

LES DÉLICES DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION STATEMENT

February 2021

Les Délices cultivates a passion for early music and belief in the positive impact that music and the arts have on our communities. Les Délices aims to inspire, uplift, and educate broad audiences through our acclaimed Northeast Ohio concert series, free online and community-based programming, and through tours and recordings.

Les Délices recognizes the need for a more diverse, equitable, and inclusive arts sector, particularly within Classical music and specifically Early Music. Our field has traditionally focused on European musical traditions and, similarly to the wider field of Classical music, has a disproportionately white community of practitioners. We recognize systemic racism as a major factor that has made music education, training, and work opportunities more accessible to some and less available to others. However, the Early Music (or historical performance) movement ultimately has revolutionary roots. We embrace the movement's fundamental values that have historically included questioning received knowledge and notions, diversifying and expanding repertoire beyond the canon, and integrating a more fully-developed and nuanced understanding of music's cultural context into programs and performance.

At Les Délices, we bring the values of the Early Music movement to bear on our current moment in American history, which implores us to openly face and help to dismantle racial and cultural inequities in our sector. We recognize that the future of Early Music must be diverse and inclusive, and that positively impacting that future begins with our own actions. To that end, we are committed to the following:

Repertoire

Les Délices seeks to recognize the contributions of marginalized persons and communities to the field of Early Music. By expanding our own definition of what Early Music includes and actively demonstrating that expanded definition through our programs, we seek to play a lead role in leveraging a broader perspective that permeates the field.

Artists

Les Délices makes conscious efforts to expand our artist roster beyond our long-standing network of colleagues, prioritizing new collaborators who represent communities of color and diverse ethnic backgrounds, whom we identify through persistent and keen observation of both emerging and established artists in the field, recommendations from professional leaders and peer organizations, and submissions to open calls to artists.

Staffing Considerations

Les Délices is committed to an inclusive hiring process as an equal opportunity employer. Les Délices shares opportunities broadly and posts to a variety of publicly accessible job boards and all candidates are given a fair assessment. We strive to create a welcoming atmosphere that supports learning and each employee's growth and development.

Vendor Contracts

Les Délices' artistic work is supported by vendors that include audio, video, and lighting professionals as well as designers, printers, caterers, venues, marketing partners, and others. As Les Délices continues to grow and evolve, we strive to support and sustain minority- and women-owned businesses whenever we are in a position to establish new vendor contracts. These vendors are proactively sought out using available local networks and resources.

Leadership

Les Délices encourages a culture in which diverse perspectives are expressed and honored. Expansion and turnover of our board is a priority as the organization matures. We actively seek board members to serve the needs of the organization who bring a diversity of experience and range of voices to our leadership. We encourage candidates who have been historically underrepresented based on race, ethnicity, age, ability, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity, socioeconomic status, nationality, citizenship status, or religion.

Audience

Les Délices strives to appeal to a broad contemporary audience. Programs emphasize storytelling to bring modern relevance to historical music and ideas and expand definitions and perceptions of Early Music. Through programming and artistic personnel, Les Délices aims not only to deepen understanding of history while recognizing the legacy of racism and colonialism, but also raise visibility for the diversity of accomplished performers already working in our field.

Les Délices carefully balances sustainability and accessibility when it comes to creating an inclusive and welcoming space for both audiences and artists. We are committed to making our programs accessible to the broadest possible audience by keeping ticketed events affordable.

Les Délices also provides free programming online and in the community, including open rehearsals, family concerts, and freely available and accessible broadcasts. Our school-based educational outreach programs provide rich context and robust resources with the goal of inspiring future musicians and audience members.

Venues

Les Délices has established residencies for live performances at venues that are located within three diverse and geographically dispersed communities. We prioritize assets such as ADA accessibility and proximity to public transit, which are essential to many of our patrons. As we work toward increased visibility and recognition, we make a unique contribution to the cultural vibrancy of the neighborhoods in which we rehearse and perform.

At Les Délices, we believe music has the power to express deep emotions and provide opportunities for respite and healing through the shared act of listening.

Again, we are cognizant of the injustices in our own field and recognize that unequal access to education and other resources continues to thwart careers for many aspiring musicians. We value the voices of our peers of color and are committed to understanding their lived experiences as artists, students, educators, and arts patrons, and to supporting their work in the field of Early Music. We believe that the future of Early Music can achieve a more diverse, equitable and inclusive environment and that the long-term sustainability of the field can be supported by our dedication to this work.