Igniting a Passion for the Arts,
on campus and throughout the Upper Valley
NEW HOP DIRECTOR TO ARRIVE IN APRIL

We are pleased to welcome Mary Lou Aleskie, a leader in the arts world known for the distinctive programming she has created over more than three decades, as the next Howard Gilman ’44 Director of the Hop. Aleskie comes to us after 11 years as the director of the International Festival of Arts & Ideas, a critically acclaimed series in New Haven, CT that blends performances from around the globe with dialogues among leading thinkers. It has been cited by the National Endowment of the Arts as one of the top five arts presentations in the nation. She follows Jeff James, who retired in 2015, and interims Marga Rahmann ’78 and Maria Laskaris ’84.

An internationally known advocate for the power of the arts to unite, Aleskie also chairs the board of the International Society for the Performing Arts, a New York-based association consisting of 500 members from 60 countries. She says, “I think the world is getting smaller every day, and the more that we learn to understand each other, the better.”

Since her appointment Aleskie has been making frequent trips up Interstate 91 to get better acquainted with Dartmouth and the Upper Valley and to settle her family: husband Peter Webster, a theater and opera director, and their 17-year-old daughter, Rosemarie. Her first trip of the new year, in early January, was a chance to connect with longtime friends and collaborators who also have long history with the Hop. “I was so excited that my first visit to the Hop featured both Mark Morris Dance Group and the Silk Road Ensemble, artists who have figured prominently in my presenting work over the last 15 years. What a treat to share the opening night at the Hop of their collaboration, Layla and Majnun. I look forward to welcoming both companies back to Dartmouth many times in the future.”

“We are thrilled to have such a creative and experienced leader in the arts take the helm at the Hop,” says Provost Carolyn Dever. “Mary Lou has produced a wide variety of prestigious festivals and performances, and advanced cultural understanding through arts engagement. Our extended community will benefit from her energy and expertise.”

CIRCUS BRINGS LEARNING TO LIFE

Mary Gaetz, Education and Outreach Coordinator

Even in the dark it was hard to miss the wide eyes and grins on the faces of students attending Cirque Mechanics’ Pedal Punk school performances this past December. The School Matinee Series (supported in part by Hop membership) provides subsidized access for schools and registered home schools to high-quality performances, creating unique educational opportunities. Martin Butler, math teacher at Albert Bridge School in Brownsville, VT, appreciated how the show reinforced his lessons about simple machines. Krissey Preston, home school teacher, brought her son Ethan to the show. “We just wrapped up a physical science unit and we knew that we were coming to [Pedal Punk] so we tied it in.” Back at school following the show, South Royalton School students built bicycles and created steampunk-inspired art.

“I thought a lot about how much work it took to do all these things—they worked really hard.” Grace, South Royalton School student

Student reactions to the show were enthusiastic. Teresa from Albert Bridge School found connections with her class work: “We’ve been learning about bikes—how things are powered and how they work. That’s what the play was about. My class is doing water wheels, using water to move a wheel. On a bike you have to pedal it to power it.” Homeschooler Kevin Pillsbury was excited to see a BMX bike moving like the gyroscope he was working with at home. Watching her students react to a juggler dropping an object, South Royalton School teacher Nicole Stuart found a teachable moment outside of the traditional curriculum. “He modeled that it’s OK to fail, to get right back up, be seamless in that transition and smile. The students cheered, acknowledging how difficult that could be.”

In a partnership with the Montshire Museum of Science, schools and home schools attending Pedal Punk were offered a discount on workshops exploring scientific principles of the show. Montshire staff led students through a workshop about the science of balance, and students made a balance toy to take home. Kevin’s mother Meg Pillsbury appreciates the creativity of the school matinee series, but she also appreciates the price point. “We love these shows—we could never afford to bring the family to the night performances. We are so thankful to be able to do it.”

