

THE BAROQUE ORCHESTRA of NEW JERSEY

2025-2026 Annual Report



From Our President



As we approach our 30th anniversary (November 2026), I can't help but marvel at just how far this orchestra has come. We began as a small community orchestra focusing on Baroque works and have grown into a community orchestra that performs music of all genres from all periods. However, one thing has remained a constant and that is being a part of the community. In addition to performances and lectures at senior centers and libraries across the state, we have continued to connect with other community and state groups to bring our music out to the community.

This year and last year have been extremely impactful. We have performed on the Morristown Green as part of the celebration of Lafayette's return to Morristown, and, very significantly, our Maestro was commissioned to compose a work commemorating the event. Additionally, a group from the orchestra performed at the invitation-only Lafayette Ball at the historic Sansay House in Morristown. Our next community event was performing at Jockey Hollow and later at the invitation-only 250th celebration at the Ford Mansion. We continued the 250th celebration with a performance in collaboration with the Morris Museum. We are thrilled that we have been able to connect with so many of our community members and to extend our reach beyond the borders of Morris County. We hope you'll join us as we enter our next 30 years!

Jo Ann Bates, President

From Our Artistic Director



2025-2026 was truly one of the most exciting and diverse years for me as conductor of The Baroque Orchestra of New Jersey. We performed more concerts than ever with music representing a greater diversity of composers, periods, and styles. We expanded our community presence, our repertoire, and our collaborative partners. We accomplished an important cultural goal by being an active partner for America 250 activities, connections, and events.

We opened our season with our 2nd Music Box Series concert at The Morris Museum. It was fun to have Jere Ryder discuss and demonstrate three music boxes from the museum's collection and then perform the works with several of New Jersey's leading vocalists. It

was a pleasure to return to our Baroque roots with music by Alessandro and Domenico Scarlatti, George Frideric Handel, Luigi Boccherini, and Antonio Vivaldi. It was exciting to discover unknown composers like Joseph Martin Kraus and to rediscover favorites like Mozart's *Eine Kleine Nachtmusik*. It was great to work with special guest artists like Daniel Colalillo, Noah Stevens, Ron Levy, and Peter Toth.

A highlight was partnering with The Growing Stage to present a "Young People's Concert" which introduced Baroque and Classical selections to young families and to participate in encampments at Jockey Hollow, a Patriots Ball at Washington's Headquarters, and a Back Deck concert at the Morris Museum.

I look forward to our 30th Anniversary concert at the Morris Museum in November, a season of familiar favorites and new discoveries, and most of all to sharing time and beauty with friends and colleagues.

Maestro Robert W. Butts

Maestro Butts, one of America's most impressive and charismatic conductors, founded the orchestra some twenty years ago -- performing a rich menu of classical music and opera from the Baroque period to the present. I don't live in NJ and yet I attend all the concerts.

Stephen Young
Patron/Competition Sponsor

The Baroque Orchestra of New Jersey

Mission Statement: The Baroque Orchestra of New Jersey performs music of all periods and styles at affordable prices, supports young artists and audiences, and performs both in organized concert seasons and in special concerts in collaboration with artists and organizations throughout New Jersey.

History Highlights

- **1996**—November 3, founded as The Baroque Orchestra of Boonton with performances in the historic Darress Theatre.
- **1996-2002**—BONJ collaborated with community organizations throughout Morris County including New Jersey Foundation for the Blind, Birchwood School, Boonton School System, Franciscan Oaks, The Arts Council of the Morris Area, The Tibetan Society, The Princeton Shakespeare Theater, and The Boston Early Music Festival.
- **2000**—BONJ collaborated with The Little Opera Company and began a tradition of collaborations and opera production that continues. The first opera was Mozart's *Le Nozze di Figaro*, narrated by Celeste Holm. The second was Donizetti's *L'Elisir d'amore* narrated by Jerome Hines.
- **2002**—BONJ moved to Madison and performed at Grace Church in collaboration with Grace Community Music.
- **2004**—BONJ began a cycle of Beethoven's symphonies and concerti in collaboration with pianist Paul Zeigler.
- **2005**—June, BONJ presented inaugural concert at The Nous Theatre in Blairstown, New Jersey featuring Metropolitan Opera tenor Gary Pate, Korean pianist Sohyun Ahn, and the Masterwork Chorus for a program of The Mozart *Requiem* and music by Mendelssohn, Shostakovich, and Puccini.
- **2006**—August, BONJ presented first annual Summer Music Festival featuring orchestra, chamber, opera, early music, keyboard recitals, and symposia. Orchestra also began broadcasting programs through Cablevision.
- **2008**—BONJ began performing concerts at Dolan Hall, The Annunciation Center, The College of Saint Elizabeth in Morristown; presented first modern day performance of Alessandro Scarlatti's *La Giuditta* at Dolan Hall and in New York; through the generosity of the Young Family, BONJ sponsored the Pearl & Julius Young Music Competition.
- **2009**—BONJ performed Acts 2 & 3 of *Siegfried*, becoming the only conductor and orchestra to have performed three Wagner operas in New Jersey.
- **2010**—BONJ was awarded the first of several awards for orchestra and conducting excellence from The American Prize.
- **2012**—BONJ performed at NJIT in Newark, New Jersey.
- **2014**—BONJ presented world premiere of Maestro Butts's *Symphony #1—The Joshua Symphony*, commissioned by the Plaut Family.
- **2015**—Maestro Butts and soprano Dominika Zamara performed Pergolesi's *La Serva Padrona* in Crema, Italy and Rockaway, New Jersey; performed concert at DiMenna Center, New York City in collaboration with The New York Classical Music Society; performed two operas composed by Maestro Butts at The National Opera Center in New York.



