

WASHINGTON PERFORMING ARTS WELCOMES EIGHT NEW MEMBERS TO ITS 2022 JUNIOR BOARD

(Washington, D.C.) — Washington Performing Arts has announced the addition of eight new members to its Junior Board, which comprises arts enthusiasts under 40 years old, who are committed to enhancing philanthropy, leadership, and advocacy in support of Washington Performing Arts’s mission and within the D.C. community.

“I’m excited to welcome these dynamic new members to our Junior Board, and I look forward to the impact and engagement that they will bring through their participation,” said President and CEO Jenny Bilfield. “Much as Washington Performing Arts has invested in emerging artists, we believe it’s equally important to provide a pathway for new generations of arts lovers to connect their passion with opportunities to develop crucial experience in leadership, governance, and advocacy. The mentorship of our Board and partnership with our staff offer invaluable context in service of a great mission—truly exemplifying the ‘unifying power of the arts’ on multiple levels.”

Established in 2015, Washington Performing Arts’s Junior Board engages young professionals who have a desire to impact the future of the arts. Its members cultivate a community of arts supporters from within their networks and involve their peers in Washington Performing Arts’s varied performances and initiatives. They also collectively adopt an existing Washington Performing Arts program—such as the Children of the Gospel Choir or the Embassy Adoption Program—as their philanthropic project and develop their leadership and governance skills through mentorship from Washington Performing Arts’s Board of Directors.

Several Junior Board members have matriculated to the Washington Performing Arts Board of Directors over the years, most recently Joseph May and Kerrien Suarez. Both served on key Committees and have been involved in core initiatives (eg: Governance, Board Engagement, Equity; our annual Gala; Strategic Planning). Through this continuum of engagement Bilfield hopes these dynamic professionals will continue their involvement in Washington Performing Arts for years to come.

The eight new members of the Washington Performing Arts Junior Board are:

- **Jenelle Coy** – Spero Studio, Founder & Managing Director
- **Devika Daga** – U.S. General Services Administration, Director of Market Intelligence
- **Shari Feldman** – University of Maryland, Honors Humanities Staff
- **Simon Patmore-Zarcone** – George Washington University Law School, Student
- **Hugo Rojo** – CBS News, Director of Communications
- **Aarthy Thamodaran** – Simpson Thacher & Bartlett LLP, Associate
- **Mohit Tuteja** – GlobalFoundries, Senior Manager
- **Chariese Walton** – U.S. Department of Agriculture, Trade Policy Officer



JENELLE COY

Jenelle S. Coy is a first-generation Trinidadian-American who is the Founder and Managing Director of Spero Studio, an award-winning culture-forward™ communications firm. Jenelle has been named to *AdAge* 40 under 40, *Forbes* 30 Under 30 and *Washington Business Journal* Minority Business Leader of The Year awards and Spero Studio has been named to the American Express list of “50 Fastest Growing Women Owned Businesses” twice. Jenelle is profiled and featured

in *Advertising & Creative: Strategy, Copy, Design Fifth Edition* by SAGE Publications – an advertising textbook used in universities nation-wide.

“I am so passionate about bringing communities together to support incredible mission-driven organizations. Working alongside Washington Performing Arts will create dynamic opportunities to bring people together in ways never before seen and uplift the work of incredible artists.”



DEVIKA DAGA

Devika is a product strategist passionate about growing safe and inclusive products at scale. She currently serves as the Director of Market Intelligence at Technology Transformation Services in the U.S. General Services Administration. Prior to public service Devika spent 10+ years at large and small tech companies including Google in roles that gave her the opportunity to live and work across

Africa and Asia. It was during this time abroad that she developed her passion for contemporary African art and classical Indian music. Devika is a proud alum of the University of Michigan, a mayoral appointee for DC’s Innovation and Technology Inclusion Council, and a founding member of Chief, a network focused on connecting and supporting women executive leaders.

“After years living everywhere and nowhere I finally planted roots in NW DC last year. I’m excited to learn about and contribute to DC’s vibrant performing arts culture, and in doing so hope to build my local community.”



