Through its live performances of classical music and educational programs, the New Haven Symphony Orchestra aspires to exceed expectations, unite communities, challenge, delight, and inspire. We change lives, for the better.
Formed in 1894, the New Haven Symphony Orchestra (NHSO) is the fourth-oldest orchestra in America. Artistically excellent concerts featuring diverse repertoire are a hallmark of the NHSO experience. The Orchestra presents concerts and education programs to 120,000 listeners in venues across the state of Connecticut. As a leader in Connecticut’s cultural life, the Symphony works in partnership with numerous schools and community organizations. During the past year, the NHSO worked to strengthen its community partnerships and stabilize its finances.

The 2011-2012 Symphony Series at Woolsey Hall offered a three concert celebration of the music of Mozart and a survey of works by Yale composer Christopher Theofanidis. Mr. Theofanidis will be featured over the next three seasons, culminating in the world premiere of a newly commissioned work during the NHSO’s 120th anniversary season in 2013-2014.

The Orchestra’s 70 professional musicians are led by Music Director William Boughton and Concertmaster Ani Kavafian. Under Boughton’s leadership, our programs expanded both geographically and musically, delivering the NHSO’s high musical standards across Connecticut. Two landmark accomplishments took place during the 2011-2012 season:

- The Orchestra brought more music to more places with a commitment to regionalization that extends its reach beyond New Haven. The NHSO presented concerts in two performance centers: Greater New Haven and the Naugatuck Valley. We also performed in Fairfield, Hartford, along the Shoreline, and in Northeastern Connecticut.

- Our expanded marketing efforts continue to draw new subscribers to our season concerts. We have increased overall subscriptions for two consecutive years.

Artistic Vision

This season saw the on-going commitment and development of our mission to celebrate our American heritage by developing an awareness and appreciation of American artists and composers. We performed works by American composers Christopher Theofanidis, Charles Ives, and David Lang alongside more well-known American repertoire from Broadway and Latin America. We launched the New Generation Artists Program which provides opportunities for and fosters the talents of young American musicians. A Mozart Festival was a season highlight featuring the NHSO’s own, Ani Kavafian, concertmaster, David Shifrin, clarinet, Jennifer Hoult, harp, and Richard Clymer, trumpet. Combining familiar works with unfamiliar ones offered interesting juxtapositions such as Tchaikovsky’s First Symphony alongside his Violin Concerto and Theofanidis’s Muse with Mozart’s Clarinet Concerto. The NHSO’s growing educational efforts included expanded programming, the second performance of the Youth Orchestra, and the Webster Bank Music Exchange. Coachings by our musicians in the community are fundamental to our relevance and connection with our audiences—however and wherever they access us—the NHSO’s music-making holds no boundaries.

“With Boughton at the helm, the Symphony is heading in many bold and exciting directions…every time Boughton comes out on stage, a brilliant star descends from the musical firmament into New Haven. His presence at the podium, especially in these challenging economic and political times, is a gift to the City and the people of our state.”

Dan Mathews, NHSO subscriber
Our Education and Community Engagement Initiatives reach 35,000 people in 42 Connecticut towns. In response to cutbacks at many schools, the NHSO education program has expanded to include full orchestra concerts, school workshops with children playing alongside professionals, chamber group coachings, and individual instruction. In-school literacy programs like our *Creating Musical Readers* series serve to inspire and delight students while introducing them to the instruments of the orchestra. Adult education initiatives, including our *SymphonyCity* conversations and *Prelude* pre-concert lectures, allow participants to engage with experts from a variety of musical perspectives and more deeply appreciate our concerts. Our outreach initiatives have been extended to include concerts celebrating Hispanic-Latino traditions (marketed in English and Spanish) and the African-American community (such as our family concert featuring hip hop dance). NHSO’s upcoming residency by Haitian American hip hop violinist Daniel Bernard Roumain was awarded a nationally competitive grant from the National Endowment for the Arts.

One focus of the 2011-2012 Education Program was to increase the number of coaching sessions offered by the NHSO’s professional musicians to area music students. A new program took place at the Cooperative High School for the Arts and Humanities. Our ensembles-in-the-classroom program, *What if Mozart Played Guitar Hero?*, was very well received and expanded its influence to a circle of eleven schools.

