



**FOR INFORMATION ABOUT THE CAMPAIGN, OR  
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## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

### ***PIANOS IN THE PARKS LAUNCHES A COMMUNITY CAMPAIGN TO CELEBRATE PUGET SOUND'S LOVE FOR OUTDOORS AND MUSIC***

*Private and Public Partnership Encourages Discovery of Seattle and King County  
Parks through Music and Art with 20 Painted Pianos in 20 Parks/Open Spaces*

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**SEATTLE, July 17, 2014** – Today, notable local government, arts, community and business leaders unite to launch *Pianos in the Parks*, a summer campaign from July 17 to August 17, encouraging Puget Sound residents to discover 32,000+ acres of City of Seattle and King County parks and open spaces through the power of music and art. *Pianos in the Parks* is being underwritten by Laird Norton Wealth Management, and was created in partnership with Seattle Parks and Recreation, King County Parks, the Seattle Symphony, KEXP, Gage Academy of Art, City of Music, and Classic Pianos.

*Pianos in the Parks* features 20 artistically enhanced pianos created by Gage Academy of Art faculty, students and friends, each placed in one of 15 iconic Seattle city parks and open spaces, such as Alki Park, Cal Anderson Park, and Seattle Center, and five King County Parks locations, including Marymoor Park and the Sammamish River Trail.

“Our local resources like our parks are vital to creating meaningful connections within the community,” said Robert Moser, President and CEO of Laird Norton Wealth Management. “At Laird Norton, we believe that we have responsibility to support a strong and healthy community. This is precisely why we’re dedicated to help grow and protect these assets now and for future generations. We’re thrilled to make *Pianos in the Parks* possible for the community to discover and rediscover these great amenities.”

“We are delighted to host the pianos at 13 city parks, Seattle Center and City Hall plaza,” said Seattle Mayor Ed Murray. “*Pianos in the Parks* will enliven our parks and engage communities through the power of art and music.”

“We’re well known for having vibrant, welcoming parks and trails that bring communities together,” said King County Executive Dow Constantine. “This partnership is another way we’re improving the experience for our residents and visitors, and supporting local arts.”

*Pianos in the Parks* sheds light on how the City of Seattle and King County parks connect the county's 1.9MM residents. These park systems feature more than 665 parks and open spaces, including trails, athletic fields, playgrounds, concert venues, swimming beaches and pools, fishing piers and more.

"When George Seurat painted his colorful landscape of a Paris crowd enjoying a summer afternoon on the Seine, it was also a celebration of something brand new – open space in the big city," said Gary Faigin, Co-founder and Artistic Director at Gage Academy of Art. "Artists and parks have always had a love affair – parks are a great place to make art, to see art, and to enjoy the company of our fellow citizens. We're fortunate to live in a city that also loves its parks, and Gage Academy of Art is happy to lend its support to *Pianos in the Parks* – a visual and musical tribute to our open spaces that are welcome to everyone, forever."

Each piano, procured and tuned by Classic Pianos, is available for the public to play. Musicians of every level are encouraged to enter the *Pianos in the Parks* Facebook contest at: <https://www.facebook.com/pianosintheparks>, in which they can upload a video of their performance of an original piece or music from the public domain for a chance to play at *Concerts at the Mural* presented by KEXP and Seattle Center on Friday, August 22. Entries will be voted on by Facebook "likes" with the top five most heavily "liked" videos being judged by a community panel.

"Music discovery is quintessential to the continued development of our vibrant Northwest music scene," said Tom Mara, Executive Director of KEXP. "KEXP is delighted to support the *Pianos in the Parks* program as it encourages new and imaginative ways to create and share musical ideas within our community. We're also looking forward to hosting the winner of the piano performance competition at our annual Concerts at the Mural series on August 22."

Additionally, music partners KEXP, Seattle Symphony and City of Music, with support from the Seattle Music Commission, will be serving up fun surprises and activities for the public to enjoy at no cost. The Seattle Symphony will host a weekly "Seattle Symphony Playdate" at Westlake Park, where the public can enjoy instrument-making, instrument exploration, and more.

"One of our values is, 'Everybody in, nobody out,'" added Seattle Symphony Executive Director Simon Woods. "We strongly believe that music is for everyone, not just to listen to, but to play, imagine and create. We embrace everyone performing and creating their own music, and there's no better way to do that than through *Pianos in the Parks*. Whether you are a professional musician or only know how to play *Chopsticks*, we invite you to explore your own passion for music, art and nature with us this summer."

At the end of the campaign, all *Pianos in the Parks* pianos will be sold to the highest bidder in an online auction on the official website: [www.pianosintheparks.com](http://www.pianosintheparks.com), finding new forever homes. Proceeds from the sale of these pianos will benefit Seattle Parks and Recreation, King County Parks, Seattle Symphony, KEXP and Gage Academy of Art.