“Some of these kids have never been to Hanover, some have never been at a theater before. It’s valuable in so many ways. We’re just lucky to be able to take advantage of it.” Martin Butler, Albert Bridge School teacher

Students from Chester-Andover Elementary School in Chester, VT, react to Cirque Mechanics’ Pedal Punk.
One consistent highlight of the Hop summer season is an evening with filmmaker Ken Burns. Over the past two decades, the Walpole, NH, documentarian has generously brought his new work to Dartmouth for special advance screenings. Hop audiences have been among the first in the country to see episodes from his world-renowned series such as *The War*, *Prohibition*, *The Tenth Inning*, *The Dust Bowl*, *National Parks* and *The Roosevelts*. In 2015, Burns presented a fascinating work-in-progress episode from his current project on the Vietnam War.

The Hop is delighted to welcome him back on July 13. Ken and co-director Lynn Novick will present an evening of highlights from their now-finished series *The Vietnam War*, giving Hop audiences a first look before its Fall 2017 PBS premiere.

Dartmouth History Professor Edward Miller served as a consultant on the Vietnam project starting in 2012. The Hop screening is scheduled to coincide with a related academic conference which, says Miller, is “part of the efforts to produce a major new research collection entitled *The Cambridge History of the Vietnam War*. This will be a three-volume collection of essays written by top scholars in the world on various aspects on the history of the war.” Along with Burns and Novick, Miller and a few local veterans will participate in a post-screening discussion.

Since they regularly juggle multiple concurrent projects, Florentine Films has been crafting *Vietnam* for years. The 10-part, 18-hour series sheds new light on the military, political, cultural, social and human dimensions of a tragedy of epic proportions. Structured chronologically, it is built around interviews and personal stories of nearly 100 American and Vietnamese witnesses—veterans as well as civilians—who lived through the war. Their intimate, personal “bottom up” testimony will be interwoven with a parallel “top down” political and military narrative. Professor Miller adds:

“I’m excited by the fact that the film includes a great deal of testimony from Vietnamese people about their diverse experiences. Most previous American documentary films about Vietnam have focused mainly on the decisions of US leaders and on the experiences of Americans, with only fleeting attention to Vietnamese actors and perspectives. I think that this is going to be one of the most distinctive and interesting things about the film for many viewers.”

It’s a groundbreaking 360-degree narrative of the war, telling the story from all sides as it has never before been told. Adds Professor Miller: “I think that this film will ensure that 2017 will be a big year for the discussion of Vietnam War history and memory in this country and around the world.”

**KEN BURNS RETURNS**
Sydney Stowe, Acting Director, Hopkins Center Film

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**LIVE…BUT ON SCREEN**
Rebecca Bailey, Publicity Coordinator

In the 2015-16 season, Benedict Cumberbatch-mania came to Hanover. Hop patrons could not get enough of this star of stage, screen and TV’s *Sherlock* appearing as Hamlet in the National Theatre Live in HD series. After five sold-out screenings in the Loew and one in 900-seat Spaulding Auditorium, Hop Film finally slaked the vast Cumber-thirst.

Hamlet ranks as the Hop’s most successful instance of “event cinema”—a term which describes filmed live events and other broadcasts available only in movie theaters.

At the Hop this category now includes Met Opera Live in HD and broadcasts from British theaters and major concert venues. The newest kid on the event cinema block is Exhibition on Screen, which offers close-up explorations of some of the world’s best art treasures.

“The price [$15] is attractive and the audiences seem to appreciate the chance to see and learn more about art in a gorgeous presentation,” says Sydney Stowe, acting director of Hop Film. “The series brings some of the world’s best exhibitions to Hanover.”