Selecting a short passage, he began by having one section of the orchestra play its own simple part. Then he had a second section join in with its part, and so on, adding sections until the orchestra was playing an exquisite and intricate combination of melodies, countermelodies and harmonies. And then the four soloists came in with their parts, and the orchestra's beautiful passage became simply a background for the incredible solos. Insights like this provided by Maestro Butts are a special joy of BONJ concerts.

Sheila Abrams, njartsmaven.com

- **2016**—Performed Telemann's *Concerto in re maggiore* with special guest French Hornist Robert Lee Watt from the Los Angeles Philharmonic; performed Scarlatti opera in collaboration with National Park Service 100th Anniversary.
- **2017**—Premiered works by Roman Composer Marco Frisina; performed chamber music concerts in Venice, Italy; collaborated with Light Opera of New Jersey.
- **2018**—Performed in collaboration with The Loyola Jesuit Center, The United Way, Madison Area YMCA, and Life With Joy, and began a collaboration with Morris Arts and Cultural Collective.
- **2019**—Began collaboration with LatinX ConeXiones and Keys 2 Success, featured on WQXR *Performance Today*, named one of the "Best Things To Do in Morristown" by *Discover New Jersey Arts*.
- **2020**—During the COVID lockdown, the orchestra developed an online presence with the talk show *Bach, Bagels, and Bob*, a collaborative video with Keys 2 Success, and a series of video-recorded new performances
- **2021**—Performed a virtual summer music festival and further developed online programs
- **2022**—Performed a holiday program at Avalon Assisted Living, continued virtual festival and online programs, collaborated with Dance Connections
- **2023**—Returned to full schedule plus free summer concerts; performed a concert at Washington's Headquarters at the 90th Anniversary of The National Historical Park; performed with young pianists of Keys 2 Success program; performed at Madison Holiday Festival; coached the Madison High School orchestra; started The New Contemporary series presenting local composers
- **2024**—Performed special free concert at Plainfield Performing Arts Center to initiate Diversity of Beauty project, performed outreach concert at Laurel Circle Retirement Community, performed Humperdink's opera *Hansel and Gretel* as holiday gift to the community at the Madison Arts Center
- **2025**—Continued to expand collaborations around New Jersey, performed special concert with American Friends of Lafayette to celebrate 200th Anniversary, presented first Music Box Series concert in

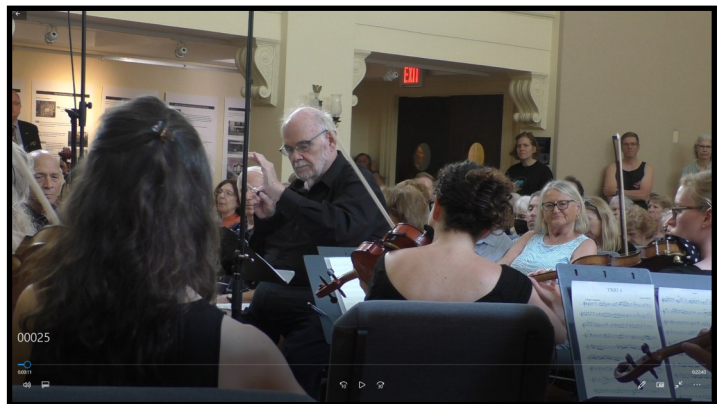
collaboration with the Morris Museum, free holiday concert for the community.

- **2026**—Young Person's Concert at The Growing Stage in Netcong; America 250 concerts with NJ250, Rev250, Morristown National Historical Park, The Morris Museum; Concerts at Avalon Assisted Living and Delany Retirement Community.



