

THE SOLTI FOUNDATION U.S.

VOLUME 07

2014 Awardees

An unprecedented year sees grants awarded to eight outstanding conductors

2013 Celebration Evening

Esteemed special guests round out a perfect evening that raises \$137,000

Snapshot | In the News

Solti Fellows inspire, honoring the life of an esteemed colleague and board member



NEWSLETTER

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WELCOME

Sir Georg Solti believed in a guardian angel that guided his life and he was grateful to the agents of that angel—the people who helped him at difficult times. The Solti Foundation U.S. believes that music is essential—especially during these troubled times—to healing and connecting individuals and global lives. Therefore, we are committed to realizing Sir Georg's passion for excellence in music and extending help to further the early careers of young, exceptionally talented American musicians at the start of their professional careers.



Dear Friends,

One of the greatest joys for me is to witness the fulfilment of my husband's wish to assist young professional musicians at the start of their careers. Many of our awardees have benefited from Foundation grants and used them well to help prepare for selection by leading US Orchestras.

My thought, in creating the Solti Foundation, was to remember my husband's life in a meaningful, practical way, by providing grants to young conductors to help them move forward into the future. As time passes, it is easy to forget the struggle, the years of waiting and deprivation that Solti had to go through before he finally achieved a full fledged career at the age of 34. I have recently discovered some of his old letters which reflect his sense of desperation that an opportunity to conduct would forever be denied to him. In the end, he was lucky and an ex fellow music student (an American), Edward Kilenyi from Tallahassee, got him a ride in a US jeep to Munich and Stuttgart where he was given his first opportunity to conduct after nine fallow years.

Life is still very hard for young musicians and particularly for conductors. There are just not enough conductorships available, but the pool of talented young Maestros grows with every year. This is why the grants for career development are so important. The extra money to buy scores and CDs or even a second hand piano, the money to travel to watch performances by the great orchestras with their Maestros, money to attend masterclasses... all helping aspiring conductors prepare for the moment when opportunity presents itself.

I would like to thank everyone of you who has contributed so generously to the Solti Foundation to make all this possible and to congratulate our awardees who with their brilliant talent are fulfilling Solti's dream more than he could ever have imagined. I am very grateful to you all.

2014 FOUNDATION AWARDS

Cristian Măcelaru ~ \$25,000 Sir Georg Solti Conducting Award



Cristian Măcelaru recently completed his fifth appearance in two years conducting the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, including two engagements in February. A former concertmaster, Măcelaru is now Associate Conductor of the esteemed Philadelphia Orchestra.

Mr. Măcelaru is a graduate of Rice University where he received his Master's degree under the tutelage of Larry Rachleff. He also participated in the prestigious conducting programs of Tanglewood Music Center and Aspen Music Festival, studying under David Zinman, Murry Sidlin, Rafael Fruhbeck de Burgos, Robert Spano, Oliver Knussen and Stefan Asbury.

Mr. Măcelaru's upcoming season includes return engagements with the Philadelphia Orchestra and with the Chicago, Houston and Baltimore symphony orchestras, as well as debuts with the symphony orchestras of Detroit, Toronto, Seattle, Milwaukee, Indianapolis, and the Metropolitan Orchestra (Canada) in North America, and with the Halle Orchestra (UK) and the Residentie Orkest (The Hague) abroad.

Cristian Măcelaru is also the recipient of the foundation's 2012 Sir Georg Solti Emerging Conductor Award, a prestigious honor awarded only once before in the foundation's history.

The Solti Foundation U.S. Career Assistance Awards

Left to right: **YANIV ATTAR**, *Music Director, Whatcom Symphony Orchestra*; **CONNOR GRAY COVINGTON**, *Assistant Conductor, Memphis Symphony*; **KEITARO HARADA**, *Associate Conductor, Arizona Opera*; **VLADIMIR KULENOVIC**, *Associate Conductor, Utah Symphony and Opera*; **SHIZUO KUWAHARA**, *Music Director, Symphony Orchestra Augusta*; **LEE MILLS**, *Assistant Conductor, Brazilian Symphony Orchestra*; **JOSEPH YOUNG**, *Assistant Conductor, Atlanta Symphony Orchestra*.



