FOR THE WOMEN WHO MAKE THE MUSIC
IN THE MUSICAL THEATER INDUSTRY

MAESTRAMUSIC.ORG · INFO@MAESTRAMUSIC.ORG
Maestra envisions a world in which women have equitable access, visibility and creative impact in the musical theater industry.

In this future, at least half of all music-related theater jobs and leadership positions are filled by qualified women, non-binary and TGNC musicians, decidedly inclusive of people of color.

Women are historically and consistently under-represented in musical theater. Maestra provides support, visibility and community to the women who make the music in the musical theater industry. By delivering on our mission, we will be a catalyst and driving force to help achieve gender equity in our industry.
Why Maestra Exists: Women in Music Today
Women in Music Today

Only 22% of musicians in Broadway orchestras are women.

In fact, 25% of Broadway orchestras have ZERO women in the pit.

In other words, 1 in every 4 bands is entirely male.
In the last eight years, out of 98 available Broadway drum chairs, only 2 went to women.

From 2009 - 2020, only 4% of orchestrator jobs on Broadway were held by women.

Only 8% of new Broadway scores in the last 10 years were composed by women.
Women in Music Today

“Women are more than 50% of this country, and women should be more than the token lady on the creative team. We need to be there across the board.”

Lynne Shankel, Music Director & Orchestrator of Broadway’s Allegiance, Composer of Postcard American Town

“Every room that I’ve been in, every show that I’ve worked on that has had more diversity, different perspectives and different voices... those shows have flourished. The more ways we can look at a subject, the better we can understand it.”

Rona Siddiqui, Music Director of A Strange Loop and Program Director at BerkleeNYC
“I am not looking for a goal of 50/50. I am looking for a goal of much more than that. I’m looking for women and women’s sensibility and women’s skills to dominate this industry.”

– Erin McKeown, Composer & Lyricist of Miss You Like Hell
MAESTRA MUSIC began in early 2017 as a series of informal cocktail gatherings hosted by Composer/Lyricist and Music Director Georgia Stitt. Georgia worked as the Music Director of the Off-Broadway revival of Sweet Charity (directed by Leigh Silverman, orchestrated by Mary-Mitchell Campbell, starring Sutton Foster), and the difficulty that team had finding and hiring an all-female band illuminated a problem: women musicians seemed to be invisible.

The cocktails turned into organized meetings with invited guest speakers, and the crowd-sourcing of women composers and pit musicians turned into an online Directory. Maestra was filling a great need in the theater community, linking together these musical women and shining a spotlight in their direction to empower them collectively and individually. The organization’s mission became clear. Maestra was formally incorporated and received 501(c)3 status in January 2019.

Maestra kept growing, adding members, partnerships and opportunities. And then, in March of 2020, when a global pandemic shut down the entire business of producing theater, Maestra pivoted. Not only has the organization survived this very difficult year, but it has grown. Maestra’s online workshops, resources, conversations and communities have created an international network of women musicians whose presence and collective power will lead us to a more equitable industry.
The Evolution of Maestra

- **2017-2018**: Formed a Board of Directors, Advisory Board and Steering Committee
- **Jan. 2019**: Attained 501(c)3 status
- **June 2019**: Held a full-day, professionally facilitated retreat to review survey results and clarify future priorities
- **Oct. 2019**: Formed a DEI Committee and established Student Maestras
- **Jan. 2020**: Hired a part-time Administrative Assistant
- **Mar. 2020**: Created the Virtual Technical Workshop Series
- **Sept. 2020**: Formed a Development Committee
Accomplishments Since Launch
Our support provides women with **information** and **access** to professional opportunities.

- The **Maestra Directory** has helped industry Music Supervisors, Contractors and Producers find and hire more women for music jobs.

- Partnerships with **Hear Her Song** and **Broadway Inspirational Voices** have yielded several commissions and world premieres of songs by Maestras. As part of their 25th anniversary season, Broadway Inspirational Voices committed to champion female composers.

- Partnership with **The Harmony Program** placed Maestra teachers into classrooms with public school students, giving teens in NYC access to the musical theater industry.

- Online **social networks** regularly feature job opportunities or contest and grant application deadlines so Maestras are informed and connected to each other.

- Extensive **Resources** page on our website links to organizations, competitions, grants and data that encourage and support the women in our network.
Our support provides **professional development** to further prepare women for **on-the-job success**.

- **2020's Virtual Technical Workshop Series** offered sixty-one classes to provide the focused education and training necessary for Maestras to be successful in their work. These sold-out workshops covered topics like percussion, music copying, writing an artist statement, music technology, creating inclusivity in a music rehearsal room and more.

