





## ***Music Transforms***

Iris Orchestra envisions a community transformed and flourishing through the power of exceptional music.

*The Fellows have an uplifted spirit about what they do, and when they play, it's like, 'if I can do it, you can do it, too.' And that's a good way to inspire kids like me.*

**AnJanique Grays, student**

*My goal is to become something that I never thought I could be.*

**Jaroayn Pierce, student**

*People are transformed in a way after seeing an Iris concert, through energy, through music, and that's an amazing thing.*

**Iris Musician**



*Internationally famed, with guest artists renowned throughout the world and led by the charismatic and immensely talented Michael Stern, all nurtured and embraced by the small hamlet of Germantown, Tennessee--the local and regional embrace of our Iris Orchestra led to a true renaissance in our region for the performing arts.* **Mayor Mike Palazzolo, City of Germantown**

*My wife and I were music majors. We've lived in Europe, we travel to New York. Iris is right up there with the great orchestras.* **Iris Subscriber**

*Iris' passion is to make music really matter.*

*Michael Stern, Iris Artistic Director*



***Iris Orchestra** - Our mission is to serve the community through the gift of exceptional music through performance, education, and community engagement.*

*Conductor Michael Stern, the artistic director of Iris Orchestra, has led orchestras throughout North America, Europe and Asia. He is Music Director of the Grammy Award-winning Kansas*

*City Symphony. Stern received his music degree from the Curtis Institute of Music in Philadelphia, and is a graduate of Harvard University, where he received a degree in American History. The*

*son of violinist Isaac Stern, Maestro Stern's passions and heritage combine to connect Iris to top performers in the forefront of a world-wide movement to make orchestral music really matter.*



## Message from Our Board Chair

Music brings us together. It describes our joy and our sorrows. It instructs us, connects us, entertains us: it makes us better people.

Iris Orchestra's mission is to serve the community with exceptional music. For over twenty years, the musicians of Iris Orchestra have

delighted the audiences of Greater Memphis. They have visited wards at Le Bonheur Children's Hospital, taken music to children learning to hear with cochlear implants at Memphis Oral School for the Deaf, and taught violin to hundreds of children in Shelby County Schools.

Their work serves the community in many ways, large and small.

As this special orchestra takes on the challenges of its third decade, I invite you to join me in supporting music that delights, challenges, and connects.

Sincerely,  
Rick Broer, Chair  
Iris Orchestra  
Board of Directors



# Our Programs



***Iris Orchestra***

The critically acclaimed ensemble at the heart of all of our programming - performing concerts for over twenty years at our home venue, Germantown Performing Arts Center



***Iris at the Brooks***

Memphis Brooks Museum of Art - concerts of solo and chamber music paired with visual art



***Education & Outreach***

Engaging music's ability to transform lives throughout Greater Memphis



***Iris Artist Fellows***

Memphis' first professional-development diversity initiative for rising Black and Latinx orchestral musicians

*You'll see the passion that every person brings to what they're doing on stage. Eric Stephenson, Iris musician*

**Delight**



## **Iris Orchestra**

Orchestral programs feature critically acclaimed performances from across the classical canon and world premieres of Iris-commissioned works. Iris' ability to attract guest artists not typically seen in Memphis adds to our prestige. The vibrant core for a substantial portfolio of programs, the orchestra is the resident professional orchestra of Germantown Performing Arts Center.

## **Iris at the Brooks**

The Iris at the Brooks series of solo and chamber music at the Memphis Brooks Museum of Art is a collaboration between the guest artists and Iris musicians. Iris at the Brooks offers audiences an intimate and approachable experience including conductor Michael Stern's Q&A with the performers and a visual art experience following the musical programming.

## **Past Guest Artists**

*Emanuel Ax, Joshua Bell, Jeremy Denk, Jaime Laredo, Cho-Liang Lin, Yo-Yo Ma, Branford Marsalis, Midori, Garrick Ohlsson, Itzhak Perlman, Peter Serkin, Gil Shaham, Andre Watts, Pinchas Zukerman*

# Inspire



## Education

Iris Orchestra has developed partnerships with organizations throughout the area to engage our musicians' expertise in music and instrumental instruction to serve the children of Greater Memphis. Partners include Shelby County Schools, Memphis Music Initiative, Carpenter Art Garden, GPAC Youth Symphony, Morton Museum of Collierville History, and Bodine School. Iris Artist Fellows teach 20 hours a week in Shelby County elementary school classrooms.

*It's really exciting when they are successful at playing, when they have been working on something for such a long time and then that one day it finally clicks, and they're just so excited and they can't put their instrument down—it's just the best thing to see.*

***Ashley Vines, Iris Fellow alumna***



# Connect

## Outreach

Iris musicians bring music to children at Le Bonheur Children's Hospital and Hope House, serving children whose families have been impacted by AIDS. Iris musicians create special programs for students at Memphis Oral School for the Deaf, performances for audiences at retirement homes, and collaborative programming with Company d Dancers (young adults with Down syndrome).