This past season marked the second season of the NHSO Youth Orchestra, with 30 high school woodwind, brass and string musicians participating. Our March concert featured Leonard Bernstein’s *Overture to Candide* and excerpts from Aaron Copland’s *Rodeo*. To further foster the exceptional talent in Connecticut’s young orchestral musicians NHSO Music Director William Boughton will appear as a guest coach at the Neighborhood Music School in the 2012-2013. He will also conduct the All-State Orchestra at their music festival in April 2013. The Webster Bank Music Exchange Program connected city and suburban instrumental ensembles in a mutually beneficial relationship of collaborative music making. The program positively influenced the skills and perspective of more than 100 young musicians from Wilbur Cross High School in New Haven and Daniel Hand High School in Madison.
Young People’s Concerts  For 80 years the NHSO has introduced students to the orchestra at Young People’s Concerts. Nearly 11,000 students in grades K-8, in six different cities attended this series of performances in Spring 2012. Two performances were held at Woolsey Hall (New Haven), Fairfield Public Schools, Milford Public Schools, Hyde Cultural Arts Center (PANEC schools of Northeastern Connecticut), Seymour Public Schools (Naugatuck Valley) and a single performance took place in our expansion city, New London. The Orchestra’s educational work is vital to our children’s future with numerous developments planned for the coming seasons.

The NHSO received positive reviews from students and educators alike for the 2012 program entitled American Salute. The concert featured Aaron Copland’s Lincoln Portrait, which tied into the social studies curriculum’s focus on the 150th anniversary of the Civil War. Education experts ReallyInventiveStuff collaborated on the script and the concert was emceed by opera singer Dana Elizabeth Fripp. Ms. Fripp’s first experience of classical music occurred at a Woolsey Hall Young People’s Concert when she was a New Haven Public School student. A complete curriculum for classroom use was developed with the aid of retired New Haven Public Schools music pedagogue and NHSO Board Member Dr. Charles Warner. This guide was made available to all teachers in the program and to any educator who sought to download it free online.

Family Concerts  The 2011-2012 Family Concert Series included three innovative programs that introduced children to orchestral instruments on winter weekends with three concerts in January, February, and March. Each performance was preceded by an Instrument Discovery Zone where children could boom, toot, and pluck orchestral instruments.

- What If Mozart Played Guitar Hero? introduced the string family while juxtaposing the music of Mozart and rock heroes such as The Beatles and The Rolling Stones.

- Haydn to Hip Hop had audiences joining teaching artist Brian Gillie as he taught four centuries of dances, from minuets to disco and hip hop. The percussion and brass sections were featured.

- Mike Mulligan and His Steam Shovel showcased the woodwind quintet as Yale composer Tom Duffy conducted and narrated his musical setting of the beloved children’s story.

“The YPC curriculum guide looks fabulous! It is really teacher friendly and provides meaningful instruction to truly engage student learners. It’s a guide teachers can use for years.”

Ellen Maust, New Haven Public Schools Music Department Facilitator
Community Support

Presenting a diverse array of concerts and music education requires a robust fundraising campaign. Development efforts were supplemented by successful fundraising events: Jerry Steichen’s Cabaret and Run for the Music were presented, and an annual gala was re-introduced to great acclaim. The NHSO celebrated Wolfgang and Constanze Mozart’s 230th Wedding Anniversary with a string quartet and light opera program that attracted over 200 donors and major sponsorship. A Bold New Vision campaign to support audience development and expansion of our education efforts raised $162,295 and attracted $546,132 in special funding that is pledged through December 2013. Every Board of Directors member contributed to A Bold New Vision. Director of Development Elaine C. Carroll, who spearheaded the campaign, was appointed Executive Director in December 2012.

These fundraising successes, combined with curtailed spending and innovative programming resulted in a $120,000 surplus. The surplus allowed the Board to replenish the Board Designated Cash Reserve Account, quadrupling its value. It is the long-term goal of the Board to restore this Cash Reserve to its pre-2008 balance of $450,000. We extend a sincere thank you to the many generous individuals and corporations who helped us exceed our income goals in every giving category.

