



# KVNO *in* 2023

**A Year in Review**



Listeners,

Thank you for joining us for another incredible year of Omaha's Classical Radio. We offer you a simple promise: timeless music and timely information. Our mission is community-driven, and we create a space on the air that is uplifting, unique, and open to all.

But fulfilling this promise takes a dedicated staff and tremendous support from listeners like you. We are one of only 55 fully classical stations in the country, and classical music thrives in the Omaha metro because of you. Please join me to reflect on 2023 at KVNO – a transformative year of music, art, and community. Stay Classical, Omaha!

Sincerely,

Sherry Kennedy Brownrigg



## Year at a Glance - 2023 by the Numbers



**8,760**  
hours of programming

**1,342**  
new app users



**13**  
local on-air hosts



**~30K**  
weekly listeners



**280+**  
albums added to the music library



**50-50**

KVNO listeners are evenly split between men and women



**24/7**  
classical music



**51<sup>st</sup>** year on the air

**139** Arts Today feature stories



**162%**  
higher social media engagement



**45** Otis Mug Mondays



**4**  
Live Broadcasts of the Omaha Symphony



**260**  
Symphonic Sunrises



**52**  
"Rides of the Valkyries"

**1,040**  
BBC News broadcasts





# On the Air

## *24/7 Classical Excellence*

At KVNO, we are all classical, all the time. We believe in the power of classical music to uplift, inspire, educate, and entertain. You can tune to Classical 90.7 at any hour, day or night, and hear the greatest music of all time.

We broadcast many national favorites, like Performance Today, Exploring Music, and the Chicago Symphony Orchestra. But KVNO has a strong commitment to local programs, by and for our community in the Omaha metro. Each week, 70% of our programming is locally produced by KVNO from our Dodge Street studio, and our hosts are proud to live right here in your neighborhoods.

In 2023, Morning Classics remained our most popular program with Omaha icons Otis Twelve and Jeff Koterba at the board. This year, Otis was inducted into the Nebraska Broadcasters Association Hall of Fame, celebrating a radio career spanning over 50 years with this well-deserved honor. And Jeff was appointed in August to a three-year term on the Omaha Public Art Commission – only one of many hats he wears as radio host, cartoonist, author, and musician.

Though listening peaked in the mornings, our audience stayed strong throughout the day, with listeners tuning in for hosts Sherry Kennedy Brownrigg, Ben Rasmussen, Emily McIvor, and Coleen Cook. We also welcomed two new hosts this year, Allyson Jay on *Modern Classics* and Katrina Naraine on *Nocturnes*. Our Saturday audience joined fan-favorites Fernando Montejano and Steve Weiler. And Michael Moriarty remained the steadfast voice of *Starlite Classics* - and the only host on-air seven days a week.

We said a fond farewell this summer to Dr. Chris Allen, retiring General Manager, and welcomed Sherry Brownrigg into the role on July 1. Sherry previously served as KVNO Station Manager and is the only female General Manager in Omaha radio.

## Going Global

With the KVNO website and app, you don't have to be in Omaha to love Omaha's Classical Radio. In 2023, listeners used our app in 49 different states and 61 different countries. (We missed you, Rhode Island!)

# On the Air, Continued

## *Diversity in Classical Music*

Sherry Brownrigg was invited to speak on a panel on diversity in classical music at the Public Radio Content Conference this summer. She shared the daily work that goes into expanding the KVNO canon and adding diversity to our music library. Roughly one third of pieces added to our library this year were composed by or performed by women and people of color. Diversity is especially visible in *Reflections of Us*, *Feminine Fusion*, and *Modern Classics with Allyson Jay*.