"As season ticket holders, we enjoy the diversity in the programs performed by the Baroque Orchestra of New Jersey, from the Classics to original compositions. We love that the orchestra is deeply imbedded in the community through collaborations with Keys2Success, the National Park Service, the Madison Arts Center, and the most recent performance by the extraordinary high school string quartet, The Joy in Music Ensemble.

Alan & Charlotte Moors, patrons



"For nearly twenty years, Morristown National Historical Park has had a wonderful working relationship with Maestro Robert Butts and the Baroque Orchestra of New Jersey. From world premieres of the music of Alessandro Scarlatti to compositions by Maestro Butts himself, the range, artistic capabilities, and technical competence of Maestro Butts and the Orchestra have consistently thrilled audiences and critics alike with their performances at the park. Indeed, in 2023, during the park's 90th anniversary, Maestro Butts premiered his composition, the *Jockey Hollow Suite*, with the Orchestra to the largest audience ever recorded in the auditorium. The park has obtained grants from local arts organizations to help fund performances and we have been fortunate to have had Maestro Butts as a good friend and partner.

Jude M. Pfister, Chief of Cultural Resources, Morristown NHP



There was a vitality and directness to their musical expression that spoke to the individual strengths of the musicians.

Courtney Smith, njarts.net

The 2025-2026 Season – BONJ 30

- ***Verdi and Beethoven, November 14/16, 2025***—2nd in Music Box Series with The Morris Museum, Giuseppe Verdi arias sung by Gary Pate, Diane Fox, Theresa Carlomagno, Jason Adamo, Timmie Cole, and Dmitri Zigrino, plus Ludwig van Beethoven's *Piano Concerto #4* with Daniel Colalillo.
- ***Warm Winter Wassail, January 14, 2026***—George Frideric Handel's *Organ Concerto* featuring guest soloist Anne Matlack, music by Antonio Vivaldi, the NJ premiere of Luigi Boccherini's *Symphony #23*, Haydn's *In-sanae* featuring the Grace Church Choir, and Haydn's *Symphony #84*.
- ***Many Mozarts, April 19, 2026***—Leopold Mozart's *The Toy Symphony*, *Overture to L'Amant Anonime* by Chevalier de Saint-Georges (known as "The Black Mozart"), American premiere of *Symphony in C Minor* by Joseph Martin Kraus (known as "The Swedish Mozart"), and Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart's *Piano Concerto #24* with special guest Ron Levy.
- ***Family Affairs, June 14, 2026***—*Viola Concerto* by Georg Philipp Telemann with guest Noah Stevens, works by Alessandro Scarlatti and his son Domenico Scarlatti, *Keyboard Concerto in F minor*, with special guest Peter Toth, by Johann Sebastian Bach and *Sinfonias* by his sons Carl Philipp Emanuel Bach, and Johann Christian Bach.

Between the excellent conducting and excellent playing by Jesse and the group, it was a delightful experience in all ways. It was also nice to meet some of the Board members and chat with them. I am still excited from the concert.

Peter Jarvis, Composer/Percussionist





BONJ and America 250

The Baroque Orchestra of New Jersey has collaborated with Morristown National Historical Park since 2006. In 2023, Maestro Butts was commissioned to compose *Jockey Hollow Suite* and the orchestra premiered the work in a concert at Washington's Headquarters Museum in July 2023 for the 90th Anniversary of the park.

In 2025, Maestro Butts was commissioned by The American Friends of Lafayette to compose *Lafayette Suite* in honor of the 200th Anniversary of Lafayette's return visit to Morristown in 1825. The orchestra performed on the afternoon of July 13 in the celebration on the Morristown Green. A quartet of musicians from the orchestra played that evening at the historic Sansay House in a gala ball recreating an event during Lafayette's visit. The suite was performed at both events along with other music from the period.

In 2026, the orchestra collaborated with several organizations celebrating the 250th anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence. Performances began on Saturday/Sunday April 18/19 when the orchestra performed at the Jockey Hollow Visitor's Center during the annual encampment. *Jockey Hollow Suite* and selections from the revolutionary period were featured. On April 26, the orchestra performed at The Growing Stage in Netcong for a special Young People's Concert that presented music associated with America 250.

On May 9, various organizations joined to present a Patriot's Ball on the grounds of the Ford Mansion, Washington's Headquarters. The event featured reenactors, political leaders including Governor Sherrill, scholars, and representatives of NJ250, Morris County 250, The Washington Association, The Friends of Lafayette, and REV250. The orchestra played songs, concert pieces, and dances that would have been familiar to those in Morristown during the Revolutionary Period.

