FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

OAcademy 2021 Launch: Americas-wide digital orchestra academy connects isolated worlds

A NEW VISION FOR ENSEMBLE TRAINING

The Orchestra of the Americas Group announces the launch of OAcademy 2021 — a Hemispheric digital orchestra academy connecting the world’s most iconic music instructors and performers with a rigorously selected cohort of 60 rising musicians from across 20 countries of the Americas, many from underserved communities. The OAcademy 2021 journey, which lasts from January through June, focuses on the cultivation of essential skills required by orchestra musicians in an era when music making formats and structures are rapidly shifting.

BRIDGING OPPORTUNITY DIVIDES

Using technology to create powerful learning opportunities and career advancing networks for those with limited resources, OAcademy is working to level the global music playing field by breaking down age-old centers of access. Historically, rising musicians moved to New York, Berlin, or other global hubs connected to high-level instruction and networks in order to break into the top-tier orchestra industry.

"Countless populations of musicians across the Americas have faced the decision to either remain in their home communities knowing that opportunities for growth would be limited, or to move abroad for international-caliber training while assuming a great financial risk. Through OAcademy's technology, curriculum, and networks, our goal is to build pathways that allow these same learnings and opportunities to be accessed without leaving home. This represents a transformation for huge tracts of our Continent with an abundance of musical talent, but without local access to these global resources."

Carlos Miguel Prieto (Music Director)

EMPOWERING WORLDLY ARTISTS

Together with Prieto, a range of top-tier artists and institutions have lined up to support OAcademy, from Grammy-winners Gil Shaham, Marin Alsop, Alexander Shelley, and Yo-Yo Ma to principals from top orchestras including The Metropolitan Opera, the National Arts Centre Orchestra, Toronto Symphony, the Mariinsky Orchestra, Orchestre Symphonique de Montréal, and many others.

“Through instruction by industry experts and harnessing the power of diverse institutional partnerships, our objective is to align the OAcademy learning experience with what the professional world needs today and tomorrow.”

Hilda Ochoa-Brillembour (Board Chair)
Co-curating institutional partners include The Curtis Institute of Music, The Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra, The Organization of American States, Canada’s National Arts Centre Orchestra, Bard College Conservatory, and HarrisonParrott, among others. In its forward-looking vision, OAcademy goes beyond musical skills training. Guided by the example of OAcademy collaborator Yo-Yo Ma, the curriculum is centered around five practice pillars: Reflection, Exchange, Identity, Service and Leadership. These pillars are designed to inspire civic-minded musicians to cultivate a Worldly Artist Mindset — equally committed to making an impact around the corner, as around the world. Cross-cultural peer projects and virtual field assignments as volunteers in underserved communities are integral components of the learning journey for all participants.

BUILDING 21ST CENTURY SKILLS

OAcademy focuses on connecting classroom-acquired music skills to the dynamic needs faced by rising orchestra professionals in a rapidly transforming field. The global pandemic has only exacerbated the need for new responsive pathways between music education and the frontlines of the performing arts sector. Among the wide-ranging skills that OAcademy emphasizes are digital literacy, content collaboration by remote teams, and the development of a relevant artist’s voice. For OAcademy fellows, this means more than working alongside contemporary composers, performers, and others from the field; it entails building projects with video-game creatives, collaborating on assignments with visual arts organizations, receiving feedback from commercial concert presenters and branding experts, and other learning components designed to support the holistic growth of next-generation orchestra professionals.

FOLLOW THEIR JOURNEY

60 Fellows of OAcademy 2021 representing 20 nations of the Americas start the journey on January 18. More information on OAcademy, its participants, and the experience can be found at www.oamericas.org/oacademy
www.facebook.com/oamericas
www.instagram.com/oamericas