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Opus Notes

OPUS 118 HARLEM SCHOOL OF MUSIC

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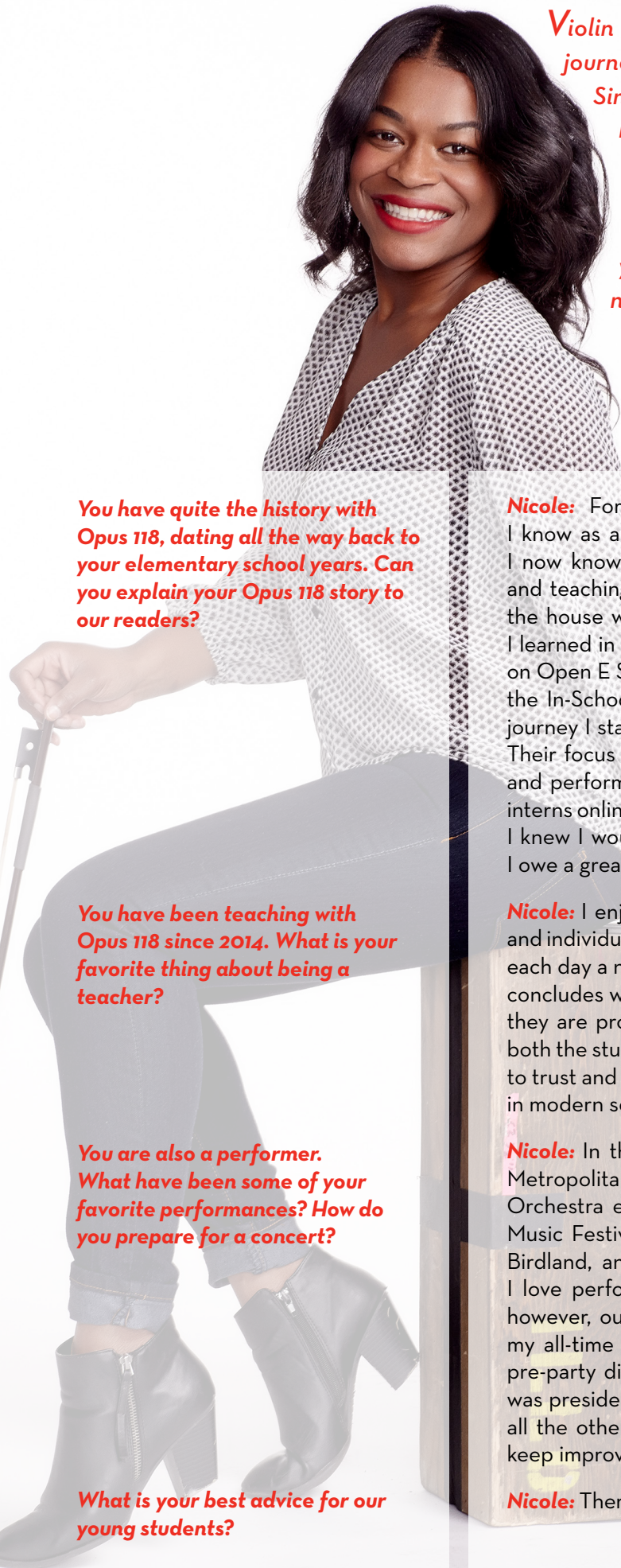
Formalized in academic year 2013-2014, Opus 118 is now starting the fifth year of our Teacher Training Initiative! This program features in-depth professional development for aspiring strings teachers. Participants observe, intern, and co-teach group violin classes in East Harlem public schools using Opus 118's unique pedagogical approach. Following successful completion of this initiative, former Opus 118 interns have gone on to teach private and partner lessons as well as group classes in our After-School Program, take on work as lead teachers in our In-School Program partner schools, and even become mentors in the Initiative.

This year, in addition to returning assistants Amanda Negron and Katie von Braun, we would like to welcome violinist **Katherine Kyu Hyeon Lim** to our program! Katherine is originally from South Korea, but had a chance to perform in Prague, Czech Republic at the young age of ten through the Seoul Oratorio and Prague Conservatoire partnership school. This work also inspired her to give a year-long series of non-profit concerts at under-served countryside schools in South Korea the same year. Following three years at this partner school, Katherine joined the Wells Cathedral School in the United Kingdom, serving as both the concertmaster and principal second violins in their symphony and string chamber orchestras, while also having the chance to tour in Milan, Italy. She was also a member of the Juilliard School's Honours Chamber Music Programme in its inaugural year with the Nova Quartet, performing at Merkin Concert Hall and Lincoln Center. Katherine is currently a master's student at The Juilliard School, focusing on performance, and is very passionate about teaching.

Opus 118 will continue hiring qualified violin teaching interns throughout school year 2017-2018. To find out more on how to apply, go to opus118.org/employment.