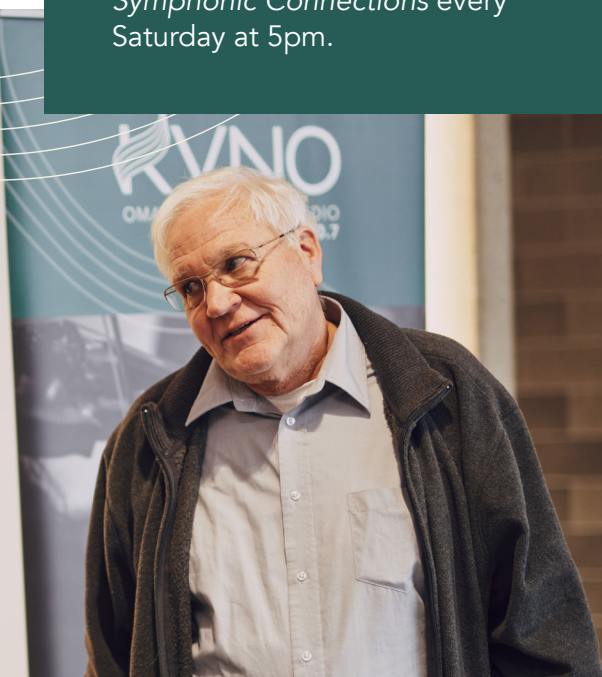
*Reflections of Us* premiered on KVNO this spring and amplifies diverse voices in classical music. The thirteen-episode series is hosted by Dr. Derrick Fox, former UNO Director of Choral Activities. Dr. Fox takes us on a journey through the music, people, and lived experiences that have long been excluded from classical music.

## *Broadcasting Local*

If you tuned into KVNO this year, you likely heard a performance by the Omaha Symphony. We are fortunate to live in an incredible city for classical music, and we share a Symphony recording every day with Symphonic Sunrise. *In Concert with the Omaha Symphony* returned in spring, featuring performances from the 21/22 concert season. And you heard live Symphony performances as they happened on 90.7, with regular live broadcasts hosted by your favorite KVNO voices.



*Symphonic Connections* debuted on November 18th on KVNO. An exciting addition to our Saturday lineup, this program is hosted by Ernest Richardson, Resident & Principal Pops Conductor at the Omaha Symphony. Ernest uses his expertise to draw new connections with the emotional, spiritual, and visceral impact of symphonic music. You can hear *Symphonic Connections* every Saturday at 5pm.



# Your Source for the Arts

KVNO is your home for local arts reporting. Gabriel Escalera leads the KVNO Arts Desk and connects you with the latest in Omaha arts & culture through original feature stories and interviews. You can

hear Arts Today every weekday at 8:30 am during *Morning Classics* and 4pm during the *Classical Commute*. Revisit your favorite stories from the year at KVNO.org.

## Gabriel's Picks

#1



Photo Credit: JaQuan Clements (Bryson Tiller)

### **'The Steelhouse' Opens This Week | May 10, 2023**

The Steelhouse, managed by Omaha Performing Arts, celebrates their grand opening and fills a gap in Omaha music venues, attracting new artists to the city.

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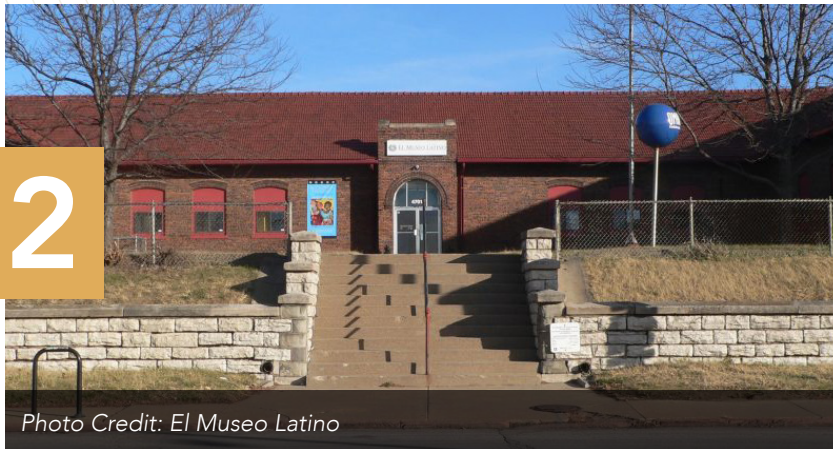


Photo Credit: El Museo Latino

### **'El Museo Latino' Begins Long-Waited Restoration | April 21, 2023**

El Museo Latino begins a long-awaited renovation, shortly after celebrating their 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary. Executive Director Magdalena García shares the exciting plans with KVNO.

#3



Photo Credit: Brittany Brooke Crow

### **Artist Creates Sculptures with Roadkill Animals | January 3, 2023**

Artist Lee Emma Running repurposes roadkill in her sculptures, combining animal bones, kiln-cast glass, and precious metals in her work. She talks through the unique logistics and inspiration behind her work.