- The **Maestra Mentorship** program began in 2018 in partnership with **New York Youth Symphony**'s Musical Theater Songwriting program and has paired nearly 20 mentors with mentees, 50% of which are BIPOC. In 2020, **Student Maestras** launched and has created an additional 35 pairings.

- We provide Maestras **DEI training** and continue to find and promote opportunities for the BIPOC women in our community. In partnership with **Women of 802**, we co-produced **Pass The Mic**, a series of conversations about the contributions of Black Womxn Musicians.
“It has been such a fulfilling opportunity to mentor young, aspiring female musicians, especially those of color, who may not have chosen this field because they didn’t see many involved who looked like them. Maestra allows these hopeful young women to be mentored, to gain confidence in their abilities and to ‘unmute’ their voices, thoughts and ideas, so that the look of Broadway reflects a multi-cultural demographic, just like the world we live in. With Maestra, our voices can speak volumes!”

– Sheilah Walker, Music Director & Conductor
We make it easy for decision makers to find qualified women for job openings.

- The global Directory that we built and maintain holds profile pages for almost 1,000 Maestras in theater markets across the globe.

- We’ve joined forces with MUSE: Musicians United for Social Equity to create a Partner Directory that will increase visibility and provide more industry opportunities for our BIPOC members.

- At the Lilly Awards in May 2019, we announced that there were zero female music contractors working on Broadway and showcased in our Directory the women who were hirable and ready to do the job. As a direct result of that call to action, a Maestra was hired for the spring 2020 season.
We share stories to illustrate the gender gap and the range/depth of talent available to close the gap.

- The Maestra Spotlight event for Disney's Women of Broadway showcased ten Maestra songwriting teams and an all-female band.

- Our blog series called #WomenWhoWowUs publishes regular in-depth interviews with many women across various areas of our industry, shining a light on who they are and what they’ve accomplished.

- Maestra's Timeline of Women Composers on Broadway showcases the paucity of women writing music at the highest level, especially in the Golden Age of Broadway (1930-1970).

- In partnership with the American Federation of Musicians and The Dramatists Guild, we are gathering and analyzing data about women in the musical theater industry and will present our findings publicly.

- Our Facebook, Twitter and Instagram feeds regularly feature information and insights to tell the stories of women in the industry.
“Most of my mentors were men and I just thought that was fairly natural, but recently I’ve come to understand how important visual representation is. Maestra is that: making things more visible, getting people out there, giving opportunities to people.”

Kristy Norter,
Saxophone Soloist for *Tina: The Tina Turner Musical* and Music Contractor for *SIX*

“I use the Directory frequently to hire musicians. I also have been contacted by others who use the Directory seeking people with my skills — and as a transgender woman, the opportunities Maestra has created for women of all backgrounds have been invaluable to me getting in the room.”

Anessa Marie,
Composer & Music Director, Founder of Phoenix Trans Choir of NYC
We provide **community-building** and **networking opportunities** to women in the industry.

- **Maestra Moms**, a network of Maestras who are also parents, has an active Facebook group and enjoys meet-ups and picnics, for which Maestra provides childcare.

- Hosted in the homes of our members, **Maestra Salons** allow members to share music and music-making.

- **Regional Facebook Groups** connect Maestras around the world. Each group has its own online presence and community of followers.

- **Maestra Care** provides support and information about mental health and wellness along with resources for emergency relief to Maestras in need.
At *Monthly Meetings* in NYC and on Zoom, Maestra composers get to know each other and share information and contacts.

**Featured guest speakers have included:**

- Emily Grishman *(Music Copyist)*
- Lynne Shankel *(Orchestrator)*
- Jeanine Tesori *(Composer)*
- Mary-Mitchell Campbell *(Broadway Music Supervisor)*
- Kirsten Childs *(Composer/Lyricist/Bookwriter)*
- AnnMarie Milazzo *(Vocal Designer)*
- Stacey Mindich *(Broadway Producer)*
- Marsha Norman and Julia Jordan *(The Lilly Awards)*
- Gretchen Cryer and Nancy Ford *(Broadway Songwriters)*
- Lynn Ahrens *(Broadway Lyricist)*
- Schele Williams *(Theatrical Director)*
- Laura Lee Everett *(Opera America and Women’s Opera Network)*
- Mei Ann Teo *(Musical Theater Factory)*
- Kathleen Marsh *(Founder & CEO of MusicNotes.com)*
- Lia Vollack *(Film Music Executive/Broadway Producer)*
“I get the same feeling every time I go to a Maestra meeting: I walk away feeling so inspired, so connected to people, like I have a support network for anything that I need in this industry. It’s so important to have that when you’re a writer in this business, because what we do is so solitary so much of the time. Being connected to a wider group of people is crucial.”