"Just like people, every piano has a story," said Ben Klinger, Sales Manager of Classic Pianos. "We're thrilled to be a part of *Pianos in the Parks* as it offers pianos that are perhaps entering their final chapter, a grand final cadence, and they have been tuned, serviced and dressed up for the occasion. We love that people of all walks of life will be able to enjoy spontaneous musical moments on these pianos together in our region's great parks."

*Pianos in the Parks* is a campaign that has attracted a wide breadth of partnership support. In addition to the primary partners, *Pianos in the Parks* has received support from several local

companies and entities, including PlayNetwork, a Redmond-based branded customer experience company that has generously donated their video production services to the campaign, Seattle Center, Dakota Art and Saint Mark's Episcopal Cathedral.

To view special content, scheduled activities, participating parks/open spaces and full contest information, please visit: [www.pianosintheparks.com](http://www.pianosintheparks.com). To tag contest entries, pictures and experiences, use the hashtag #PianosintheParks.

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#### **About Laird Norton Wealth Management**

For nearly half a century, Laird Norton Wealth Management has been driven by a passionate commitment to help its clients and their families achieve financial security, find happiness and thrive in every aspect of their lives. The company is relentless in the pursuit of client satisfaction and is committed to always making a client's best interest the number one priority. Originally founded to serve the financial management needs of the Laird and Norton families, the firm now provides personalized wealth management solutions for more than 425 individuals, families, foundations and nonprofit organizations. With deep roots in the Pacific Northwest, Laird Norton Wealth Management proudly maintains a long-term commitment to giving back to the local community and improving this region for generations to come.

Laird Norton Wealth Management believes that parks, trails and open spaces help connect communities and make Seattle and King County a great place to live work and play. Last year, the company helped launch the King County Parks Foundation, which was formed to leverage private donations to steward and grow the King County Parks system and increase recreational opportunities across King County's parks and trails. Laird Norton Wealth Management is excited to extend their support of parks and open spaces through *Pianos in the Parks*, which they hope will bring awareness to the importance of parks in our community and help ensure a healthy regional parks system for future generations.

For more information about Laird Norton Wealth Management, please visit: [www.lairdnortonwm.com](http://www.lairdnortonwm.com).

#### **About Seattle Parks and Recreation**

Seattle Parks and Recreation (Parks) manages a 6,200-acre park system of 465 parks and extensive natural areas. Parks provides athletic fields, tennis courts, play areas, specialty gardens, and more than 25 miles of boulevards and 120 miles of trails. The system comprises about 11% of the City's land area. Parks also manages many facilities, including 26 community centers, eight indoor swimming pools, two outdoor (summer) swimming pools, four environmental education centers, two small craft centers, four golf courses, an outdoor stadium, and much more.

Seattle's parks provide numerous benefits to the people of Seattle—healthy people, a healthy environment, financial sustainability, and strong communities, which are important to Seattle's health and vibrancy. For Seattle to remain a world class city that is attractive both to businesses and individuals, it needs to maintain a great park system with healthy open spaces and recreational opportunities.

Teen leaders see youth in their programs learn and grow; maintenance workers meet people every day who are improving their health on park trails and fields; tree crews see the benefit of their work every spring with new growth in the urban forest; and community center staff help every day to build social capital raised by people in a community playing and working together for common benefits.

We are delighted to host *Pianos in the Parks* this summer; a perfect fit with Seattle Parks and Recreation's mission to provide opportunities to play, learn, contemplate and build community. Let the music begin! <http://www.seattle.gov/parks/>

#### **About King County Parks**

King County Parks - Your Big Backyard - offers more than 200 parks across 26,000 acres of open space, including such regional treasures as Marymoor Park, Cougar Mountain Regional Wildland Park, and a world-class aquatic center. The Burke-Gilman and Sammamish River Trails are part of our nationally recognized 175-mile regional trail network.

*Pianos in the Parks* is a fantastic opportunity to surprise visitors with a unique, interactive experience while exploring their Big Backyard. By cultivating strong relationships with non-profit, corporate and community partners, King County Parks enhances park amenities while leveraging King County taxpayers' investment by generating additional revenue and creating efficiencies that keep our parks open and safe for all to enjoy.

<http://www.kingcounty.gov/parks/>

### **About KEXP**

KEXP 90.3 FM is a non-profit, listener-supported public radio station based in Seattle. KEXP's purpose is to enrich the lives of artists and music enthusiasts alike by championing music discovery. More than 200,000 listeners from around the world tune in each week over the air and online. DJs are dedicated to curating an eclectic mix of genres including rock, hip hop, reggae, country, Latin, modern global, and more. Because of KEXP's longstanding commitment to community endeavors and musical discovery, we are delighted to be the media partner for *Pianos in the Parks* in its inaugural year. To find out more about KEXP, visit [www.kexp.org](http://www.kexp.org).