The NHSO family lost a longtime subscriber last season, when Richard L. English passed away. A philanthropist and banker, Mr. English’s family helped found the Symphony 119 years ago. A passion for music and the New Haven community prompted Mr. English to leave a $20 million bequest to establish a fund at The Community Foundation for Greater New Haven; the NHSO will benefit from 40% of the income generated. The gift also benefits the New Haven Museum, Neighborhood Music School, and the Connecticut Yankee Council of the Boy Scouts of America. “For over 300 years, the English family has contributed to New Haven’s history helping to transform our City into Connecticut’s cultural center,” said Elaine C. Carroll. “Richard English’s historic gift assures that we will be an orchestra for the future. His generosity allows us to pursue new collaborations to better meet the needs of our community. For generations to come, music will be a lively presence in Connecticut thanks to Richard English.”

Philanthropist Richard L. English endowed a fund that will support the NHSO in perpetuity.
**Community Partnerships**  The NHSO makes itself available as a resource to many educational and charitable organizations in the Greater New Haven area. For instance, in March 2012 the NHSO partnered with the Community Soup Kitchen of New Haven to produce a fundraiser at their kitchen and Woolsey Hall. The list of local institutions who partner with the NHSO gives a sense of our broad reach: Ansonia Public Library, Ashford Public Schools, Branford: Evergreen Woods, Brooklyn Public Schools, Canterbury Public Schools, Chaplin Public Schools, Cheshire: Nelson Hall at Elim Park, Danbury: Western Connecticut State University, Danielson/Dayville: Killingly Public Schools, Derby Public Library, Eastford Public Schools, Fairfield Public Schools, Fairfield County Chorale, Quick Center for the Arts, Fairfield University, Sacred Heart University, Guilford Public Library, Guilford Public Schools, Groton Public Schools Hamden Middle School, Eli Whitney Museum, Keefe Community Center, Quinnipiac University, Whitney Center, Wintergreen School, Young Audiences, Hampton Public Schools, Hartford: Cathedral of St. Joseph, Madison Public Schools, First Congregational Church of Madison, Our Lady of Mercy School, Milford Public Schools, Parsons Center, Rotary Clubs of Milford and Devon, North Grosvenor Dale: Mary Fisher Elementary School, New Haven Public Schools, Albertus Magnus College, Amistad Academy, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Co-op High School, Connecticut Children’s Museum, Connecticut Food Bank, Davis Street Arts and Academics School, Educational Center for the Arts, International Festival of Arts and Ideas, Junior League of Greater New Haven, Market New Haven, Music Haven, Neighborhood Music School, New Haven Chorale, New Haven Reads, Omni New Haven Hotel, St. Martin de Porres School, The Study at Yale, Tower One/Tower East, Yale Center for British Art, Yale Glee Club, Yale School of Music, Newtown Public Schools, North Haven: Covidien, Windham Public Schools, Plainfield Public Schools, Pomfret Public Schools, Rectory School, Preston Public Schools, Putnam Public Schools, Scotland Schools, Seymour Public Schools, Shelton Public Library, Shelton School District, Sterling Public Schools, Stratford Academy, Sikorsky Corporation (outreach to military families), Trumbull: Fairfield County Children's Choir, Union Public Schools, Wallingford: Spanish Community of Wallingford, Waterbury Public Schools, Waterbury Symphony, Webster, MA Public Schools, West Haven: Veterans Administration Hospital, Willimantic: Windham Public Schools, Willington Public Schools, and Woodstock Public Schools, Hyde Center for the Performing Arts.

Robert Eck, chair of the NHSO’s Artistic Committee, sums up the successes of the 2011-2012 season: “In 2008, the League of American Orchestras invited the NHSO to participate in a highly competitive three-year Institutional Vision Program. Among other actions, the NHSO developed a Mission and Vision Statement, to communicate the NHSO’s identity and its long-term goals as an institution. Our brief Mission Statement charges the NHSO to exceed expectations, unite communities, challenge, delight, inspire. We change lives, for the better. The NHSO Strategic Planning Committee determined that in addition to continuing our excellent renditions of Classical Music, a gradual movement toward American composer music, with a concentration in Asian, African-American and Latin composer music would better serve to unite and challenge, delight, inspire the diversity of communities within our midst. Our 2011-2012 repertoire showcased the NHSO’s commitment to classical masterworks and contemporary American composers, with concerts dedicated to historical greats like Mozart, Beethoven, and Tchaikovsky infused with pieces by acclaimed contemporary composers such as David Lang, Aaron Jay Kernis, and Christopher Theofanidis. Fulfilling these challenges is an ongoing process; the NHSO looks forward with increased optimism toward the future.”