On July 9, the orchestra performed an America 250 concert at the Morris Museum as part of the summer Back Deck series. Because of weather conditions, the concert was moved into the Bickford Theater. In addition to 18th century selections, the orchestral also played *Lafayette Suite* and *Jockey Hollow Suite*, with narration by Museum CEO Tom Loughman.



The 2025-2026 Season

Community Performances

The Baroque Orchestra of New Jersey expanded its presence in the community through new collaborations with arts, historical, and community organizations as well as continued concerts with our partners.

The most extensive collaborations were with county, state, and national organizations involved with events celebrating America 250. These included concerts, dances, balls, commissioned compositions, encampments, and lectures.

On December 21, the orchestra presented a free holiday concert at the Madison Community Arts Center, continuing its Diversity of Beauty project. This annual event began in 2024 with performances of Engelbert Humperdinck's opera *Hansel and Gretel*. The orchestra performed for the eleventh consecutive First Night concert, this time at Morristown High School.

The orchestra continued to support local composers. We developed a two-concert series called "The New Contemporary" at the Madison Arts Center and at Grace Church. Concerts of all new music were presented on October 26 and May 3.

We collaborated to provide artists for the MACA Holiday Arts Festival November 28 and 29. The orchestra played a special holiday concert at Avalon Assisted Living in Hillsborough, a concert on May 24 at Delaney at the Green, a retirement community in Florham Park, music on June 18 for *Evening the Gardens* at Loyola Jesuit Center, and music for the Madison Public Library gala on March 21.

A special new series was begun on April 26 when the orchestra presented a Young People's Concert at The Growing Stage in Netcong. The program featured instrument demonstrations, music from the Baroque and Classical periods, and an introduction to music of America 250.

During the almost ten years that I have been a volunteer usher at the Baroque Orchestra's concerts, I have been amazed and excited by the diversity, innovation and talent displayed at every concert, cabaret, opera and chamber music performance. Every performance by the orchestra members and their leader is an uplifting and educational event that touches my heart.

Carolyn Fagan





Rarely has a more perfectly selected ensemble been so well directed, for anyone knows the most difficult of all productions is the musical, and for coordinating this large ensemble so well, Maestro Butts deserves our kudos!

Arthur W. Ritchie, Courier News

Maestro Robert W. Butts

Conductor

- Studied conducting at Juilliard with Maestro Vincent La Selva; received DMA (Doctor of Musical Arts) in conducting from The American Conservatory of Music in Chicago
- Has conducted in Romania, Czech Republic, Russia, France, and Italy
- Principal conductor of the 2018 Alion Baltic Festival Orchestra in Tallinn, Estonia
- Principal Conductor for Garden State Sinfonia, The Little Opera Company, New Jersey Concert Opera, Eastern Opera Company, Light Opera of New Jersey, and Opera Theatre of Montclair
- Has conducted concerts featuring The New Jersey Symphony, The Masterwork Chorus, The Plainfield Symphony, and Harmonium Choral Society
- Is only conductor to have conducted three Wagner operas (*Das Rheingold*, *Die Walküre*, *Siegfried*) and three Handel operas (*Acis and Galatea*, *Semele*, *Giulio Cesare*) in New Jersey
- Has taught conducting at Montclair State University and The College of Saint Elizabeth

Composer

- *Guitar Works of Robert Butts*, CD, performed by Stanley Alexandrowicz on Elegia Classics
- *Strings Along the Seine* premiered at The American Church, Paris, France, June 2022 with the EU Chamber Orchestra
- *Vite senza tempo*—first Italian opera composed by an American, premiered in Italy September 2021 at the Teatro Verdi di Padova.
- *Viola Concerto* featured in *Performance Today* Broadcast, WQXR New York—July 21, 2019
- Three concerts of Maestro Butts's music were performed in Venice, Italy in December 2017
- Guitarist Stanley Alexandrowicz premiered *Early Morning Suite* in London, England in 2015 and *Tombeau in Memoriam Vaclav Kucera* in Sicily in 2017
- *Symphony #1—The Joshua Symphony* was commissioned by the Plaut family, premiered in 2014
- Composed *The Triangle* as part of Atlanta Opera's 24 Hour Opera Project
- *Mark Twain and the General* and *The Cask of Amontillado* were performed at The National Opera Center in New York City—2015
- *Saturnalia Strings* was premiered in Crema, Italy—2015

Educator/Lecturer/Scholar

- Has taught at The Casperson School of Graduate Studies at Drew University, Montclair State University, the College of Saint Elizabeth, and Fairleigh Dickinson University
- Has lectured for The New Jersey Council for the Humanities, the New Jersey Symphony, The New Jersey State Opera, Elderhostel, and New Jersey Continuing Education Programs
- Has presented papers at conferences of The American Musicological Society, The Sonneck Society, and The Country Music Conference