The Solti Foundation U.S. awarded \$55,000 in grants this year, the largest amount in the Foundation's history.

Since focusing exclusively on young American conductors in 2004, the Foundation has awarded a total of \$279,500.



The Solti Foundation U.S. was established in 2000 in order to honor the memory of Sir Georg Solti by lending significant support to career-ready young American conductors. Winners have been awarded substantial grants and have received door-opening introductions to the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, Lyric Opera of Chicago and Chicago Opera Theater.

2013 BENEFIT CELEBRATION

The Solti Foundation U.S. held its annual benefit dinner at The Casino in Chicago. Over 200 guests attended the October 28 event, which raised \$137,000 to help carry on Sir Georg's musical legacy by awarding financial grants to exceptional young professional conductors.

A cocktail reception and a musical program preceded the Awards Presentation. The recipient of its largest monetary award, the Sir Georg Solti Conducting Award is also known as the Solti Fellow, was James Feddeck. The prestigious grant is given annually to a single promising American conductor 38 years of age or younger.

The Honorary Chairman of the benefit was Lady Valerie Solti. The event was co-chaired by Kay Mabie, Mary Jane Drews, and Zarin Mehta.

Solti Fellow James Feddeck Speaks From the Heart

"The generosity of this foundation has been a true blessing and significant source of stability as I continue my walk in this crucial yet formative phase of my musical development and career.

...There are many things they don't tell you when you are a student at music conservatory, particularly regarding the sizable investment it takes to start a major conducting career. It takes a certain amount of courage to stand in front of 100+ professional musicians and their massive collective knowledge and personal experiences which far eclipse your own. To physically and spiritually embody the various knowledge and musical passion required to make convincing and inspiring performances.

...A conductor by himself is fairly useless: what sound does he make? What good is the curiosity, the artistry, the vision, without the means: without an orchestra in front of him with which he may realize such architectural plans? And what about the resources required to attain and continually grow and challenge that knowledge and perspective?

...You all are making such a difference. You are making dreams come true. You are stakeholders. You are visionaries. For the future. For the emerging leadership in the arts and music, for the generations to come. What a tremendous opportunity this is and a tremendous legacy. This next generation simply would not be possible without you."



SAVE THE DATE ~ MONDAY, OCTOBER 13, 2014

The Solti Foundation U.S. Benefit Celebration
The Casino, 195 East Delaware Place, Chicago
Cocktail Reception 6:00 p.m.
Welcome and Program 6:45 p.m.
Dinner immediately following



Photos from the top right down: Conductor Award recipient James Feddeck (left) with Lyric's Sir Andrew Davis; Michelle Miller Burns (left) and Christine Williams; The Casino | Photos bottom left to right: Kay Mabie (left) and Penny Van Horn; Dale Clevenger and Giovanna Grassi; Frank Villella and Elizabeth Buccheri
Photos courtesy of Dan Kuruna

SNAPSHOT | THE LIFE OF A SOLTI FELLOW



James Feddeck, 2013 Sir Georg Solti Conducting Fellow

Immediately after the October 2013 benefit, James Feddeck headed to Miami, Florida for concerts with the New World Symphony. Later in the fall he conducted the Bach *Magnificat* with the Rochester Philharmonic and Eastman Chorale and then went on to conduct a performance of Handel's *Messiah* with the Indianapolis Symphony. At the start of the New Year, he conducted Bruckner's Fourth Symphony in Santa Fe – which led to an immediate reengagement for the Verdi *Requiem* next season. Another significant highlight was his subscription debut with the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra in February. Additional engagements have included the Naples Philharmonic, Florida Orchestra and Tucson Symphony. Most recently, he premiered a new percussion concerto in Cleveland with the chamber orchestra, CityMusic Cleveland, conducted the West Coast premiere of Anna Clyne's "Prince of Clouds" with Jaime Laredo and Jennifer Koh in Los Angeles, and traveled to Calgary to conduct Sibelius' Fifth Symphony and Beethoven Triple Concerto with the Gryphon Trio as soloists.