Symphonies, ballets, dance recitals, rock concerts and even TED Talks have jumped into this growing arena. But the Hop is content for now with its current event cinema mix—which this spring will include National Theatre Live’s *Hedda Gabler* and *Twelfth Night*, as well as an Exhibition on Screen program on Monet.
FREE FOR ALL
Margaret Lawrence, Director of Programming

Now approaching its third year, the Hop's Free For All, a completely free series featuring three large concerts on the Dartmouth Green and two family-friendly films in Spaulding, is wildly successful. A College/community partnership, with Dartmouth’s Office of the Provost sponsoring the first concert each year, Free For All is the most visible of the Hop's Community Venture Initiative programs, which are devoted to removing barriers to participating in the arts. The momentum is growing: last summer, a record-breaking 3,693 people attended, participating in the arts. The momentum is growing: last year, a record-breaking 3,693 people attended, participating in the arts. The momentum is growing: last year, a record-breaking 3,693 people attended, participating in the arts.

"It adds to the quality of everyone’s life to have culture and music and arts...I love to expose my children to it...and it brings us together as a community."

Musical highlights last summer included Brooklyn-based bhangra band Red Baraat, who exhorted a thousand dancing from Nils Fredland of Revels North. Planned for a Free For All programming announcement, coming this May—and join us for more summer fun!

"The shows are awesome and I like that it brings the community of all ages together," said one attendee with a smile. Said another, "it’s refreshing to have events like this in the area...doesn’t matter if you are rich or poor, [people] just come and be themselves." Added another, "[It’s] a chance to socialize on a beautiful summer evenig, let kids run around and enjoy live music!"

Free admission to films like Willy Wonka and the Chocolate Factory and Finding Nemo beckoned entire families into the deliciously air conditioned Spaulding Auditorium. Reported a parent, "We enjoy the movies and atmosphere!"

A highlight was our visit to the Song Festival grounds in Tallinn, Estonia. We stood on the stage, which holds 20,000 singers, and imagined what those gatherings have been like since 1855, held throughout years of occupation and freedom alike. In Kaunas, Lithuania, we performed the opening concert in the International Choir Festival, a prestigious event that attracts top choirs from many countries.

Our most unusual performance was in the Wieliczka Salt Mines in Poland, a vast underground cavern abandoned after the mining operation ceased, now a UNESCO World Heritage Site. When we got 300 feet down into St. Kinga Chapel, we formed a circle and sang. As the sound filled the cavern, visitors came to hear us—first with curiosity, and then broad smiles.

One place we did not sing was Auschwitz-Birkenau, the infamous concentration camp outside of Krakow, Poland. This was a place to be silent. It was also one of the most moving visits of our trip.

Founded in 1807, the Handel Society of Dartmouth College is proud to be America’s oldest town-gown choral society. The ensemble performs an exhilarating range of choral and choral-orchestral music, from long-treasured masterworks to stunning contemporary pieces and new commissions. Whether performing at Dartmouth or on tour, the Society's goal is to provide transformative musical experiences for performers and audiences alike.
HOP MEMBERSHIP YEAR

As Mary Lou Aleskie steps into the position of Hop director, we thank Maria Laskaris ’84 (pictured above at the members’ season kickoff event) who steps out as interim director. “As a patron and long-time member of the community, I’ve always loved the Hop, but the chance to serve as interim director has deepened my knowledge of and appreciation for all that the Hop and its supporters do for the campus and the community,” Laskaris said.

IN REVIEW

“I’m a member because I’m a lover of the arts in all forms, and the Hop is tops!”

“I’m a member in order to support a fabulous institution committed to community involvement.”

Top: Interim Director Maria Laskaris at the members’ season kickoff; members Joan and Dan Collison at the season preview. Bottom: Hop staff member Erin Smith chats with Brooke Robinson and Jennifer Stark at the season preview; Mary Quinton and Deborah Bacon Nelson toast the camera at the Victoria screening.

Top: Cindy Shannon at the Victoria screening. Middle: A young arts lover enjoys some refreshments at the membership-sponsored Milk and Cookies party; Jazz vocalist Cécile McLorin Salvant mingles at the members’ season kickoff. Bottom: Hop staff member Johanna Evans and Interim Director Maria Laskaris with member Bob Wetzel at the Victoria screening; Jane Ralph at the member’s season kickoff.
A NEW FACE IN MEMBERSHIP

Hop Membership Coordinator Abbey Harlow joined the Hop staff in September 2016. A Vermont native, she spent much of the last decade living in Boston, working in membership and house management at arts organizations such as Passim and the Boston Center for the Arts. Most recently, Abbey worked in development at Vermont’s Weston Playhouse. Abbey received her master’s degree in arts administration from Boston University, and holds a bachelor’s from Smith College.