Awards and Honors

- 2023 Innovative Programs—Morris County Chamber of Commerce
- 2019 Artist of the Year—The New York Classical Music Society
- 2019 Exemplary Leader Award—Morris County Chamber of Commerce
- Included in World Top Musicians Directory—2018
- Tourism Appreciation Award—2017—Morris Tourism
- 2015 Honored Artist—2015—The American Prize
- Vytautas Marijosius Memorial Award—2011—The American Prize
- Arts Professional of the Year—2003—Arts Council of the Morris Area

BONJ & Keys 2 Success

The Baroque Orchestra of New Jersey and Keys 2 Success began a historic collaboration that has continued and developed since the young piano students of the Newark schools were invited to perform before the June 2019 concert. In Spring of 2020, during the covid pandemic, musicians of the orchestra and young students recorded themselves individually and a special video was created featuring them together playing *Variations on Simple Gifts*. In July 2021, the students performed with musicians of the orchestra in a special concert at the Madison Community Arts Center. In April 2022, the orchestra presented Keys 2 Success with the Cynthia Platt Scholarship during a special celebration at Pennington Court in Newark. In July, 2022, musicians of the orchestra performed at Kinney Community Gardens in Newark. The collaboration reached a high point when the young artists performed with the orchestra in a concert at Dolan Hall, Saint Elizabeth University, Morristown, New Jersey on April 2, 2023. The landmark collaboration marked the first time anywhere that young piano students performed in concert with a professional orchestra.

BONJ In The Media

2012-2016—Reviews/articles in njartsmaven.com

2020-2024—*Bach, Bagels, and Bob*, internet talk show hosted by Maestro Butts and featuring artists and guest of the orchestra

November 2015—**New Jersey Monthly** featured article

September 2015—Carlton Wilkinson Article in **Asbury Park Press**

April 2016—Carlton Wilkinson Article in **Daily Record**

August 2015—Maestro Butts Interviewed as **Comcast Newsmaker**

March 2015—Maestro Butts Interviewed “**Cremona Today**” in Italy

May 2018—Maestro Butts on “**Classical Discoveries**” in Princeton

January 2019—Maestro Butts interview on **FOCUS**, Venice, Italy TV program

November 2019—BONJ featured on *Performance Today*, *WQXR*

July 2020—*On the Scene With John Bathke* - **News 12 New Jersey**

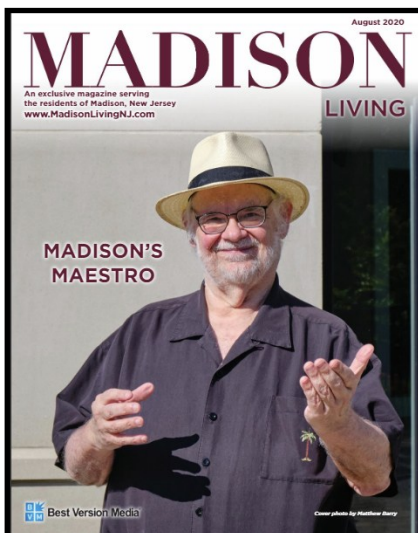
August 2020—**Madison Living Magazine**—cover feature story

October 2020—**Madison Historical Society** Online Talk

January 2024—Concert reviewed for njarts.com

July 2024—Maestro Butts and orchestra featured in film “*My Name is Marco*”

July 2024—Maestro Butts featured in documentary “*Padua: Home of Vite senza tempo*” independent Italian film created in Padua, Italy.



BONJ and Young Artists/Young Listeners

The Baroque Orchestra of New Jersey supports young artists and young listeners.

Young artists are invited to play with the orchestra.

Young listeners are provided opportunities to attend BONJ concerts.

The Pearl & Julius Young Music Competition

- Through the generosity of the Young Family, the competition was awarded annually 2008-2019.
- Annual competition for instrumentalists ages 16-22
- Cash prizes plus opportunities to perform a concerto with the orchestra at the summer festival orchestra concert
- All finalists invited to be a member of the orchestra
- 2018 winners: flutist Mei Stone, pianist Sherwin Pan, and pianist Kelsey Lee
- Past winners have continued their careers in The United States and around the world (photos include several of these)
- Judges include principal musicians of the orchestra and professional musicians and educators from The Metropolitan Opera Orchestra, The New Jersey Symphony, The New York Classical Music Society, and The Cali School of Music

The Cynthia Platt Scholarship

- Awarded Annually in honor of Cynthia Platt, Morris County Musician
- Scholarship is awarded to help with music education
- Awarded since 2010
- 2022 recipients: Keys 2 Success, Newark, New Jersey

Support of young listeners/artists

- High School students Ben Schuchmann and Claire Lock performed as part of the orchestra, learning from the professionals in their sections.
- Young People's Concert, The Growing Stage, Netcong, New Jersey
- Maestro Butts, violinist Rosalie Dumas, and cellist Peter Howard coached the string players of Madison High School in playing a Bach concerto.
- String quartet of students from Ridge High School performed Antonin Dvorak's *American Quartet* to open the June 2024 concert.
- Concert tickets provided to students in high schools, colleges, and universities
- Young listeners are provided opportunities to meet and talk with soloists and musicians of BONJ during intermission or following the concert
- Tickets for students under 22 are only \$5.