Since signing with Harrison Parrott Agency of London in 2013, James Feddeck has secured European engagements for next season including the Tampere Philharmonic Orchestra in Finland, as well as debuts with the Houston and Baltimore Symphony Orchestras later this summer.

IN MEMORY | DEBORAH SOBOL



Deborah Sobol, Solti Foundation U.S. board member and dear friend passed away suddenly on January 25, 2014. She will be missed.

Andrew Patner writes:

The sudden and wholly unexpected death of Chicago pianist and artistic and organizational force Deborah Sobol is a terrible tragedy for her family and for music and community in our city. Over her 40 years here, Debbie co-founded and led the Chicago Chamber Musicians for 20 years, launched, led, and has been tirelessly expanding Rush Hour Concerts at St James (Episcopal) Cathedral and its educational programs throughout the area, and was the local instigator and anchor of the France-inspired annual Make Music Chicago day.

All of this while being a respected performer, sought-after teacher and studio director, and faculty member at Roosevelt University and other institutions. A source of joy, support, and inspiration to so many, and with her devoted husband, Dr. Rowland (Bing) Chang, a wise philanthropic figure and mother, it's just impossible to imagine that she is gone in an instant. WFMT, with which she collaborated closely throughout her careers (plural), broadcast a special program following her memorial service.

In Debbie's own words—on the people who came to the concerts she organised:

At one concert a few years ago, a young woman came up to me. She'd just learned that she'd failed the medical board exams, and she was so distraught that she'd run into the nearest open church, which happened to be St. James Cathedral (Rush Hour Concerts' Summer Series home). She told me that the music brought her back to herself, to the reality that she could take the exam again, this time with more experience. She left calm, restored and encouraged.

Then there's the homeless man who comes neatly dressed every week, puts 15 cents into our donation box, and sits next to one of Chicago's philanthropic icons (free admission means no assigned seats), discussing "what we heard last week" and "what we'll hear next Tuesday." He leaves connected and dignified.