What has been your favorite experience at the Hop?
My first event on staff was the season kickoff members’ party, and I was struck by everyone’s warmth and excitement. They were so welcoming to me, and very excited about being part of the Hop community.

What is your favorite thing about working here?
It’s new for me to work somewhere with a larger staff—it’s a diverse bank of knowledge, experience and interests. I also enjoy the bustle of working in a college town. My commute has its benefits as well—I’m a huge reader, and I’m able to blast through audiobooks on my drive.

What is your favorite thing about the Hop Membership program?
The various ways it offers members to engage with their own community, as well as enjoy deeper connection with our arts programming. From screenings, to talks, to parties with the artists, to after-show events, there’s a lot to do. It’s a great opportunity to think across their given fields, and make these connections with other disciplines.

What has been your favorite experience since moving back to Vermont?
When I was living in East Boston, I regularly hopped on the subway for up to 90 minutes to attend performances and visit museums. When you frame it that way, there is a staggering amount of arts programming around me in Vermont! People are so artistically minded in this area, and the Hop is a huge part of that. I love living here again.

How has your arts-going experience changed since moving back to Vermont?
When I was living in East Boston, I regularly hopped on the subway for up to 90 minutes to attend performances and visit museums. When you frame it that way, there is a staggering amount of arts programming around me in Vermont! People are so artistically minded in this area, and the Hop is a huge part of that. I love living here again.

You can contact Abbey with membership questions or comments at hop.members@dartmouth.edu or 603.646.2006.

FILIPPO CIABATTI: CONDUCTING AND CONNECTING

Rebecca Bailey, Publicity Coordinator

In the eyes of its recently appointed director, the Dartmouth Symphony Orchestra serves a number of purposes—all of which nonetheless harmonize as beautifully as, say, strings and woodwinds.

“One purpose of the orchestra is to make sure that, in a liberal arts environment, we can provide a high-quality experience for people with strong musical skills whose academic focus is elsewhere,” says Filippo Ciabatti, who came to the post with conservatory training from his native Italy and a new doctorate from the University of Illinois, Champaign-Urbana.

However, he says it’s also important to reach out to the students who don’t play in the orchestra, and raise awareness regarding the great cultural resources that both the DSO and Hopkins Center offer—to convey the idea that “music can add value to their studies and their souls.”

It’s equally important to honor the DSO’s special role in the Upper Valley, which doesn’t have a professional symphony orchestra. “We are lucky to have a community that supports and follows us, always with great enthusiasm and interest. Part of our mission is to reach out to the community and make sure they are involved in what we do, and that we are continuing to educate them about music.”

Ciabatti is happy to invest time and shoe leather in reaching out. In addition to giving free public talks before each concert, he has talked at Hanover’s Kendal retirement community and, on campus, everywhere from academic departments to Greek houses. “I go prepared to talk about the program and ready to answer any questions, but what I have found is that students are very curious to know what an orchestra does, what a conductor does, and how it works. So usually, I keep the conversation quite open.”

After one such talk, a student told him, “I can relate to your job. I’m a rower. What you said about leadership and discipline and the group and the sense of community within the orchestra, it really resonates with what I do.” A liberal arts setting gives Dartmouth students the opportunity to think across their given fields, and make these connections with other disciplines.

Having a range of ages in the audience enriches the concert experience for the DSO players, he says.

“It’s important for the DSO students to understand how music connects everybody of different ages and experiences.”

