



# CULTURE CONVERSATIONS:

## *REFLECTIONS, DISCUSSIONS, AND EXPERIENCES TO ENRICH THE LIVES OF LEHIGH VALLEY TEENS*

Announcing a collaboration between **The Bach Choir of Bethlehem** and **Allentown Symphony Orchestra**, offering a community youth engagement program that culminates in free attendance to concerts featuring emerging artists as well as world-renowned artists Yo-Yo Ma and Kathryn Stott.

These concerts will serve as catalyst to invite teens to discuss what inspires them and to prompt conversations about the relevance of cultural activities in their future.

## HOW YOU CAN HELP!

We're asking music, art, and theatre teachers from around the Lehigh Valley to share the invitation to participate in the Culture Conversations (CC) program with your students. Interested students will answer a brief survey and write a short essay on what they hope to achieve through fully participating in the program. Deadline for applications is February 28, 2022.



## THE PROGRAM

We're encouraging robust representation of teen voices from around the community, and wish to invite as many students to each conversation as possible.

**Google Classroom / VIRTUAL sessions:** Preparation for each session will involve reading selected materials and/or videos to view prior to conversation. Virtual Sessions will be held live at 8pm. If a student cannot attend the virtual session, they may view an archive recording. We strongly encourage attendance at the live sessions for engaging conversations among the participants and leaders.

Students will submit responses to each session online, including short answer surveys and brief written responses to prompted questions. These should not take more than thirty minutes.



Two teen reporters, Sophie Eljovich and Kyra Kelly, from WDIY 88.1FM may follow-up with participants between each session for further interviews. WDIY will broadcast these interviews on the **Teen Connect** program.

## SAMPLE REFLECTIONS

Discuss your thoughts on the following statements:



- Culture is important to me.
- I feel there are multiple opportunities to experience other cultures in this area.
- I am curious to learn about other cultures.
- In a few sentences, tell us about any new insights you gained from this session.
- What (if any) barriers stop you from participating in live cultural experiences?
- How have cultural experiences improved, expanded or enhanced your development as a person or as an artist?

## CULTURAL ACTIVITIES

**March 13 / 14: ASO Concert: BOLÉRO** – tickets given to all participants who complete a response to Section 1 of the program. Special "Meet and Greet" with cellist, Gabriel Martins.

**April 30: Yo-Yo Ma and Kathryn Stott** – Each student who attends and completes each virtual session and completes the responses prior to April 1, who also commits to completing the entire program, will be considered by random selection to receive a free ticket to the April 30 Yo-Yo Ma and Kathryn Stott Concert. Because this program is engaging youth, tickets will be offered only to teens, not to parents, adult drivers or chaperons. ID and proof of vaccination required at the door.

## SCHEDULE

February		March		April	
17	Program Launch	7	Response to session #1 Due	1	Confirmation to attend Yo-Yo Ma & Kathryn Stott Concert due
28	Application Deadline	12/13	ASO Concert: BOLÉRO		
28	Virtual Session #1	14	Virtual Session #2	18	Virtual Session #3
		21	Response to session #2 Due	25	Response to session #3 Due
				30	Yo-Yo Ma & Kathryn Stott Concert



## VIRTUAL SESSION #1 - BEGINNINGS

**Monday, Feb. 28, 2022 8:00pm EST.** Students will “meet” and share how they started their artistic path and the concept of “Artist as Citizen.”

**Pre-session work: Duration – 1 hour**



Watch Yo-Yo Ma’s [Nancy Hanks 2013 Lecture](#).

*Description: Drawing on his training as a musician and what he has learned traveling the world for more than 30 years as a touring performer, Yo-Yo Ma discusses where in nature, society, and human interactions we can find the greatest creativity, and what we can all do to become contributing and committed citizens. Start viewing at 23:02.*

- **Leela Breithaupt**, executive director of The Bach Choir of Bethlehem
- **Al Jacobsen**, executive director of The Allentown Symphony Association
- **Leila Ramagopal-Pertl** music educator, advocate, and Chair for the Committee on Cultural Inclusion: The College Music Society (*tentative*)

### Sample Reflections

- How do I describe myself as an artist?
- How did I start in music/art/theatre?
- What were the most provocative points of this session?
- What new ideas inspire me to learn more?

**Reflection #1 Due March 7, 2022.**



## VIRTUAL SESSION #2 – WHERE WE ARE NOW

**Monday, Mar. 14, 2022 8:00pm EST.** Students share information about their current access to cultural experiences, and opportunities to grow creatively.

**Pre-Session Work: Duration – approx. 35 minutes**

- Explore the [Kennedy Center Social Impact Sessions](#)
- Read 10 ways music is intrinsically linked to our cultural identity by Chantal Ford



### Session Guests

- **Mark Fitzgerald Wilson**, executive director of Zoellner Arts Center, Lehigh University
- **Hollis Ashby**, executive director of the performance series at Williams Center, Lafayette College
- **Marc Bamuthi Joseph**, Kennedy Center Vice President and Artistic Director of Social Impact (*tentative*)

### Sample Reflections

- How do other teens see students who participate in music, theatre, art?
- How do you explore other cultural experiences?
- What were the most provocative points of this session?
- What new ideas inspire me to learn more?

**Reflection #2 Due March 21, 2022.**





## VIRTUAL SESSION #3 - OUR FUTURE

**Monday, April 18, 2022 8:00pm EST.** In this session we will share reflections of their future regarding cultural experiences, and opportunities to grow creatively.

**Pre-Session Work: Duration – approx. 35 minutes**

- Read the article “[How Art and Culture Can Help Us Rethink Time](#)” by Ella Saltmarshe and Beatrice Pembroke of BBC.com/Future.
- Watch [When the world is burning, is art a waste of time?](#) by R. Alan Brooks. Ted Talk, 12:35.

### Session Guests

- Rachel Roberts, director of Institute for Music Leadership, Eastman School of Music
  - Student/s, Institute for Music Leadership, Eastman School of Music (*tentative*)
  - Madelyn Dundon, musician, actor, dancer (*tentative*)



### Sample Reflections

- How might I continue to participate in music, theatre, art?
- What are my fears and apprehensions for a future in music, theatre, art?
- What do I hope to create in the future?
- What were the most provocative points of this session?
- What new ideas inspire me to learn more?

**Reflection #3 Due April 25, 2022.**



## FINAL REFLECTION

**After attending the April 30, 2022 Concert, students have the option of writing a reflection, or sharing a video reflection of their experiences. These reflections may be shared with our community.**

- How do I define myself as a creative person?
- What were the most valuable things I learned from this experience?
- What do leaders in schools, arts organizations, and community development need to know about you and other students like you?
- How can I keep being curious about the world?
- What will I do differently as a result of this program?



**Final Reflection due May 9, 2022**