

# SEATTLE CHAMBER MUSIC SOCIETY

## **CONTACT**

Seneca Garber  
Director of Marketing and Communications  
(206) 283-8710  
[seneca@seattlechambermusic.org](mailto:seneca@seattlechambermusic.org)

## **NEWS RELEASE:**

For Immediate Release

### **SEATTLE CHAMBER MUSIC SOCIETY EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR TO RETIRE**

**Seattle, WA** – September 30, 2020 – The Board of Directors of Seattle Chamber Music Society (SCMS) announces that after 25 years of leadership, Connie Cooper will step down as Executive Director, effective September 30, 2021. Ms. Cooper has provided steady management and financial stewardship throughout her tenure, and partnering with Founder Toby Saks and current Artistic Director James Ehnes to produce exceptional Summer and Winter Festival chamber music concerts. Under her leadership, SCMS has grown its budget 500%, maintained balanced operating budgets every year, added an annual Winter Festival, and designed and established a new Center for Chamber Music in downtown Seattle. In addition, SCMS expanded outreach programs, established an endowment, and completed a capital campaign for the new Center.

Founded in 1982, Seattle Chamber Music Society is internationally recognized as a world class presenter of classical chamber music concerts at its annual Winter and Summer Festivals in the Illsley Ball Nordstrom Recital Hall in Benaroya Hall in downtown Seattle, WA. Most recently, SCMS was a leader in pivoting concerts to a fully virtual format for its 2020 Summer Festival, a format it will again utilize for the 2021 Winter Festival.

Ms. Cooper's contributions to the organization's success are highlighted by her effective management and execution of the Winter and Summer Festivals. Artistic Director James Ehnes invites renowned musicians to play at each year's festival performances which are also broadcast live on KING-FM and streamed over the internet, reaching thousands more listeners for each concert.

Ms. Cooper has assembled a small and effective staff that will continue to manage both the administrative and artistic functions of the Seattle Chamber Music Society. She will be celebrated at a community event for her outstanding contributions to the Seattle arts community.

The Society will embark on a nation-wide search for her successor to ensure a smooth transition.

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**ABOUT SEATTLE CHAMBER MUSIC SOCIETY:**

Each year, Seattle Chamber Music Society (SCMS) presents a Winter Festival in January and Summer Festival in July at the Illsley Ball Nordstrom Recital Hall at Benaroya Hall. In addition to its high-quality performances, SCMS offers community engagement programs for adults, youths and the community-at-large to encourage audience appreciation and understanding of chamber music. These programs bring audiences of all ages in close contact with musicians and their music through informal, accessible and enjoyable formats.