



## **Colburn School and Sphinx Organization Form Partnership to Engage, Develop, and Empower Young Artists of Color on the West Coast**

(Wednesday, October 28, 2020, Los Angeles) – The **Colburn School**, a leader in music and dance education based in Los Angeles, and the **Sphinx Organization**, a non-profit organization based in Detroit dedicated to transforming lives through the power of diversity in the arts, have formed a partnership aimed at creating new opportunities on the West Coast for emerging young Black and Latinx musicians and arts professionals.

Beginning in 2021, Colburn will provide full scholarships in its Music Academy program to pre-collegiate musicians who are winners and semi-finalists in the Junior Division of the Sphinx Competition; present the Sphinx Virtuosi in a residency that encompasses performance, education, and community engagement; and host the first West Coast retreat for the Sphinx LEAD cohort. Designed as a long-term collaborative partnership, the two organizations will explore additional opportunities to engage, develop, and empower young artists of color.

“The Colburn School is excited to engage deeply with the Sphinx Organization, longtime international thought leaders in building opportunity and access for artists of color in classical music,” said Colburn President and CEO Sel Kardan. “The partnership with Sphinx will enrich all aspects of our institution, as well as our greater community. We look forward to forging a lasting relationship and dialogue that creates additional pathways for aspiring musicians and arts leaders from Los Angeles and across the country.”

"We are excited to work with Colburn to further the work of excellence and diversity in the arts," said Afa S. Dworkin, Sphinx President and Artistic Director. "At Sphinx, we believe in the power of partnerships and striving for an impact that is greater than the sum of its parts. The time for transformative work is now and we are thrilled to do it together!"

### **Colburn School Scholarship Support**

With the goal of creating greater access to pre-conservatory training, the School will provide significant scholarship support for alumni of the junior division of the Sphinx Competition. The Sphinx Competition is an annual national competition offering young Black and Latinx classical string players a chance to compete under the guidance of an internationally renowned panel of judges, and to perform with and receive mentorship from established professional musicians.

As part of the newly formed partnership, Sphinx alumni will be eligible for full scholarships to the Colburn Music Academy, a residential pre-college program that prepares gifted young musicians ages 14-18 for conservatory study and future careers as professional musicians. Upon a successful audition for the Music Academy, Sphinx alumni will receive full scholarships that also include room and board. Any past or present winner or semi-finalist from the junior division of the Sphinx Competition is eligible.

Each year, graduates of the Colburn Music Academy enter top conservatories around the country, including the Colburn Conservatory, and this program complements the full-tuition scholarships already offered to all students in the Colburn Conservatory. The next Sphinx Competition is scheduled to take place online Jan. 27 – 30, 2021.

### **Sphinx Virtuosi Residency**

The Sphinx Virtuosi are the nation's most dynamic professional chamber orchestra, dedicated to increasing racial and ethnic diversity in classical music. Composed of eighteen of the nation's top Black and Latinx classical soloists, the Virtuosi are alumni of the internationally renowned Sphinx Competition, and its members work together as cultural ambassadors reaching new audiences. In October 2021, the Colburn School will host a three-day Sphinx Virtuosi residency, to include public performances and educational and community engagement activities. Sphinx Virtuosi musicians will lead programs and perform alongside students in the Colburn Community School, Music Academy, and Conservatory of Music.

### **Sphinx LEAD Retreat**

Sphinx LEAD (Leaders in Excellence, Arts & Diversity) is a 2-year professional empowerment program designed to evolve the landscape of arts leadership. Ten arts leaders of color are selected annually to participate in a curriculum including mentorship, networking, and leadership retreats at top institutions nationwide. In July 2021, the Colburn School will host the first West Coast retreat for the Sphinx LEAD cohort, providing access to local arts leaders and opportunities for participants to engage with Colburn faculty and students. The Colburn School's Jazmín Morales, Assistant Director, Center for Innovation and Community, was selected as a Sphinx LEAD participant in 2019.

The Colburn School is grateful to receive support for these initiatives from the Sidney E. Frank Foundation. "We're moved and encouraged by everything you're doing as you deepen your long term connection with the community, and expand your efforts to bring more young people of color into the world of classical music and the classical arts," said Cathy Halstead on behalf of the Sidney E. Frank Foundation. "We look forward to being a small part of the important work you're doing. Your way forward provides a path that is essential to all of us."

### **About the Sphinx Organization**

The Sphinx Organization is the social justice organization dedicated to transforming lives through the power of diversity in the arts. Sphinx's four program areas—Education & Access, Artist Development, Performing Artists, and Arts Leadership—form a pipeline that develops and supports diversity and inclusion in classical music at every level: music education, artists performing on stage, the repertoire and programming being performed, the communities represented in audiences, and the artistic and administrative leadership within the field.

Sphinx was founded in 1997 by Aaron P. Dworkin with the goal of addressing the underrepresentation of people of color in classical music. The name Sphinx, inspired by the mythical creature and legendary statue, reflects the power, wisdom and persistence that characterize Sphinx's participants, as well as the enigmatic and interpretive nature of music and art.

Now led by President and Artistic Director Afa S. Dworkin, Sphinx programs reach more than 100,000 students and artists as well as live and broadcast audiences of more than two million annually. Read more about Sphinx's programs at [www.SphinxMusic.org](http://www.SphinxMusic.org).

### **About the Colburn School**

A performing arts institution located in the heart of Los Angeles, the Colburn School trains students from beginners to those about to embark on professional careers. The academic units of the School provide a complete spectrum of music and dance education united by a single philosophy: that all who desire to study music or dance should have access to top-level instruction.

- The Community School of Performing Arts welcomes students of all ages, from seven months old to adults. It offers over 120 classes each year in orchestral instruments, piano, guitar, voice, jazz, music theory, drama, and ensembles including orchestra, choir, and chamber music.
- The diploma- and degree-granting Conservatory of Music is distinguished by a unique all-scholarship model, renowned faculty, and outstanding performance opportunities. It prepares the very highest level of collegiate musicians for professional careers.
- The Trudl Zipper Dance Institute develops performers of all levels, from aspiring professionals in the Dance Academy to beginners starting in Youth Dance. Students of all levels receive training in ballet, tap, musical theater, and modern genres as part of a comprehensive dance education.
- The Music Academy is a highly selective training program for gifted young pre-collegiate musicians, designed to prepare students for conservatory study and performing careers at the highest levels of achievement. This residential program balances performance, musical instruction, and academics.
- Created to serve all units of the School, the Center for Innovation and Community Impact empowers the musical and dance leaders of tomorrow by nurturing students' passion and ability to serve their communities, preparing them for sustainable careers, and embracing the development of new ideas. The Center embodies Colburn's commitment to developing young artists with the curiosity, skills, and commitment to make a difference in their field.

Each year, more than 2,000 students from around the world come to Colburn to benefit from the renowned faculty, exceptional facilities, and focus on excellence that unites the community.

Learn more at [www.colburnschool.edu](http://www.colburnschool.edu).

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