# Your Source for the Arts, *Continued*

## Between Two Covers

In *Between Two Covers*, we bring you original book reviews twice a month from our partners at The Next Chapter Bookstore and UNO's Writer's Workshop.

## Arts Calendar

The KVNO Arts Calendar is quickly becoming the hub for art events in Omaha. We saw a need in the metro for an event calendar dedicated to the arts and launched the Arts Calendar in September. The calendar has grown to include hundreds of concerts, plays, gallery openings, workshops, and more. Visit the KVNO website to explore the events you don't want to miss.

## NBA Awards

Lindsay Tague, KVNO Arts Reporter, won two awards from the Nebraska Broadcasters Association for Arts Today features. Lindsay is a graduating UNO student who competed against professional reporters across the state. Her winning stories were "Rose Theater Education Programs" and "Nebraska Wind Symphony and Tony Snyder." We also congratulate KVNO student worker Jenna Janssen for winning a significant NBA broadcasting scholarship this year. *(Pictured Left)*

## Artists & Organizations Featured in 2023

- Opera Omaha
- Omaha Community Playhouse
- Omaha Performing Arts
- Omaha Symphony
- Benson Theatre
- Ming Toy Gallery
- Gallery 1516
- KANEKO
- Pottawattamie Arts, Culture & Entertainment (PACE)
- Roberta & Bob Rogers Gallery
- Samuel Bak Museum
- Great Plains Theatre
- Brownie Bar Bakery
- UNO School of Music
- Omaha Chamber Music Society
- Bemis Center for Contemporary Arts
- Lee Emma Running
- Cindy Rae Mathiasen
- McGuigan Arts Academy
- Yates Illuminates
- Salt Creek Song Festival
- Nebraska Crossroads Music Festival
- Omaha Conservatory of Music
- Papillion-La Vista Community Theatre
- UNO BOCH Festival
- National Composers Orchestra
- Old School Shakespeare Omaha
- Omaha Film Festival
- Résonance
- Vesper Concerts
- El Museo Latino
- BLUEBARN Theatre
- Omaha Comedy Fest

# Classical Kids

Every month, KVNO honors a new Classical Kid who excels in their music studies. We celebrate young musicians from the metro who play, sing, and compose. Each Classical Kid shares their story in an interview on KVNO and earns a \$300 scholarship from the Soener Foundation, in memory of Mary Belle Soener, to continue their music education. In the program's history, nearly 300 young artists have been honored as KVNO Classical Kids.

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*The sound resonating in my head, ears, and the space around me is what I love about music.*

– Ella, June Classical Kid



In January, the 2022 Classical Kids wowed the audience at our annual Classical Kids Showcase at the Strauss Performing Arts Center. The showcase is free to the public and a celebration of the incredible musical talent in our community.

# Introducing the 2023 Classical Kids

January



**Marty Si, 10**  
*Piano, Guitar, Drums,  
Double Bass*

February



**James Murphy, 9**  
*Piano, Composition*

March



**Illyanna Robinson, 12**  
*Piano, Composition, Violin*

April



**Jeremy Wang, 11**  
*Violin, Piano, Composition*

May



**Vincent Pei, 8**  
*Piano*

June



**Ella Flamminio, 10**  
*Piano, Trumpet,  
Vocal Music*

July



**Angie Kang, 10**  
*Piano, Violin, Vocal Music*

August



**Caleb Li, 8**  
*Piano, Violin*

September



**Leo Duda, 13**  
*Cello, French Horn, Piano*

October



**Passion Yu, 8**  
*Cello, Piano, Composition*

November



**Grace Alvarado-Llasaca, 13**  
*Piano, Violin, Flute,  
Vocal Music*

December



**Gus Solberg, 10**  
*Cello*



# In the Community



## *Chevalier Screening & Panel*

In April, we teamed up with Film Streams and other local organizations to host the Omaha premiere of the movie *Chevalier*, a film that centers on the life of Black French composer Joseph Bologne. A sold-out audience joined us for the screening and panel discussion, moderated by Jeff Koterba. We were honored to partner with The House of Afros, Capes & Curls; Joy Brings Light; and Alliance Française on this unforgettable evening.



