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UniSound Launches Full-Time Black Teaching Artist-in-Residence Expansion

After three successful seasons of Black Teaching Artists-In-Residence program, UniSound expands the program to include a new full-time teaching artist.

PITTSBURGH, Pennsylvania (May 8, 2023) – UniSound is expanding the scope of its existing Black Teaching Artist program, which supports the artistic practice and professional development of Black music teaching artists in the Pittsburgh region. In the fall of 2023, UniSound will welcome the inaugural UniSound Black Teaching Artist Fellow, who will be selected through a competitive nationwide search. The UniSound Black Teaching Artist Fellowship is a two-year, full-time position for an early career music teaching artist who identifies as Black/of African descent. Due to the current needs of the Pittsburgh ecosystem, for the 2023-2025 session priority will be given to a violin teaching artist. The BTAR Fellow will split their time between teaching private, group classes, and chamber coachings through a partnership with Hope Academy and Guardians of Sound Hip Hop Orchestra and also have the opportunity to facilitate workshops in community and educational settings. The BTAR Fellow will also be encouraged to collaborate and perform with local arts organizations (for additional compensation). The fellow will receive a yearly salary ranging \$35,000-\$40,000 along with a housing/transportation stipend, as well as opportunities for professional mentorship and networking.

“Act3 is excited about the prospect of widening the net for supporting Black music teaching artists in our region. By welcoming new Black teaching artists to our region, we will ensure that more children interested in learning music can see themselves in their instructors” says Act3 partner, Dr. Kendra Ross. UniSound hopes to remedy this gap by creating an opportunity for a Black music teaching artist to come to Pittsburgh to live, teach, create, and thrive. In doing so, this will create more opportunities for Black and brown students to develop their musicianship in a nurturing environment and make space for Black music teaching artists from around the country to experience and benefit from the rich musical and cultural landscape of our great region.

This program expansion has been funded by a grant from the Hillman Foundation. UniSound is also currently funded by The Heinz Endowments. Previous funders include Arts Equity Reimagined Fund, The Allegheny Regional Asset District, and an anonymous funder. The job posting is now live. Interested parties can [apply here](#). Priority review will be given to applications received by June 12th.

In addition to the expanded BTAR Fellow position, UniSound will also offer the fourth season of its Black Teaching Artist-in-Residence program for 2023-2024. BTAR is a nine-month program to support the music practice and professional development of Black teaching artists in the Greater Pittsburgh region. The artists-in-residence will serve as thought partners with UniSound and its member organizations, and each teaching artist will conclude their residency with a project of their choosing, such as a workshop, a recital, or a lecture. Applications for the BTAR program will open in July.

More on the Program Partners:

The initial schedule for the inaugural Black Teaching Artist in Residence Fellowship will include working with students from three UniSound organizations. In coming months as the format and schedule for the Fellow is solidified, other UniSound organizations may also request hours with the BTAR Fellow. The three primary program partners are:

Guardians of Sound Hip Hop Orchestra is a music performance and education project using current mainstream music through the lens of acoustic and orchestral instruments aided by modern music technologies. The Orchestra is comprised of instrumentalists, singers, and Emcees working primarily with the music of "now". The model relies heavily on tapping students' self-motivation and inherent passion for music by working with material of foremost relevance to them. Hip Hop Orchestra combines the use of music/media technology with traditional acoustic instruments to facilitate music learning and performance in today's technology-centric musical landscape. They compose, arrange, perform, record, and teach current music using acoustic and orchestral instruments, and voices. By doing this well, they inspire today's music creators, producers, performing artists, educators and students to use acoustic sound, musicians and instruments in their work. Guardians of Sound Hip Hop Orchestra is comprised of multiple flexible ensembles of professional, pre-professional, and youth musicians infusing a more organic, less heavily processed sound into current mainstream music making.

Founded in 1999 to bring arts education to children and youth in the community, **Hope Academy of Music and the Arts**, East Liberty Presbyterian Church's largest outreach program, offers a safe place where young people of diverse racial, ethnic, cultural, socioeconomic, religious and linguistic backgrounds can further their personal and artistic growth through the study and performance of theater, dance and music. They strive to create a diverse and inclusive artistic community that provides deep arts instruction through a sequential and

progressive program; that supports the personal and artistic growth of students and teaching artists alike; and contributes to our community's positive growth and cultural vibrancy.

Youth Chamber Connection is a chamber music program for young musicians in the Pittsburgh and tri-state area. YC² is a shared program of Three Rivers Young Peoples Orchestras (TRYPO) and the Pittsburgh Youth Symphony Orchestra (PYSO), and is open to all interested students, regardless of music program affiliation.

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About UniSound: [UniSound](#)'s mission is to create a more accessible, sustainable, and equitable youth music ecosystem in the greater Pittsburgh area through building an alliance of organizations that provide music education and performance opportunities for youth. UniSound is a program of Three Rivers Young Peoples Orchestras, but is ultimately a collaborative project of more than 40 Pittsburgh area organizations that share a common trait of valuing and/or providing opportunities for children and/or teens to create music out-of-school time.

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