Carmel Dean, Composer of Renascence and Music Director of Spelling Bee, American Idiot, If/Then, and Hands On A Hard Body

“Maestra has helped me meet some really wonderful people, some of whom I’ve gone on to work with. It’s created an opportunity for some really great conversations with other women composers. We all have our own story, our own relationship to what is expected of us as women, and we all love music so deeply.”

Dr. Masi Asare, Composer/Lyricist/Playwright and Performance Studies faculty at Northwestern University
Future Growth
Bolster our call to action by telling the story of women in the musical theater through **irrefutable data**.

- **Statistical Research**: Gathering statistics across race, gender and age
- Our research will be in partnership with the **American Federation of Musicians (Local 802)** and **The Dramatists Guild**, filling a gap in analysis, which has **never considered the race and/or gender** of industry composers or theater musicians.
- Our report aims to supplement The Lilly Awards’ presentation of “The Count,” which was a game-changer for women playwrights but did not incorporate the contributions of composers. We plan to present our findings in Spring/Summer 2021.

### Future Growth: Storytelling

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Instrument</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Guitarists</td>
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<tr>
<td>Keyboardists</td>
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<tr>
<td>Percussionists</td>
<td>5.2%</td>
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<td>Brass Players</td>
<td>6.7%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Associate Conductors</td>
<td>9.6%</td>
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Data source: American Federation of Musicians, Local 802
Future Growth: Storytelling

Bolster our call to action by telling the story of women in the musical theater industry – past, present and future.

- **Back To Work Campaign:** Create a social media campaign planned for summer/fall 2021 that uses our data findings to guide post-pandemic hiring, emphasizing that women must be considered for ALL jobs.

- **Timeline:** Expand the Timeline of Women Composers to include Off-Broadway shows and test the hypothesis that there has historically been a glass ceiling for women composers.

- **Blog Writers:** Increase the volume of writing and the kinds of writers we can attract by paying them for their work.
Provide **much-needed resources** to women in the musical theater industry.

- **Mentorship**: Further expand the Maestra mentorship program that pairs Maestra mentors and mentees and provides them with access to and information about their chosen fields, with a commitment to intersectionality.

- **Virtual Technical Workshops**: When the theater industry came to a standstill in March 2020, Maestra offered our workshops at no cost to the participant. Our goal is to provide that service year-round, requiring us to underwrite the program entirely.

- **Directory 2.0**: In addition to the ongoing maintenance and growth of our Directory, we are adding more features, including video profile introductions and newly searchable data about shows written by Maestras.
Future Growth: Infrastructure

Invest in **professional services** and **staffing** to build on our early success and propel our work forward.

- **Part-time Staff**: As we grow, so will our part-time staff, which will expand to include a Director of Programs, Director of Development, Grant Writer, Communications/Social Media Coordinator, Data Manager, Statistician and Workshop Instructors.

- **Operational Costs**: Enhance our operations to match our growing staff and programs including website development, graphic design, accounting/finance, legal, catering and hospitality, space rental, payroll, marketing and press.
“I’m very fortunate to be a part of Maestra, and I’m especially fortunate that in my lifetime, something like this exists. I’m happy to participate in the long road to equality.”

Elise Frawley, Broadway violist and Founder of Women of 802 (American Federation of Musicians)

“Initially I was just part of the Directory, but during the pandemic I kept returning to the community. I am constantly in awe of the commitment and follow-through of Maestra members.”

Monica Davis, Broadway violinist/violist, Founder of “Pass The Mic” series, Executive Board of Local 802
“I’m so impressed with all the women I’ve met at Maestra. I don’t think there was anything like this when we came to New York. I think back to the ’60s, and there weren’t that many women in orchestras on Broadway. I remember one time, I was a rehearsal pianist for a show, and I asked somebody where the women’s bathroom was, and they didn’t know. So somebody else had to be asked, and then the contractor came up and he got very angry. He said, ‘This is why I don’t want women in the pit! We don’t have a bathroom for women!’ I mean, it’s unbelievable now. These are things you wouldn’t think would have happened, but they really did.”

– Nancy Ford, Composer of I’m Getting My Act Together and Taking It on the Road
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