawyers in America*, Mr. van den Broek is recommended by competitors and clients for his “insightful advice,” “great quality of drafting,” “understanding of clients’ needs,” profound and vast understanding of international law,” as well as his handling of “trade disputes, including WTO cases.”

Throughout his years of practice, Mr. van den Broek has assisted companies and governments with some of the most complex and high-stakes legal, strategic, and policy issues they face, including in particular those that have substantial cross-border or international aspects. He is known for his experience in complex trade and other treaty-based international dispute settlement and arbitration matters—including at the World Trade Organization (WTO), in the EU, and in the United States—on global trade and investment policy issues, and in international and cross-border negotiations. He also works with clients on complex international or cross-border crisis management and strategic response issues, in global trade compliance matters, and he has assisted companies with respect to a range of government-facing issues involved in major corporate

transactions and deals. Unique among private practitioners, Mr. van den Broek has represented clients in well over 50 WTO disputes, as well as a range of other treaty-based and commercial disputes and arbitrations. He also regularly counsels clients on other complex and high-stakes international government-facing and/or treaty-related issues.

Mr. van den Broek is Adjunct Professor of International Trade and Investment Law at Georgetown University Law Center, a Senior Distinguished Fellow at the Institute of International Economic Law (IIEL), and a Member of the IIEL's Advisory Board. He regularly speaks and publishes on topics relating to global trade and investment, geopolitics and economics, international law, and compliance. He has served as a member of the board of chairman of several not-for-profit organizations in the United States and Europe, and has been a co-founder, advisor to, and/or initial investor in several companies and a private investment fund.



**GARY YACOUBIAN**

***President, CEO & Managing Director, Specialty Technologies (SVS)***

Gary Yacoubian is President, CEO and Managing Partner of Specialty Technologies, LLC, dba SVS. SVS is a successful global high-performance audio brand that Mr. Yacoubian's team acquired in 2011 and is known by its enthusiastic, almost cult-like following to produce some of the finest speakers and subwoofers in the world. SVS is redefining the value proposition for all audio brands with its disruptive and future-facing market engagement strategy, bringing products that affordably deliver exciting immersive audio and home theater experiences to new, broader-based, more diverse, and younger audiences than the audio space has seen in years.

Prior to joining SVS, Mr. Yacoubian was Vice President, Strategic Development of Monster Products, Inc. in Brisbane, California. His leadership responsibilities with Monster and the groundbreaking Beats headphone brand touched every facet of sales and operations of this global leader in consumer electronics products, addressing the realms of headphones, premium accessories, and other innovative technology spaces. Prior to joining Monster, Mr. Yacoubian was President and Chief Operating Officer of MyerEmco AudioVideo, a 10-store specialty audio/video retail chain and Custom Installation Designer/Installer that served the D.C. market for more than 50 years.

Mr. Yacoubian serves on the Executive Board of the Consumer Technology Association (CTA), the organization that holds International CES in Las Vegas, and is past Chair. As Chair, his appointment marked the first time in the Association's history that a Consumer Technology retail executive had taken a senior leadership position with that Board. He is Vice Chair of CTA's Division Executive Board, the governing body of all of that Association's Divisions, and is currently serving as Chair of CTA's Audio Division Board, and also serves the CTA Foundation Board of Trustees as Vice Chair. He also has served on numerous committees and industry panels for the Association and others in the Consumer Electronics industry and on the advisory boards of several audio/video manufacturers.

Mr. Yacoubian is the holder of a B.A. degree from Kenyon College in Gambier, Ohio and an M.B.A. degree from the University of Maryland. He and his wife Silvia reside in the Washington, D.C. area. They have two sons John and Chris.

## BIOGRAPHICAL DETAILS AND PHOTO OF THE NEW JUNIOR BOARD CHAIR



**ALYSSA O'CONNOR**  
***Attorney, The Federal Reserve System***

Alyssa O'Connor is a Senior Attorney in the Legal Division of the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System, where she works on banking regulation and policy. Ms. O'Connor graduated from The University of Chicago Law School and received a B.S. with honors from the School of Industrial and Labor Relations at Cornell University.

A lifelong arts lover, Ms. O'Connor has been a member of the Washington Performing Arts Junior Board since 2017 and also serves as the Secretary of the BravO Council, the advisory board for Washington National Opera's young patrons' group. Ms. O'Connor lives in Washington, D.C. and is a native of Rochester, New York.

### **DOWNLOAD HEADSHOTS OF THE NEW BOARD MEMBERS AND JUNIOR BOARD CHAIR:**

<https://www.dropbox.com/sh/hznthgvn4ulgt dx/AADNhTNbPShixLRafXa48Vg9a?dl=0>

## **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 D.C. 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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