It gives the students even more enthusiasm for their musicianship when people from diverse backgrounds “respond to the emotional language of music,” he says. And at the end of the day, that’s really what music is all about.
When Brooklyn-based composer Molly Herron talks about science, her eyes get a faraway expression and she becomes extremely excited. And in the last year or so, she’s talked about science at Dartmouth a lot. Herron is the third next-gen composer to participate in the Hop’s Andrew W. Mellon Foundation-supported STEM Arts program. STEM Arts inserts innovative composers into science, technology, engineering and math ("STEM") departments at Dartmouth, where they compose a new musical work inspired by faculty research.

This past December, Herron joined two Thayer faculty members to lead a four-day Winterim course in which students designed and built several new modular instruments together. Winterim courses are short intensives offered during Dartmouth’s winter term break. Says Thayer Dean Joe Helble, "We created Winterim courses starting last year to help students explore their interests outside of coursework, but may be for the sheer joy of learning something new—an experience that has not yet been imagined, then go out and create it. Partnering with the Hop to develop an original composition and instruments is a brilliant and wonderful collaboration."

First, Thayer faculty helped the Hop choose a composer, seeking someone excited by science and open to new ideas. Herron, who says she is "inspired by the complicated, messy sounds of our everyday environment and the energy of interaction," had previously collaborated with instrument inventors to find new avenues for sound. She was the perfect match.

On May 4, culminating a final campus residency, Herron—along with the Tigue Percussion Trio and several vocalists—will premiere the new work in Thayer’s GlycoFi Atium as part of Thayer’s 150th anniversary celebration. The new instrument will take center stage in the performance, offered free to the public.

Past STEM Arts partnerships have included Fay Wang, who was inspired by biology research to create a piece inspired by the microscopic resistance to antibiotics; and Tristan Perich, whose conversations with math faculty sparked a 2016 work combining acoustic instrumental music and electronic "white noise."

Invited by the Hop to partner, Helble didn’t pause. "Thayer’s approach to engineering education really emphasizes helping students develop their creative potential. Not just to look up information in a textbook but to understand the entire problem and the tools you need at your disposal, in order to be creative and to develop an elegant solution."

The arts do exactly the same thing: they allow students to imagine what hasn’t yet been imagined, then go out and create it. Partnering with the Hop to develop an original composition and instruments is a brilliant and wonderful collaboration."

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Cynthia J. Naylor  
Ruth and Larry Mengedoht  
Jane Ann and F. Graham McSwiney  
Lucy and Robert McLennan  
Sara and Greg Gorman  
Eve and Viljand Gondarman  
Joseph Grimes Jr.
IN MEMORIAM

Robert S. Weil ’40 P’73, honorary lifetime member of the Hopkins Center Board of Overseers, passed away in October. After graduating from Harvard Business School and serving as an officer in the US Army, he joined the family cotton company, eventually rising to the position of Chairman of the Board. Bob served as a board member of the Hopkins Center and Hood Museum for many years and was a champion of the role of the arts in a liberal arts education, as stated in a letter to then Dartmouth President James Freedman in 1997:

"...the study of the Visual and Performing Arts develops conceptual thinking, exercises the imagination and stimulates creativity. It awakens creative talent, and it cultivates an awareness and appreciation of creativity in others. Moreover, the discourse of the Arts is universal, transcending the barriers of language. The intellectual or emotional content of a painting or a passage of music loses no effectiveness in the translation to the viewer or the listener, whatever the listener’s linguistic comprehension may be."

Willaert Quartet cellist Nick Storch followed works with a young cello during a master class at the Upper Valley Music Center.
WHAT OUR MEMBERS ARE SAYING

"I’m a member to provide financial and social support to an important arts organization."

"We support the Hop because of the fantastic cultural resource it is for the community."

"We think it is very important to support the arts at a local level."

"We are members because we love the arts—theater, music, performances of all kinds. We believe the arts bring us important ideas about life and living."

Left: A young artist shows off her work at the membership-sponsored Milk and Cookies event. Right: A group of music lovers snap a photo at a Hop Free for All concert.

For a complete list of photo credits, go to hop.dartmouth.edu/online/photocredits