Personally, I am more of a rap fan and attend rap concerts frequently but this orchestral concert was a profoundly great and fun experience...[Dr. Butts] gave the audience an opportunity to get involved throughout the program. I was touched when he allowed volunteers, preferably children, to interact with each other in the playing of Toy Symphony by Leopold Mozart... I went out of my comfort zone and experienced an unusual form of music to me that I discovered that I enjoyed.

—Mohammad Abdelaziz, Montclair State University student

BONJ—Seniors and Outreach Concerts

The Baroque Orchestra of New Jersey remains active in bringing music to the community. Orchestra and chamber music programs are developed and performed at retirement communities, schools, foundations, colleges, health facilities, and in collaboration with historical organizations. During the 2017-2018 Season, BONJ reached over one thousand listeners who might not otherwise have had a chance to experience the music.

Seniors

- BONJ concert and lecture programs have been presented at senior centers and retirement communities throughout New Jersey including Winchester Gardens in Maplewood, Crane's Mill in West Caldwell, Franciscan Oaks in Denville, and Heath Village in Hackettstown, Delaney at the Green in Florham Park, Brightview in Randolph, and Laurel Circle in Bridgewater.
- BONJ invites accomplished seniors to perform with the orchestra, whose musicians currently range in age from 17 to 86.

Health Facilities

- BONJ has worked with organizations such as The New Jersey Foundation for the Blind
- BONJ has performed at Morristown Medical Center and Overlook Hospitals in collaboration with Atlantic Health Systems, Avalon Assisted Living
- BONJ has provided programs in collaboration with Morris Tourism
- BONJ has performed concerts with The National Park System in Morristown



Revenue

Total Revenue	\$148,625.00
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Expenses

Total Expenses	\$126,778.00
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Revenue from grants, donations, contributions, foundation support ticket sales

Expenses include staff salaries, artist fees, technical/production costs, venue rental, administrative expenses (phone, postage, supplies, insurance), recording costs, miscellaneous expenses.

Revenue also includes a one-time bequest from William Becker received in 2026.

Foundations/Corporations

Madison Rotary

Morris Arts

Visionaries (\$5,000 and above)

Jo Ann Bates

Clare Roth

Benefactors (\$1,000-\$2,499)

Katherine & John Giardina- In Memory of Victor Bauer

Barbara E. Moo & Andrew Koenig

Alan & Charlotte Moors

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Douglas C. Anderson

Michael & Denise DeMaio

Rebecca Moody

Anne F. Plaut

Anthony J. Shashaty, Sr.

Champions (\$250-\$499)

Lee Doswell

Joseph DuPont

Chuck & Ruth Fegley

Melanie & Alan Levitan

David & Sylvia Luber

Alan Meisel

Lucille Uhlman

David & Patricia Williams

Enthusiasts (\$100- \$249)

Ron & Nancy Bendelius

Barbara Bernstein

Barbara & Pete Bye

Diane Close

Catherine Coultas

Leonard Dell

Carolyn Fagan

Rita Fand

The BONJ Community

The music lives through your generosity.

The Baroque Orchestra of New Jersey thanks all our supporters and volunteers.



BONJ Volunteers

Mary Ann Bieksza

Carol Crawford

Carolyn Fagan

Rita Fand

Arnold Finkel

Sara Finkel

Rita Guibert

Marguerite La Corte

Doreen Manno

Meryl Nadell

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Barbara Perentin

Tom Roberts

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Avital Shatapura

Anne Trevor

Mary Jane Walsh

Lisa Young



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Susan Giardina

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Melanie and Alan Levitan

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BONJ and Old/New Music



The Baroque Orchestra of New Jersey was founded primarily to perform music of the 17th and 18th centuries. The commitment to bringing old music from The Baroque and Classical Periods to life remains a vital part of the orchestra's mission. Popular Baroque composers have included Monteverdi, Purcell, Vivaldi, Handel, Telemann, and Bach. The orchestra has, however, also performed music of their contemporaries—often presenting the first modern day performance from manuscripts edited by Maestro Robert W. Butts. These composers have included Pachelbel, Lully, Albinoni, and Scarlatti. In addition to the popular works of Mozart, Haydn, and Beethoven, the orchestra has brought to life music by their contemporaries: The Chevalier de Saint George, Carl von Dittersdorf, Josef Reicha, Antonio Salieri, and Joseph Mysliveček.

