

COME TOGETHER VIRTUAL PARTY RECAP

On the evening of Thursday, September 24, 200 guests from across the country logged in to watch BHMA's Come Together Virtual Party. They gathered with friends at outdoor viewing parties, or tuned in with family from the comfort of their homes to bid in the auction and enjoy the show. The event's online format, a shift from our annual on-campus gala due to the coronavirus pandemic, provided a new way for attendees to experience our mission, even from afar.

Combining live and pre-recorded portions, the program was emceed by award-winning television anchor and reporter Liz Brunner. She introduced longtime BHMA supporters Keith Lockhart of the Boston Pops Orchestra and Tom Hamilton of Aerosmith, and spoke with Executive Director Michelle Theroux. BHMA musicians were the focal point of the night—performing "Gotta Be Me" by Secret Agent 23 Skidoo, "Watermelon Man" by Herbie Hancock, and "Blue Bossa" by Kenny Dorham. They also joined forces with singer/songwriter Livingston Taylor for the song "All Together Now" by the Beatles, and sang

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alongside Brynn Cartelli, winner of season 14 of NBC's The Voice, singer/songwriter under Elektra Records, and Longmeadow native, for the title track "Come Together."

Support for our program is more critical now than ever before, and because of the generosity of our donors, we were able to raise over \$250,000. These funds will help us deliver quality virtual learning for our individuals who are unable to attend in person, and provide a safe environment for those on campus. Top sponsors of the event include **Come Together Presenter:** Kay & Peter Bernon, Frank & Patti Connor, **All Together Director:** Bonnie & Donald Dwares, Judy & Mike Van Handel, Lauren & Bob Steers, **Together Forever Musicians:** AE Events, John Campbell & Susanna Peyton, Kevin & Claudine Curran, The Heath Family Fund, Jomaa Family Foundation, Joseph Freedman Company, Rosemary & Justin McCormack, PeoplesBank, Phillips Insurance Agency, Webber & Grinnell Insurance, and Laura & Kenneth Wernick.

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Photo by LIVE member Eman Tuzman-Eagan

STOMP: IMPROVISING INSTRUMENTS & MAKING MUSIC OUT OF YOUR SURROUNDINGS

Anything and everything can become an instrument in Music Therapy Internship Supervisor Ben Rosenthal's STOMP class. Launched as part of BHMA's fall semester of expanded virtual programming, STOMP, or corpophonics, is "the use of everyday objects and your body to create percussive sounds." The course encourages group members to repurpose items they have around the house or use their own bodies as improvised instruments, and there is no one way to take part. From jars of coins and keychain holders, to empty cups and baking sheets, Rosenthal challenges students to find a new object to try each week; the only rule is "nothing super breakable," he laughs. Together they experiment with varying timbres and pitches, incorporating corpophonics as they practice percussion techniques from around the world. Even in a virtual space, group members have a strong rapport and shared sense of enthusiasm—feeding off of each other as their different instrument sounds blend together and play through their computer speakers.

STOMP sessions combine interactive and movement-based activities with discussions of the drumming patterns the class is studying. Early in the semester Rosenthal covered the basics of what STOMP is and shared videos of famous ensembles to use as inspiration. As the weeks have passed, the group has delved more into percussion styles from other countries, namely the music of the Ewe people of Ghana, known as Gahu. Filled with distinct parts, Gahu music is dynamic, social, and recreational—fitting for a virtual setting

where exact synchronization can be difficult. Rosenthal's class expands on students' experience with this type of music, as several individuals enrolled in STOMP previously participated in African Drumming Ensemble when it was offered at BHMA a few years ago. Instead of playing along with actual percussion instruments, the group listens to the different pieces of an arrangement, such as the axatse (shaker) or sogo (low-pitched drum), before replicating the pattern in their own way. Whether snapping fingers, or tapping tables, each member adds a unique sound to the virtual ensemble.

"Corpophonics isn't just one thing, it's a bunch of different things," explains LIVE member Emily Webster. It is keeping the beat on your leg, singing a note, and matching pitch through a screen. With its emphasis on creativity and spontaneity, STOMP has quickly become a favorite among students. They overwhelmingly describe it as a fun experience, though a challenging one too—particularly when the tempo increases. As group members try new objects and drumming patterns each week, they learn how to turn everyday sounds into something more. Together they make music out of their surroundings, whatever they may be. Webster notes that the principles of corpophonics can be applied to anything, anywhere—from being around the house, to walking down the street. Rosenthal's aim in starting STOMP as a virtual class was "to offer something that everyone could participate in regardless of their belongings;" he has also demonstrated an enduring lesson about music's universality.