New Teacher Trainee Katherine Kyu Hyeon Lim (above) and our returning assistants Amanda Negron and Katie Von Braun.





Violin and viola teacher Nicole Wright started her Opus 118 journey as a first grader at Central Park II Elementary School. Since then, Nicole has graduated with both bachelor's and master's degrees in viola performance and is working on her doctorate! Returning to Opus 118 as an intern in 2014, Nicole is now acting as an Opus 118 master teacher, instructing both professional musicians and young students in Opus 118's method and inspiring the next generation of East Harlem students and teachers.

Meet the Teacher: Nicole Wright

You have quite the history with Opus 118, dating all the way back to your elementary school years. Can you explain your Opus 118 story to our readers?

Nicole: Fortunately, I do have quite the history with Opus 118! Little did I know as a young child, Opus 118 would shape me to follow a path that I now know was meant for me. As a child, I always loved school, music, and teaching. My mother said from ages three to six I would walk around the house with my bookbag trying to teach my dolls and friends subjects I learned in preschool. Along with that, I would try performing my “Twinkle on Open E String” for anyone who would listen. Opus 118 accepting me into the In-School Program gave me the necessities I needed to continue the journey I started as a child and helped direct me through my musical path. Their focus on technique really enabled me to understand my instrument and perform at a level I was proud of. So, when I saw the job posting for interns online there was no doubt in my mind about applying for the position. I knew I would be learning from someone I not only admire, but to whom I owe a great deal of my success.

You have been teaching with Opus 118 since 2014. What is your favorite thing about being a teacher?

Nicole: I enjoy working with students immensely. Their eagerness to learn and individuality inspires me to explore new pedagogy methods, thus making each day a new experience. Their time with a piece on the violin most often concludes with a performance and when they are able to perform at a level they are proud of, you can see their self confidence rise, and that brings both the student and me even more joy. This joy comes from them beginning to trust and believe in themselves, a characteristic many students often lack in modern society.

You are also a performer. What have been some of your favorite performances? How do you prepare for a concert?

Nicole: In the last year, I have performed as an onstage musician at the Metropolitan Opera, as the principal violist with the Reona Chamber Orchestra ensemble at Carnegie Hall, as principal violist at the MostArt Music Festival, at the Macy's After Hours Orchestra performance, at the Birdland, and was featured on a jazz album released by Wayne Tucker. I love performing. Each performance holds a special place in my heart, however, out of all of the performances I have done there is one that is my all-time favorite—when I played at the White House Correspondents pre-party dinner, hosted by Google and the Atlantic while Barack Obama was president. Not giving up my practice is the way I prepared for that and all the other performances, both before and after. I practice everyday to keep improving my craft.

What is your best advice for our young students?

Nicole: There will be days that are challenging, but never give up.





Opus 118

Performance Ensembles

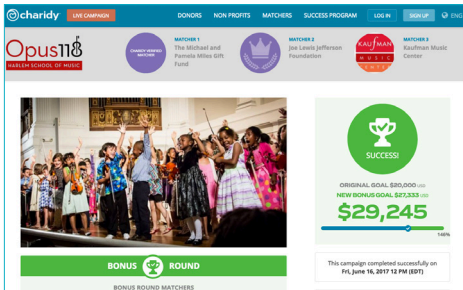
Since the start of Opus 118's After-School Program in 2002, we have offered ensemble opportunities for violin students studying privately, as well. These groups feature students from schools all over East Harlem and beyond, allowing our students from varying backgrounds to play music together.

This year, Opus 118 is offering three ensembles at varying skill levels: Intro Ensemble for our newest players; Prep Ensemble, our middle level; and Performance Ensemble, our oldest and most advanced group. Thirty students were invited to attend in 2017-2018, representing the largest total we have had in at least four school years! These students range in age from 8 to 16 and attend schools such as our In-School Program partners in East Harlem, Special Music School, and more.

There are many benefits to learning how to play music in a group for a child, which is why we have always encouraged our students to attend ensemble when they are at the appropriate level. Ensembles teach students the importance of teamwork; students playing together must learn to hone their non-verbal communication skills and blend within the overall sound of the group by listening to each other. In order for the ensembles to have a pleasing sound, players must also rely on learned musical skills such as rhythm, intonation, and dynamics, strengthening their understanding of these terms. Group playing helps to reinforce the instruction students receive in their private lessons. When receiving constructive feedback from more than one voice, students have the chance to learn aspects of violin playing through multiple perspectives. Students also have the chance to be a part of a special community, getting to know other children and young adults that may be different in many ways, but share a passion for music.