FOUNDATION TIMELINE

- ❑ **2000** At a November reception in Chicago, Lady Valery Solti and her two daughters Gabrielle and Claudia launch **The Solti Foundation U.S.** At the first fund-raising event held at the Casino Club, Samuel Ramey, accompanied by pianist Elizabeth Buccheri, gave a recital of music by Berlioz, Gounod, Boito and Cole Porter.
- ❑ **2003** The foundation establishes **The Solti Foundation U.S. Award** (\$12,500 awarded annually and distributed over a period of two years). In 2003, the award is split between two rising stars at the Ryan Opera Center, Quinn Kelsey and Stacy Tappan.
- ❑ **2004-2006** The foundation dedicates its mission exclusively to supporting the emerging careers of young American conductors.
- ❑ **2007** The foundation establishes of **The Sir Georg Solti Conductor Award**. Among the largest grants currently given to American conductors in the formative years of their careers, the prestigious \$25,000 award (dispersed over a two year period) is given biennially to a single promising American conductor 38 years of age or younger, and includes introductions to three of Chicago's most prestigious performing organizations: Lyric Opera of Chicago, Chicago Symphony Orchestra and Chicago Opera Theater.
The annual benefit chaired by Mitzi Freidheim and generously supported by Bessemer Trust raises more than \$135,000.
- ❑ **2008** The foundation increases its grant program with the addition of two new award categories: **The Sir Georg Solti Emerging Conductor Award** (\$10,000 distributed over the period of two years to an American conductor 35 years of age or younger) and **The Solti Foundation U.S. Career Development Award** (a one-year \$5,000 grant given to an American conductor 32 years of age or younger). These awards are offered biennially in rotation with the \$25,000 Sir Georg Solti Conductor Award, increasing the foundation's annual grant disbursement from \$12,500 to \$22,500.
The annual benefit chaired by Penny Van Horn and generously sponsored by Bessemer Trust raises more than \$85,000.
- ❑ **2009** The foundation introduces the **Solti Foundation U.S. Career Assistance Awards**—given annually at the discretion of the Artistic & Awards Committee to an American conductor(s) 35 years of age or younger. The amount awarded varies. Recipients may use the awards for career training and activities that will further develop and enhance their talent and experience in the conducting arena. It should be noted that several of these awardees have gone on to win the \$25,000 award.
The annual benefit co-chaired by Penny Van Horn and Nancy Kempf and generously sponsored by Bessemer Trust raises more than \$82,000.
- ❑ **2010** The annual benefit chaired by Nancy Kempf and generously sponsored by Northern Trust raises more than \$77,000.
- ❑ **2011** The foundation moves to eliminate the rotating biennial grants in order to offer the prestigious \$25,000 **Sir Georg Solti Conductor Award** on an annual basis. The **Career Assistance Awards** program is upheld. This move increases the foundation's annual grant distribution from \$22,500 to \$36,000.
The 2011 benefit chaired by Kay Mabie raises more than \$139,000. The event is sponsored by BlackRock, Bank of America, Navigant, William Blair, Bessemer Trust and Nuveen.
- ❑ **2012** The annual benefit chaired by Kay Mabie, Mary Jane Drews and Steve Potter raises more than \$105,000. The event is sponsored by Bank of America, Goldman Sachs, William Blair, BlackRock and Nuveen.
- ❑ **2013** The annual benefit chaired by Kay Mabie, Mary Jane Drews and Zarin Mehta raises more than \$137,000. The event is sponsored by Bank of America, Goldman Sachs, William Blair, Nuveen and BlackRock.
- ❑ **2014** The foundation recognizes Cristian Macelaru as the 2014 Solti Fellow and awards and unprecedented \$30,000 in Career Assistance Awards to seven exceptional candidates. This increases the foundation's annual grant disbursement to \$55,000.

List of Awardees

The Sir Georg Solti Conductor Award \$25,000

Cristian Macelaru, 2014
James Feddeck, 2013
Case Scaglione, 2011
Erik Nielsen, 2009
Anthony Barrese, 2007

The Solti Foundation U.S. Award \$12,500

Eric Melear, 2006
Carlos César Rodríguez, 2005
Thomas Rimes, 2004

The Sir Georg Solti Emerging Conductor Award \$10,000

Cristian Macelaru, 2012
Ryan McAdams, 2010

Career Development Award \$5,000

Robert Trevino, 2012
Yaniv Attar, 2010
Joseph Young, 2008

Career Assistance Award (amount varies)

Janiv Attar, 2014
Connor Gray Covington, 2014
Keitaro Harada, 2014
Valdimir Kulenovic, 2014
Shizuo Kuwahara, 2014
Lee Mills, 2014
Joseph Young, 2014
Ankush Kumar Bahl, 2013
Roger Kalia, 2013
Valdimir Kulenovic, 2013
Christopher James Lees, 2013
Yaniv Attar, 2012
Nicholas Hersh, 2012
Valdimir Kulenovic, 2012
Francesco Lecce-Chong, 2012
Joshua Weilerstein, 2012
Ankush Kumar Bahl, 2011
Sean Newhouse, 2011
Ward Stare, 2011
Kazen Abdullah, 2010
Christopher Hill, 2010
Robert Trevino, 2010
James Feddeck, 2009
Kelly Kuo, 2009
Case Scaglione, 2009
Sarah Jobin, 2006