In recent years, the orchestra has become New Jersey's leading ensemble for new music, including two world premieres of works composed by famed Roman composer Marco Frisina. Other contemporary composers whose works have been premiered include Paul Zeigler, Amy Reich, John Ivor Alexander, Ting Ho, Derwyn Holder, John Franek, and Richard Russell. Maestro Butts has had several of his works premiered by BONJ as well as in Korea, France, Scotland, England, Poland, and Italy. His *Symphony #1—The Joshua Symphony* was commissioned by the Plaut Family in 2014. *Mark Twain and the General*, *The Tell-Tale Heart*, and *The Cask of Amontillado*, have been performed by BONJ at the National Opera Center in New York City.



Discovered Baroque Masterpiece *La Giuditta* performed at Washington's Headquarters Museum for the 100th Anniversary of the United States National Park Service.



Alessandro Scarlatti, a major Baroque composer, composed the opera/oratorio *La Giuditta*, in 1693. The original manuscript lay undiscovered for over 300 years until found by Dr. Jude Pfister in the collection at the Washington's Headquarters in Morristown National Historical Park in Morristown, New Jersey.

Maestro Butts created a modern edition from the manuscript. Having performed it first in 2008 in New York City and at

The College of Saint Elizabeth, he and the orchestra felt it was time to perform in collaboration with the National Park Service—jointly celebrating the orchestra's 20th Anniversary and the National Park Service's 100th Anniversary.

The standing room only performance was presented May 1, 2016 at the restored Washington's Headquarters Museum Auditorium.

Featured in the cast were soprano Timothy Maureen Cole, mezzo-soprano Teresa Giardina, tenor Dmitri Zigrino, bass Don Kalbach, and countertenor Daniel Schuetz. Musicians of The Baroque Orchestra of New Jersey performed in Baroque style, conducted by Maestro Butts. The manuscript was on display for the audience to view.

The discovery of the manuscript as well as the modern edition and performance are the subject of a film/documentary *Scarlatti in New Jersey*.

BONJ on Film And Television



Maestro Robert W. Butts and The Baroque Orchestra of New Jersey are greatly involved in mass media in film, television, internet streaming, educational programs, and CD/DVD production.

Collaborating with Brian Foran and B&B Productions, Maestro Butts and the orchestra produced *Scarlatti in New Jersey*, a 55 minute documentary on the discovery of the Scarlatti dramatic oratorio manuscript in Morristown and the first modern day performances of the complete work. Interviews with members of the Morristown arts and cultural community as well as the artists who performed the work tell the story complete with excerpts from the 2016 performance at Washington's Headquarters Museum.

Maestro Butts developed the educational series *Concerts and Conversations*, also working with Brian Foran and B&B Productions. In each episode, Maestro Butts discusses the history of the piece as well as what makes the music work. Excerpts from the work are played to demonstrate and the entire work is played at the conclusion. Works so far filmed have included Rossini's *Overture to La Gazza Ladra*, Mendelssohn's *Piano Concerto #1*, Wagner's *Siegfried*, Beethoven's *Symphony #8*, Beethoven's *Emperor Concerto*, and Maestro Butts's own composition *The Tell-Tale Heart*.

The Baroque Orchestra of New Jersey has collaborated with Cablevision since 2007. In addition to the episodes of *Concerts and Conversations*, the orchestra has created feature length concert videos. Among the more popular have been *Opera Passions* (featuring arias from several operas by various guest artists); *Fresh Breezes* (featuring winners of the Pearl & Julius Young Music Competition); *Going Baroque* (featuring music of Bach, Handel, Vivaldi, Telemann, and Scarlatti); *From Vienna to the Vatican* (featuring music of Mozart, Paisiello, Mendelssohn, and Marco Frisina); and most recently *Die Fledermaus* (summer 2018 performance of Strauss's operetta, in English); and *Classical Vienna* (music of Mozart, Haydn, and Beethoven from 2018 concerts).

The orchestra has also created special programs for HTTV (Home Town Television, Summit, New Jersey). These have included several 30 minute programs including *A Night at the Symphony: Beethoven*, *A Night at the Symphony: Mendelssohn*; *A Night at the Symphony: Mozart*, *A Night at the Opera: Verdi*; *A Night at the Opera: Handel*.

Since 2011, the orchestra's concerts have been regularly filmed and broadcast over VilleTV in Somerville, New Jersey.