One of the greatest outcomes of the Opus 118 ensembles is their beautiful performances. In the last fifteen years, students have had many exciting concerts including President Barack Obama's inauguration festivities, Bloomingdale's Holiday Window Unveiling, Harlem Kids Week, the ASCAP Awards honoring Quincy Jones, Central Park with the New York Philharmonic, and The Manhattan Borough Arts Festival. For the last six years, ensemble members have had the chance to perform alongside the professional musicians at the Harlem Chamber Players for a joint spring concert. The groups also perform in our annual End of Year Concert for over 500 friends, family, and community members.

We would love to invite all of our friends and families to hear our wonderful students perform live. Stay tuned to our website for upcoming performance dates or join our mailing list for details!



Charidy Fundraiser: A Major Success!

On June 15th, 2017, Opus 118 held our second annual Charidy.com fundraising event with a goal of raising \$20,000 in just 24 hours. Thanks to our wonderful supporters, we exceeded all expectations by receiving donations from 111 people, surpassing our original goal by \$9,245, and beating last year's total by \$1,137. We are so grateful for our first round matchers, Kaufman Music Center, The Michael and Pamela Miles Gift Fund, and Joe Lewis Jefferson Foundation, for helping us to reach our original goal, and for our bonus round matchers, Joe and Susan Ziluca, Richard Rosenthal and Colleen Devlin Charitable Fund, and Patricia N. and Clarke H. Bailey Foundation for inspiring donations once that original goal was met. Our deepest appreciation goes to everyone who donated to this campaign and spread the word far and wide. It was an exhilarating day that will help Opus 118 start this school year on a very high note!



Our New Registrar:

Meet Katherine Haroldson

Beginning in August of 2017, Opus 118 faculty, staff, and families have had the pleasure of working with registrar Katherine Haroldson! A native of New Bern, North Carolina, Katherine has been playing the cello since the age of three. She received a Bachelor of Music in cello performance from Boston University and still actively plays in her free time. Before she began working at Opus 118, Katherine interned at Face the Music, a youth ensemble that only plays music by living composers, and a branch of Opus 118's partner, Kaufman Music Center. She is excited to get to know and work with the families here at Opus 118 and be a part of the community. Have any questions about Opus 118's After-School Program? Katherine can help! Reach out to her at kharoldson@opus118.org.



Student Spotlight: Wren and Ramsey Hansen

Because of the multi-faceted nature of Opus 118's programming, students can potentially be involved in our In-School Program, take private, partner, or group lessons after school, and/or play in one of our ensembles. Brothers Ramsey and Wren Hansen participate in all three! Ramsey, a fourth grader at Central Park East II Elementary School (CPE II), and Wren, a third grader at CPE II, have in-school classes with teacher Emily Vold twice-a-week, weekly private lessons with Nicole Wright, and rehearse in the Prep Ensemble with co-founder Roberta Guaspari. When Ramsey said that violin is now "a big thing in my life" his track record makes us inclined to agree!

The two brothers both got their start in our Intro to Violin Class when they were in Kindergarten and soon thereafter started private lessons. Since taking private lessons, Ramsey believes he's learned "a lot of skills over time and a lot of pieces," while Wren believes private lessons have moved him "much further along" because he's gotten "a lot of practice with intonation and paying attention to detail." Besides their involvement in in-school and private lessons, their time playing in Prep Ensemble has also made a difference in their playing by helping them become "more comfortable playing with other people." Because of their involvement in all of Opus 118's student opportunities, it is not surprising that violin has influenced their future goals. "Maybe I will create a violin that people can build," says Wren, who wants to work for Lego when he grows up. Ramsey says, "I think I may want to be a violinist when I grow up." If they apply the same dedication that they do to their involvement with Opus 118, their goals are well within reach!

Opus 118 students and brothers Wren and Ramsey taking a bow at the annual End of Year Concert at The American Academy of Arts and Letters.



Recent Photos & Upcoming Performances

We would love to invite you to hear our wonderful students perform. Below is a list of student performances scheduled for this year. Dates are subject to change; visit www.opus118.org or call (646) 842-2775 for the most up-to-date information. All recitals are held at Central Park East II Middle School (1615 Madison Avenue) beginning at 7PM, unless otherwise stated.

Opus 118 Recital Hours

Tuesday, November 14

Monday, December 1

Thursday, January 25

Tuesday, February 13

Wednesday, March 14

Harlem Chamber Players

St. Mary's Episcopal Church

Saturday, March 24, 4PM

Practice Challenge

Celebration Recital

Friday, April 27, 6PM

Wednesday, May 23

End of Year Concert

The American Academy
of Arts and Letters

Wednesday, June 5th 6:30PM

Friday, June 8, 6:30PM

(Honors Recital)



Our Favorite Photos: Scenes from the End of Year Concert this past spring, held at the Academy of Arts & Letters. **On the Front Cover:** a view from above as students take the stage for the annual End of Year Concert.

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