### **About Seattle Symphony**

The Seattle Symphony has partnered with *Pianos in the Parks* to help share the inspiration of live music and the joy of music-making with the community. The Symphony performs five free community concerts each year in a variety of locations, and now it is the community's turn to perform, with 20 pianos and parks to choose from. Everyone is encouraged to not only Listen Boldly, but Play Boldly, too!

The Seattle Symphony is recognized as a major symphonic orchestra in the United States and is internationally acclaimed for its innovative programming and extensive recording history. Under the leadership of Music Director Ludovic Morlot since September 2011, the Symphony was founded in 1903 and is heard live from September through July by more than 315,000 people. Its innovative education and community engagement programs reach over 100,000 children and adults each year. The orchestra has completed more than 140 recordings and has received 12 Grammy nominations, two Emmy Awards and numerous other accolades. In 2014, under the leadership of Ludovic Morlot and Executive Director Simon Woods, the Seattle Symphony launched its in-house recording label, Seattle Symphony Media. The Seattle Symphony performs in one of the world's finest concert venues — the acoustically superb Benaroya Hall — in downtown Seattle.

### **About Gage Academy of Art**

Gage Academy of Art is celebrating nearly 25 years as a vibrant art school and contemporary art center, providing community-based artistic development for artists of all ages, abilities and economic means. Since 1989, Gage has committed itself to advancing arts engagement, showcasing artists, and serving as a role model for emerging artists both inside and outside the studio. In addition to a celebrated roster of local teaching artists, Gage welcomes artists from around the world to share their techniques and artistry with workshop participants both at the Gage campus on Capitol Hill, and in inspiring locations across the globe. Gage is home to a year-round schedule of free public art events, lectures, festivals, youth programming and exhibitions.

*Pianos in the Parks* is a wonderful celebration of community, artistry, and the pleasure of finding art and music in unexpected and accessible places. Gage is proud to have paired up more than 20 talented artists with a donated piano to create something wonderfully new and fresh to animate the landscape of our public parks and open urban areas. The organization is proud to partner with some of the most dynamic and engaged non-profit organizations, civic groups and local businesses to bring *Pianos in the Parks* to life.

We hope you enjoy the pure pleasure of discovering music and visual arts in unexpected corners of our region's beautiful public parks and open spaces through *Pianos in the Parks*. For more about Gage programs, please visit [www.GageAcademy.org](http://www.GageAcademy.org).

### **About Seattle City of Music®**

The City of Music Initiative launched in 2008 as an effort to celebrate and enhance Seattle's renowned music culture. Shepherded by the Seattle Music Commission and the Seattle Office of Film + Music, partnerships with record labels, radio stations, clubs, festivals, restaurants, nonprofits, public entities and civic organizations, are instigated and nurtured to make Seattle a place where musicians thrive,

communities are strengthened and music businesses flourish. *Pianos in the Parks* is a natural fit for the City of Music Initiative - musical performance, discovery, inspiration and appreciation of music are organic catalysts for community building and activation of our public spaces.

Other projects inspired by the initiative are City of Music Career Day produced by One Reel, the Seattle Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce's Music Industry Task Force and Sea-Tac Airport's 'Experience the City of Music' initiative. For more information, visit [www.cityofmusic.com](http://www.cityofmusic.com).

### **About Classic Pianos**

The origins of Classic Pianos date back four generations, when the first family-owned piano shop opened in Portland's historic Sellwood District. Today, still family-owned, Classic Pianos has become one of the most successful and recognized retail piano businesses in the United States. The hallmark of Classic Pianos has always been passion: a passion for the art of piano-making and for providing the most pristine, diverse and inspiring pianos for *all* customers and in *all* price ranges. Through music-making, we can communicate ideas and emotions that transcend all language barriers, providing the perfect conduit for bringing people of all backgrounds together. We feel that our mission to inspire our customers through the pianos we sell dovetails perfectly with the mission of *Pianos in the Parks*—inspiring the public through exploring nature, beauty and space. We are thrilled to play our part in this wonderful and inviting outreach.

For more information: [www.classicpianosseattle.com](http://www.classicpianosseattle.com)

### **About PlayNetwork**

PlayNetwork creates branded entertainment and digital media experiences that build lasting impressions with customers worldwide. The company helps brands drive engagement with customers and develop emotional bonds that drive lifetime value. Clients engage PlayNetwork for custom music and media supervision, audio/visual systems engineering and installation, branded entertainment campaigns, technology and software development, global music and content licensing, original video and motion graphics, in-store and on-hold messaging, advertising networks, and more. They partner with over 350 brands across 85,000 locations in 110 countries, reaching more than 100 million people every day. For more information, visit [www.playnetwork.com](http://www.playnetwork.com)

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