

NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

State Theatre New Jersey Forms Partnership with Center For Musical Excellence (CME)

New Brunswick, NJ (February 5, 2020)—State Theatre New Jersey is pleased to announce an exciting new partnership with the **Center for Musical Excellence (CME)**, a non-profit organization that nurtures and supports gifted young classical musicians. The partnership will give the State Theatre access to a wealth of new talent to enhance our nationally-recognized Education & Community Engagement programs. For CME’s artists, working with the State Theatre will provide new employment opportunities, as well as invaluable experience teaching and performing for diverse groups in both traditional and nontraditional settings.

“We are thrilled to be partnering with the Center for Musical Excellence,” said **Lian Farrer**, **State Theatre’s Vice President of Education & Community Engagement**. “The collaboration offers both organizations new opportunities that will benefit emerging artists as well as the larger community.”

CME’s Founder and Director, pianist **Min Kwon**, also serves on the music faculty at Rutgers University’s Mason Gross School of the Arts. She created the organization with the mission to provide high-caliber training and individually-tailored assistance, financial support, and professional opportunities to young musicians who are pursuing wish to pursue their advanced education and life in music in the United States. Community engagement is an important part of the musicians’ training.

“I am extremely proud of our musicians and excited that they will be representing both the great work State Theatre is doing for our community, through their Education and Community Engagement Programs, and the core values that CME promotes and celebrates, ‘musical excellence,” said **Min Kwon**. “These are outstanding young professionals dedicated and passionate about their art and in their desire to share it with the community. To make an impact in our community is an essential part of a training for a young professional and should be a responsibility of all those pursuing music as our life’s profession. Music is a necessity, and not a luxury, in *all* of our lives.”

The CME artists, graduates of America’s most prestigious conservatories, have graced the stages of venues including Carnegie Hall and the Kennedy Center, performed before presidents

and queens, and committed themselves to bringing classical music into the lives of young people—especially children in disadvantaged communities. They bring youth, talent, and enthusiasm to their work at the State Theatre. This season, four artists on the CME roster are featured in two State Theatre programs: Symphony Scholars and its community artist residency.

Earlier this year, CME pianists **Patricio Molina** and **Enriqueta Somarriba** served as teaching artists for the State Theatre’s Symphony Scholars program. They worked with 145 New Brunswick middle-school music students and teachers, who attended the State Theatre Classical Series concert with London’s Royal Philharmonic Orchestra followed by a Q&A with conductor Mark Wigglesworth. In the pre-performance sessions, students learned about what to expect at the concert and how to listen to the music. (A special moment was getting to watch an archival video of three-year-old Patricio performing on Chilean television!) Follow-up classes with the teaching artists gave students an opportunity for thoughtful discussion and reflection.

Beginning on February 25, State Theatre’s Artist-in-Residence program will feature two CME violinists: **George Meyer** and **Suliman Tekalli**. Meyer, son of world-renowned bassist Edgar Meyer, a Harvard (English) and Julliard (Music) graduate, is a versatile musician who performs everything from classical violin repertoire to fiddle tunes, as well as his own original compositions. Tekalli, who also doubles as both performer and composer, makes time in his busy concert schedule to spread a love and appreciation for music in classrooms and community centers throughout the region.

Designed to make the arts accessible to everyone, the State Theatre’s free Artist-in-Residence program gives participants an up-close-and-personal experience with a professional performer. This season’s residency artists, George Meyer and Suliman Tekalli will teach and perform at schools, senior centers, residential treatment centers, hospitals, shelters, and other places throughout the community. Working separately, they will share their considerable charm and talent with the community from late February through mid-May. The residency culminates with the two musicians coming together for a joint State Theatre recital that will be held at the United Methodist Church in New Brunswick on **Sunday, May 17 at 3pm**, with CME’s Director Min Kwon on piano.

About the Center for Musical Excellence

The Center for Musical Excellence (CME) provides high-caliber training and individually-tailored assistance—financial support and professional opportunities—to gifted young musicians who wish to pursue their advanced education and life in music in the United States. CME aims to inspire, guide, and mentor aspiring young artists toward a meaningful and successful career in music, one that enriches both the artist and the community through the gift of music.

About State Theatre New Jersey

The theater exists to enrich people’s lives, contribute to a vital urban environment, and build

future audiences by presenting the finest performing artists and entertainers and fostering lifetime appreciation for the performing arts through arts education. State Theatre New Jersey's programs are made possible by funds from the New Jersey State Council on the Arts, a partner agency of the National Endowment for the Arts. Grant funding has been provided by the Middlesex County Board of Chosen Freeholders through a grant award from the Middlesex County Cultural and Arts Trust Fund. United is the official airline of the State Theatre.

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Please contact Kelly Blithe at

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Information in this release is current as of February 5, 2020.

Up-to-the-minute information on events and State Theatre news,
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