## *Nebraska Crossroads Music Festival*

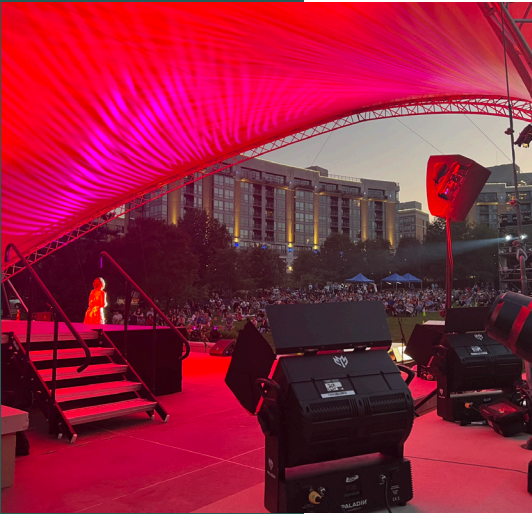
KVNO joined the Nebraska Crossroads Music Festival as the media sponsor for their first Omaha concert in August. The free concert at the Gene Leahy Mall featured over 35 musicians from around the world, with an estimated 3,000 attendees. The night included the world-premiere of "Dawning," a co-commission with the New York Philharmonic and Lincoln's Symphony Orchestra. And you may have recognized KVNO hosts Otis Twelve and Gabriel Escalera as your charming emcees for the evening!



## *Good Vibrations Used Instrument Drive*

In August, KVNO joined forces with Good Vibrations for our third annual Used Instrument Drive. Good Vibrations is an education program through the Omaha Chamber Music Society. Established in 2018, the program serves kids in need across Nebraska, providing music students with donated and professionally repaired instruments of all kinds. Our listeners have donated nearly 175 instruments to date, ranging from brass to strings to an accordion...and everything in between.

# In the Community, *Continued*



## *Opera Outdoors*

We returned as media sponsor for Opera Outdoors in September, kicking off Opera Omaha's season with a selection of opera's greatest hits. Around 2,000 people joined us for this beautiful free concert at Turner Park, hosted bilingually in English and Spanish by KVNO's Jeff Koterba and Gabriel Escalera. The KVNO table entertained kids and adults alike with Plinko and free prizes, courtesy of your friends at Classical 90.7.



## *An Intimate Evening with Bill McGlaughlin & Karrin Allyson*

In November, KVNO welcomed *Exploring Music* host Bill McGlaughlin and jazz singer Karrin Allyson to the Strauss Performing Arts Center for An Intimate Evening. Bill and Karrin are partners in life and shared insight into their lives and musical careers in a cozy conversation with Jeff Koterba. Karrin is a celebrated UNO alum and delighted her hometown audience with Billy Joel's "And So It Goes." Thank you for joining us for an evening of community, humor, and music!

## **KVNO Around Town**

You may have seen the KVNO table at one of 14 different partner events this year. Stop by to say hello and pick up KVNO pens, mints, and flyers!

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*Good Vibrations is thrilled to partner with KVNO for our yearly used instrument drive... We are so very grateful to KVNO and the Omaha community for their support of our mission.*

**- Judy Divis, OCMS President**

# Listener Support

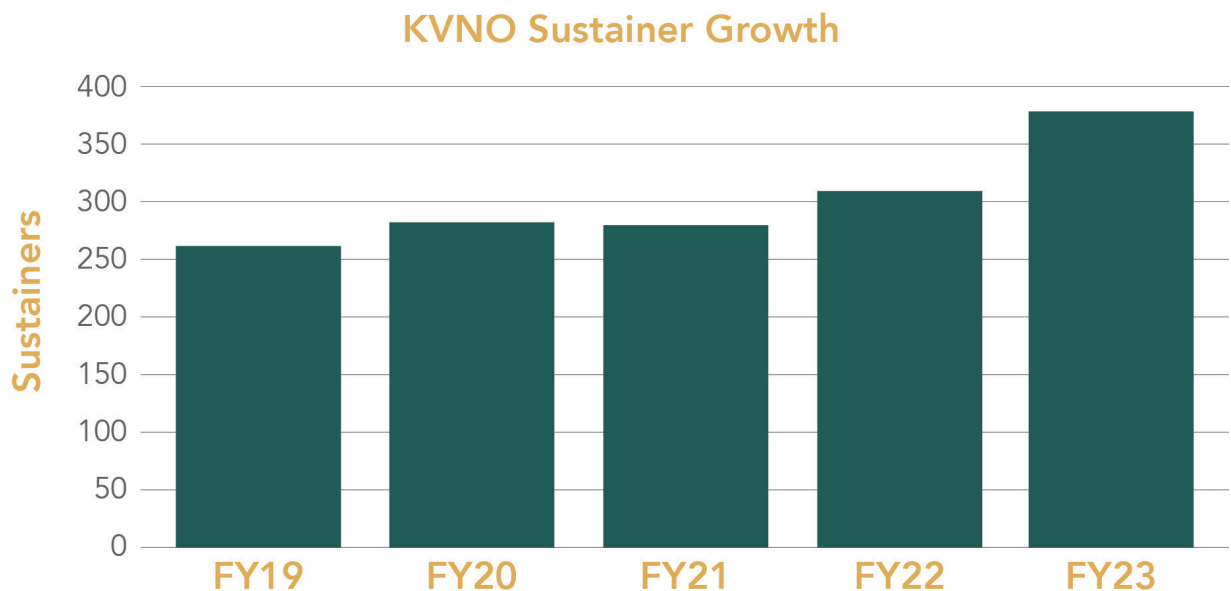
Listener support is the single most important funding source for KVNO. We are a public radio station, providing barrier-free classical music to our community. No subscription fees, no advertisements. KVNO is made possible because of you. And this year, you showed up for Omaha's Classical Radio, providing the resources we need to operate.