*We were going upstairs and playing for kids in their rooms, and there was this one child, this one little baby that was crying. The child, as soon as she heard us playing the violins, immediately calmed down and started smiling. And then I looked over through the corner of my eye and I saw the mother start crying. That was the first time in three days that she'd seen her baby smile.*

**Marcin Arendt, Iris musician**

## Iris Artist Fellowship

The Iris Artist Fellowship is Memphis' first professional-development diversity initiative for rising young Black and Latino/a professionals. As members of Iris Orchestra, Fellows receiving experience in community service, teaching artistry, chamber music, and orchestral performance and spend 20 hours each week teaching in Shelby County schools. Their remaining time is dedicated to community engagement, rehearsals, and performances throughout Greater Memphis.



*Yo Yo Ma 2005*



*Joshua Bell & Iris Artist Fellow  
Marcos Santos 2017*



*Michael Stern & Conrad Tao 2020*

## Iris History

Founded in September of 2000 by conductor Michael Stern as the resident professional orchestra of the newly constructed Germantown Performing Arts Center, Iris Orchestra started as a bold initiative: the only municipally funded musical organization in the country. In 2007, as civic funding phased out, Iris Orchestra became a self-supporting non-profit organization.

As the organization grew in the community, outreach and education programs were added. In 2015, the Iris Artist Fellowship was initiated to build the orchestra's presence and support a broader next generation of orchestral music.

*As I reflect on 25 years of citizen-servant leadership in Germantown, I fondly recall the very passionate leadership of many to form GPAC, marking the very beginning of Germantown's investment in the performing arts. **Mayor Mike Palazzolo, City of Germantown***

## The Iris Model

Iris is at once an ensemble made up of the leading musicians in the nation and an integral part of the fabric of the Greater Memphis community. Iris musicians are the stars at the heart of the enterprise. Talented musicians are recruited from all over the country and abroad to gather in the Memphis community five to six times a year, joined by a stellar list of guest artists.

From Michael Stern to the musicians, to the host families, to the board, the entire musical community works to create something unique.



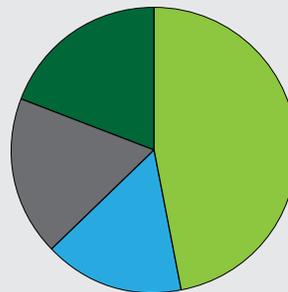
Virtual Iris-Orchestra screening at The Grove GPAC 2020

## A million-dollar undertaking

*An Iris Orchestra season, including performance, outreach, and education, is a million-dollar undertaking. Earned income from ticket sales and fees for services cover less than a quarter of the cost of doing business. The enthusiasm of individual donors, corporate giving, and private foundation support together build the financial framework of annual giving that makes the season possible.*

**Income 2020**  
**\$1,000,000**

- Individual & Corp. \$470,000**
- Foundations \$160,000**
- Earned income \$180,000**
- In-kind \$190,000**

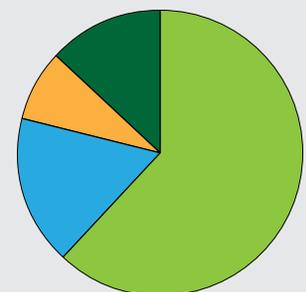


## What do gifts support?

*Philanthropic dollars pay the musicians, bring in the guest artists, provide programming to children, and support the work of the small but mighty staff that takes programming from inspiration to event.*

**Expenses 2020**

- Concert series \$620,000**
- Outreach & Education \$170,000**
- Development \$80,000**
- Administration \$130,000**



*So many stepped forward to craft, create and begin a crusade to form our Iris Orchestra. The City of Germantown is forever grateful for the vision and support of so many to make our Iris Orchestra an overwhelming success. We as a region must continue our support and protection of the performing arts.* **Mayor Mike Palazzolo, City of Germantown**

***Ticket sales cover less than a quarter of the costs***

# Our Partners

*Art for Life's Sake  
Bridges, USA*

*Campus Elementary School*

*Carpenter Art Garden*

*Company d Dancers*

*Douglass K-8 School*

*Germantown Youth Symphony Program*

*Hope House*

*Le Bonheur Children's Hospital*

*Memphis Medical District Collaborative*

*Memphis Oral School for the Deaf*

*Middle College High School*

*Morton Museum of Collierville History*

*National Civil Rights Museum*

*Opera Memphis*

*Presbyterian Day School*

*St. Jude Children's Research Hospital*

*Snowden Optional School*

*STAR Academy*

*The Bodine School*

*University of Memphis Rudi E. Scheidt School of Music*

*University Middle School*

# Reach and impact

**1.2 mil** *Iris performances showcase Memphis to 1.2 million listeners nationwide on Public Radio's "Performance Today" broadcast.*

**7,000**  
**3,500** *Free community events reaching 7,000 Memphians, 3,500 of them children.*

**4400**  
**20+** *Formal concerts reaching 4400 Memphians annually  
Partnerships with 20+ schools, hospitals, arts and community groups.*

*Iris Fellows & Corky Siegel at Clayborn Temple 2017*





*Bach Brandenburg Concerto No. 3 October, 2020*

## Board of Directors

- |                       |   |
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| Bishop Terry Steib    | Retired, Archbishop of Memphis                |

## Contact us

Marcia Kaufmann, Executive Director

Iris Orchestra  
1922 Exeter Rd., Suite 18  
Germantown, TN 38138  
901.746.9948 | [IrisOrchestra.org](http://IrisOrchestra.org)