Top Left: Joe, Paige, and Karen Phillips at their outdoor viewing party. Above Left: BHMA musicians perform the song "Come Together" with Brynn Cartelli. Above Right: Highlights from the virtual photo booth.

A MESSAGE FROM BHMA

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Hello everyone,

There is no doubt in our minds that 2020 is a year for the record books! A global pandemic, protests across the country, and political campaigns the likes of which we have never seen were headlines every day. They painted a dismal and sobering note.

We, however, would like to offer you a different perspective, a look at a community that rallied and became stronger in spite of the challenges it faced. BHMA, like so many organizations, closed the doors of its day program on March 17. We weren't able to reopen until August 10, 145 days later, to a hybrid model of in-person and remote programming.

Two weeks after our closure in March, we began offering remote services. These online classes continue to expand and capture, alike, the creativity of our staff and individuals! They provide structure, connection, and engagement for our community. During the early days of the shutdown and even now, remote programming is a lifeline for those who are unable to join us in-person.

Our community is truly committed to keeping everyone safe and healthy. Personal protective equipment, staff surveillance testing, enhanced cleaning and disinfecting protocols, and spaces and activities modifications are now standard procedures. Everyone has jumped in to go above and beyond to ensure, as paramount, the health and well-being of our individuals.

We hope that this newsletter finds you and yours healthy, safe, and well. May the stories shared here bring some light to your day during a time when we need it the most.

With warm regards,

MICHELLE N. THEROUX
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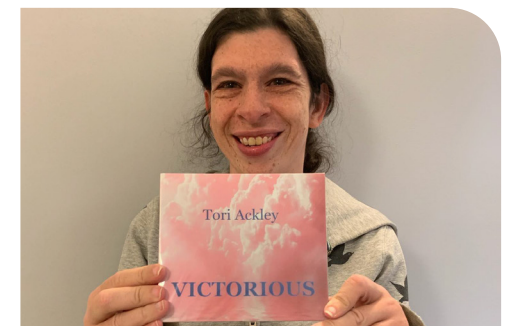
Eman Tuzman-Eagan

In August Eman Tuzman-Eagan launched his own podcast, "Getting to Know You." Created out of a desire to learn more about his peers, Eman has interviewed three students so far—Joey Gagnon, John Libera, and Mary Westgate—and has asked them questions about everything from their music interests, to their experiences living with a disability. Eman hopes to interview more members of the BHMA community, including former students and staff. You can find his podcast on YouTube.



Tori Ackley

Singer/songwriter Tori Ackley recently released her latest album, VICTORIOUS—using her journalistic style to deliver messages of empowerment. The CD is available to buy and stream online at toriacckleymusic.com. To celebrate the release of her album, Tori hosted a virtual release party on Friday, November 13, live streamed from the Bernon Music Center and featuring performances by Tori and her band.



Alexandra Kirwan

Alexandra Kirwan is passionate about politics. She loves learning about presidents and has used her music therapy lessons to make songs about Abraham Lincoln, Franklin Delano Roosevelt, Barack Obama, and the three branches of government. Alexandra is a strong advocate for herself and was thrilled to vote for the first time this Election Day.



Connor Thompson

Connor Thompson has used the pandemic to hone his photography craft, guided by our Vocational Advisor Carly Brunault and his own instincts. From wildlife shots, to nature scenes, he has been building his portfolio of images and growing his business, Spectrum Inspired Photography by Connor S. Thompson. Connor has recently been learning how to use a tripod and was also hired to take headshots for the Doug Flutie, Jr. Foundation for Autism. Check out his many incredible photos at spectruminspiredphotography.pixieset.com.



Graham Campbell

Class of 2009

Graham Campbell has been able to return part time to his job at a barbershop in the Boston area. Following COVID precautions, Graham helps keep the shop clean between appointments. He recently surprised his bosses with a video clip of his playing of Irving Berlin's 'What'll I Do' on the piano, the first time he had shared his music with the barbershop crew, much to their delight.



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