In the 2023 fiscal year (July 2022 to June 2023), KVNO raised over \$300,000 in direct unrestricted listener contributions, thanks to the generous support of more than 1,400 donors. We also welcomed 216 new donors to the KVNO family. Thank you for joining our circle of support!

## What is a KVNO Sustainer?

Sustaining donors are essential to the future of public media. KVNO Sustainers donate monthly or quarterly, providing a reliable source of support throughout the year. A sustaining gift fits in your budget and is one of the best ways to help KVNO.

Each sustainer is a critical part of funding this station, and we thank you for creating the habit of support for classical radio. Our community of sustainers is growing steadily, with our largest increase in recent history this year.



## The Future Fund

KVNO has served the Omaha metro for five decades with the support of our listeners – and we turn to our community to help us build a stable foundation for many years to come. The KVNO Future Fund is an endowment that will help fund a large portion of our yearly operating expenses well into the future. The Future Fund will help KVNO overcome unexpected hurdles and take advantage of surprise opportunities in the years to come.

With the support of many committed friends of KVNO, the Future Fund principal balance grew over 25% in the 2023 fiscal year. You are helping us build the promise of classical radio for generations to come.

*For more information on the KVNO Future Fund or legacy gifts, please contact Ben Rasmussen, Development Director, at [brasmussen@unomaha.edu](mailto:brasmussen@unomaha.edu) or (402) 554-5877.*

## Thank You

- American Midwest Ballet
- Cathedral Arts Project
- Chocolat Abeille
- Eye Consultants P.C.
- Gloss Salon & Day Spa
- Harvest Fair Trade Market
- Joslyn Castle
- Krishnadeep Concert Series
- Lauritzen Gardens
- Nebraska Crossroads Music Festival
- Max I. Walker
- Chelsea Mell (Platinum Realty)
- Omaha Chamber Music Society
- Omaha Conservatory of Music
- Omaha Film Festival
- Omaha Performing Arts
- Omaha Public Library Foundation
- Omaha Symphony
- Opera Omaha
- Outlook Nebraska
- Project Harmony
- Samuel Bak Museum
- Spirit World
- UNO Gerontology Department
- UNO Political Science Department
- UNO Summer Musical Theatre Academy
- Vesper Concerts
- Voices of Omaha

\*Program sponsors in FY23 (July 2022 to June 2023)



## Program Sponsorship

You've probably heard Otis say the words "Support for programming on KVNO is provided by..." on the air, but did you know these sponsor announcements play a crucial role in the station you love? The generous support of our local partners is a vital source of revenue for KVNO.

In the 2023 fiscal year, sponsors in our community provided nearly \$70,000 in support for Omaha's Classical Radio. Please join us in thanking the local businesses and organizations who help make KVNO possible.

For more information on Program Sponsorship, please contact Emma Cooney, Development Associate, at [ecooney@unomaha.edu](mailto:ecooney@unomaha.edu) or (402) 554-5874.

*We choose to sponsor KVNO because of their important mission of making classical music accessible in Omaha. We love KVNO, so it only makes sense to support the station.*

*– Max I. Walker, KVNO Sponsor*