SHARI FELDMAN

Shari Eve Feldman is an active singer and teaching-artist in the DMV area with global singing credentials. She recently finished a Graduate Certificate in Nonprofit Management from the University of Maryland's School of Public Policy and is a Candidate for the Doctor of Musical Arts degree at UMD's School of Music. Ms. Feldman currently teaches voice lessons, vocal pedagogy, classical music

literature, and opera history courses at Prince George’s Community College, the University of Maryland, and the University of Delaware and is co-founder of *The Evelyn Duo*, a professional soprano/piano collaboration whose mission is to elevate women’s voices in song through classical song commission and performance. She cantors for the Jewish Community at Riderwood Senior Living in Silver Spring, MD and is dedicated to being a community organizer and change-maker through music and mentoring, a passion that grew from her volunteer work with the Choir School of Delaware from 2013-2018.

"I am drawn to WPA for its energetic junior board and the prospect of contributing to this region's wonderfully vibrant performing arts legacy! With a decade's experience working in higher education and college leadership and a lifetime of music-making, I hope to contribute both artistically and administratively, making a positive impact through the arts, which have shaped who I am today."



SIMON PATMORE-ZARCONE

Simon Patmore is a law student at George Washington. He received a bachelor's of arts in Economics and Philosophy from St. Olaf College in Northfield, MN, where he also sang in the Cantorei choir. Before that he grew up in California singing in community and school-based choirs. He is passionate about storytelling, whether it comes in the form of oral argument and litigation or singing in choir. Simon enjoys cooking, traveling, and slowly making his way through all the Star Trek series.

"I was drawn to Washington Performing Arts because I wanted a chance to participate in making art in a new way. I'm so excited to help develop and sustain the DC artistic community."



HUGO ROJO

Hugo Rojo leads communications for CBS News' Washington bureau and the network's Sunday morning public affairs program "Face the Nation with Margaret Brennan." Prior to CBS News, Hugo worked in communications for *The Atlantic* and NPR, where he was able to tap into his love for musical performances as the lead publicist for NPR Music's popular *Tiny Desk* concert series. A resident of Washington, DC since 2015, Hugo is a regular at different live music venues throughout the city where he makes it a point to check out a range of artists whenever they come to town.

"For more than half a century, Washington Performing Arts has been bringing people together and creating a community around captivating performances. I had such a sense of pride in bringing several of my friends -- all first-timers to WPA's programming -- to our season opener with the Dance Theater of Harlem's 'Sound of Hazel.' I'm looking forward to helping spread the word about WPA and championing our artists."



AARTHY THAMODARAN

Aarthu Thamodaran is an avid supporter of the arts. She currently practices in the Capital Markets group at Simpson Thacher & Bartlett LLP. She holds a JD from Georgetown Law, an MBA from the University Of Chicago Booth School Of Business, and a BA from Yale University. Aarthu also serves on the Board of Trustees of Norfolk Academy and the Board of Directors of the Virginia Arts Festival. In addition to the arts, she enjoys traveling, gluten-free baked goods, reading, tennis, and fashion.

“The arts play a critical role in fostering community and enhancing our understanding of humanity. It is such a privilege to support Washington Performing Arts in this mission. I look forward to another season of world-class, thought-provoking, simply beautiful performances!”



MOHIT TUTEJA

Mohit was born and brought up in India and moved to the US about ten years ago for graduate school. He graduated from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign with a PhD in Materials Science and Engineering, and is currently a member of the Corporate Strategy team at GlobalFoundries. As a Washington, DC resident for the past five years, he enjoys all that the city has to offer in terms of the performing arts. In his spare time he enjoys food/cooking, listening to music, and attending live music performances.

“I have been a patron of Washington Performing Arts ever since I moved to the DC area. I love the diversity of the performances at Washington Performing Arts, and I look forward to working with like-minded people and contributing to DC arts community.”



CHARIESE WALTON

Chariese Walton was born in Memphis, TN and raised in Pensacola, FL. She is a Trade Policy Officer covering the EU and UK at the U.S. Department of Agriculture - which combines two of her favorite things: food and travel. She has lived in DC for 6 years and absolutely loves the city! Prior to moving to DC, she taught English in Shenzhen, China. She received a bachelor's degree in Philosophy and Religion from Florida A & M University and master's degree in International Security Studies from London Metropolitan University. When she isn't working she enjoys trying new dessert recipes - from marshmallows to making the perfect chocolate bonbon.

“I was initially drawn by WPA's mission and their Embassy Adoption Program. I recognize the importance of cultural exposure and how it can make such a positive impact in a child's life.”

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, gospel music, jazz, international genres, and more. Washington Performing Arts 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, Washington Performing Arts engages 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.

For its achievements, Washington Performing Arts has 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." Washington Performing Art's employment decisions are made based on the business needs of the organization and qualifications of the applicants and employees.