Maestro Butts has been interviewed on various radio and television shows, during which excerpts from BONJ concerts have been featured. These include "Ask the Expert: WMTR Morristown; Comcast Newsmakers in New Jersey; Classical Discoveries WPRB Princeton; Cremona Today, Radio Saiuz, Focus su Rete; and on the special video *Dominika Zamara, Pride of Poland* produced by Worlds Top Musicians.

Maestro Butts and The Baroque Orchestra of New Jersey are featured in the film *My Name is Marco*, a documentary about Roman composer Marco Frisina.



BONJ: International And Legendary Guest Artists

The Baroque Orchestra of New Jersey has welcomed internationally famous artists to perform in concert.



- 2025—*My Name is Marco*, a film about Roman composer Marco Frisina featuring Maestro Butts and the orchestra was released
- 2023—Korean pianist Lynn Czae and Korean soprano Seunghee Park Cha appeared as soloists in a concert at Morristown Unitarian Fellowship.
- 2022—Maestro Butts conducted his music and that of Mozart and Vivaldi at The American Church in Paris, Mexican pianist Patricio Apaez played Haydn's *Piano Concerto* with the orchestra.
- 2021—Maestro Butts conducted *Vite senza tempo* at Teatro Verdi di Padova, Italy.
- 2019—BONJ collaborated with LatinX ConeXiones for a concert of music by Maestro Butts and the work of artist Luis Pilar.
- 2018—Korean soprano YuJung Bae sang at the Festival cabaret; Soprano Dominika Zamara sang at the Festival Orchestra concert
- 2017—Violist Brett Deubner returned to play Hoffmeister's *Viola Concerto*; French Hornist Robert Lee Watt returned to play a Hubler concerto; Korean pianist Lynn Czae returned to play Mozart's *Piano Concerto* #23; Korean violinist Sungsic Yang played the Brahms *Violin Concerto*
- 2016—French Hornist Robert Lee Watt of the Los Angeles Philharmonic was joined by recording artists Jeff Scott and Marshall Sealy playing Telemann; Kathleen Nester, flutist with The New Jersey Symphony and on Broadway, played Vivaldi
- 2015—Korean pianist Lynn Czae, President of The New York Classical Music Society played concerti of Beethoven; Chinese violinist Simon Hu, currently of the Metropolitan Opera Orchestra played Mozart; American violist Brett Deubner of the New Jersey Symphony debuted with BONJ playing concertos of Hindemith
- 2014/2015—Roman composer Marco Frisina had two of his compositions premiered by BONJ; Soprano Dominika Zamara sang with BONJ in New Jersey and with Maestro Butts in Italy
- 2005/2006/2014—Korean Pianist Sohyun Ahn played concertos by Shostakovich, Mozart, Chopin
- 2012—Turkish guitarist Celil Refik Kaya premiered Derwyn Holder's concerto, later recorded with the Buffalo Philharmonic; Chinese pianists Beatrice and Christina Long performed Bach double-keyboard concerti
- 2011/2010—Danish mezzo Hanne Ladefoged Dollase sang Mahler song cycles
- 2010—Harry Searing—guest artist with The New York Philharmonic, the New Jersey Symphony, and The Metropolitan Opera—played Weber *Bassoon Concerto*; Steinway Pianist Julian Gargiulo played Rachmaninoff
- 2008—Performed Alessandro Scarlatti's *La Giuditta* for first time in New York City and Morristown, New Jersey
- 2006—Amit Peled, Israeli cellist performed one of his first concerto appearances
- 2005—Clarinetist David Singer, principal with Orpheus Chamber Orchestra played Krommer *Double Concerto*
- 2002—Broadway tenor Juan Pineda, star of *Miss Saigon* sang in opera collaborations
- 2001—Metropolitan Opera star Jerome Hines narrated *L'Elisir d'amore*
- 2000—Film Star Celeste Holm narrated *Le Nozze di Figaro*

I have been attending BONJ concerts for almost twenty years and find them a delight. I am a fan of Gustav Mahler and last year's performance of Mahler's first was a revelation. Mahler once said, 'A symphony must be like the world. It must contain everything'. Maestro Butts and the fine musicians of BONJ brought to life Mahler's world in a spectacular and stirring fashion.

Lisa Young, Vice-President

One of the reasons why I love playing with BONJ is the expansive and varied repertoire. It has given me the opportunity to perform both chamber works, as well as full scale symphonies. Mr. Butts is incredibly supportive of young people and I have learned a lot from all the adult members of the orchestra. They have served as valuable mentors. "I really appreciate how supportive our audience members are and it makes me feel very proud when individuals express how much they enjoyed the performance. It is very fulfilling to be able to inspire and provide joy to others.

Ben Schuchman, bassist



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