SIGAL MUSIC MUSEUM

EST. 2017

GREENVILLE, SC

Instruments That Inspire

ANNUAL REPORT

2025

HIGHLIGHTS FROM 2025

Lafayette in Charleston

MARCH 14, 2025

Sigal Music Museum began a new relationship with the SC Historical Society early in the year, kicking off with a special performance at the Fireproof Building in Charleston. This was the site of the Lafayette Society's celebration of the 200th anniversary of Gen. Lafayette's triumphant return to America in 1824. The museum's Loud & Brothers Square Piano from that year was a gift to Gen. Lafayette upon his landing in Philadelphia. Now, 200 years later, his piano was played in concert for members of the SC Historical Society and the Lafayette Society. We thank Steven Bichel for the long-term instrument loan.

Photo (above):
SC Historical Society Event
The Fireproof Building

Photo:
The Berent Piano

Berent Piano Debut Concert

FEBRUARY, 2025

Once thought lost to history, the 'Berent Piano' emerged from obscurity to find a home at Sigal Music Museum, where curator Tom Strange did an exhaustive study of the instrument. After a lengthy process, he was able to verify the story and publish a paper with the American Musical Instrument Society (AMIS) that cemented its place in music history as the first piano made and comercially sold in the developing United States (1775). It is unlikely that this instrument was ever played in concert, so the museum was honored to give the 'Berent Piano' its debut!

iMAGINE STEAM Fest

APRIL, 2025

With our 2024 exhibition ***A Measure of Music: STEAM and the Musical Mind***, patrons learned about the many ways that science, math, and technology intersect with music. This year was the museum's first time presenting at the iMAGINE STEAM Fest, which takes place along Main St. in downtown Greenville. Visitors found many fun interactive exhibits, such as a Theremin and the prototype of our Digital Sample Library workstation. The Sigal tent was a great success, establishing what we hope is a long-running annual tradition.

The Newman Piano

SEPTEMBER 2025

In June 2025, curator Tom Strange performed a one-man play he wrote about a little-known piano maker from Baltimore during the mid-nineteenth century. This Chautauqua-style performance was the first ever staged at the museum, and so well received that it was re-staged at the Woodlands at Furman in the the Fall. Amazingly, Newman's great, great grandson, Tim Turner, was in the audience with his wife Wendy! Two months later, Tim and his brother Wally were united with this amazing instrument. The brothers were able to visit Tom at our storage facility to see and hear a piece of their family's history!

Photo: Tim and Wally with curator Tom Strange. (above) Tom as Joseph Newman (right)

Greenville Music Preservation

Photo: Mobile display at USC Upstate

In October, the Board of Directors voted to formally add the Greenville Music Preservation collection to the Sigal Music Museum. GMP was started as a non-profit by Sigal Executive Director David Sims and partner Jack Hines in 2021, helping to collect, preserve, and celebrate Greenville's music history. After taking on the job at Sigal, Sims decided to offer the collection and its programs to live under the umbrella of the museum. Because of this, the museum will add a few small programs to the slate, including a mobile display for schools, the interactive display at PKL Greenville, and several smaller programs. The GMP collection includes over 550 locally-produced vinyl records and many historical artifacts, including many from places like the Grand Opera House, Williams Music, and Mark V Studios. We hope to include local objects and information from this collection in future museum exhibitions.

Andy & Friends

Concert Series at the Fine Arts Center

Andy Armstrong is a highly esteemed and passionate pianist, who brought his "Andy & Friends" concert series to the Fine Arts Center in 2024. This series brings world-class musicians to the FAC stage six times a year and has been an extremely successful endeavor. Sigal Music Museum was proud to become co-presenters of this series in 2025, kicking off with Andy's performance of the original solo piano arrangement of Mussorgsky's ***Pictures at an Exhibition***. Tickets for this series are sold on the museum's website, and have been selling fast, so reserve yours today! We are excited to see and hear Andy's offerings in 2026!

Photo: Andrew Armstrong

FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Musicians and Music Lovers,

2025 was a dynamic year for Sigal Music Museum. As you have seen on the previous pages, the museum was able to widen its impact through programs that touch on music, history, technology, and personal connections. We are a small, but mighty museum, still a "hidden gem," and poised to make great leaps in the future. Beyond a collection of historical instruments, Sigal Music Museum has found ways to engage with the modern world. Our Digital Sample Library has proven to be a very meaningful way of preserving instruments by capturing their sounds, making them more accessible to students, musicians, producers, and scholars. As the program continues, we will introduce rare instruments to an unlimited audience of producers, musicians, and scholars. It's almost like bringing an endangered species back into the wild.

2025 was also a wonderful year for building new partnerships. After federal funding cuts earlier in the year, The Woodlands at Furman stepped up to provide sponsorship for our Distinguished Lecture Series. The museum also had its first partnership with local retailer J. McLaughlin, who hosted a wonderful day at the store to benefit our organization. These partnerships will continue in 2026, becoming a part of the Sigal tradition!

David Sims, Executive Director

FROM THE CURATOR

2025 was a busy year, with academic papers presented at the American Musical Instrument Society (AMIS) conference in June, and the Cornell University-hosted Westfield Conference in August. This was in addition to several lectures at Furman University OLLI classes, and for the Sigal Music Museum Distinguished Lecture Series and GSO Guild.

We published an academic paper in the *Journal of the American Musical Instrument Society* on the Boston-born American piano maker John Osborn, and final edits are now in place for our contribution to the detailed examination of the surviving eighteenth century Flemish harpsichords, made by John Bull and Daniel Dulcken, slated for publication next year. We have also submitted the final edits on a published paper describing the development of the upright piano in England and America, for Kloster Michaelstein press.

The collections at Sigal continued to grow slowly, but we are being very careful with what we add at this point. Our holdings in certain areas like keyboards and woodwinds have reached a critical mass, and any further additions must be considered with an ever more skeptical eye. Once we have resolved our search for a larger 'Study & Engagement Center', hopefully to be concluded in 2026, we will continue to watch the collection grow carefully. We have many wonderful things to share with the world, and plans are in place to expand our exposure of the collections with the world.

Tom Strange, Curator

TEAM

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Chris Stack
Director of Marketing
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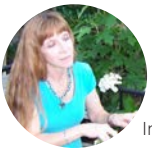

Anne Acker
Senior Editor
Grove Dictionary of Musical Instruments

Dr. Jenny Nex
Curator, Musical Instrument Collection and Lecturer in Musical Instruments

Dr. John Koster
Curator Emeritus
The National Music Museum

Dr. Albert Rice
Author and Appraiser

Darcy Kuronen
Pappalardo Curator of Musical Instruments, MFA, Boston, ret.

Catalina Vicens
Curator of the Tagliavini Collection and Artistic Director of the Museo San Colombano, Bologna, Italy

Dr. Laurence Libin
Curator Emeritus
New York Metropolitan Museum

John Watson
Curator Emeritus
Colonial Williamsburg

Michael Lynn
Professor of Recorders and Baroque Flutes, Oberlin College

Dr. Andrew Willis
Professor Emeritus
University of North Carolina, Greensboro

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Sigal Music Museum's board of directors is comprised of community leaders, industry professionals, and music enthusiasts. The museum draws on the expertise of this board to provide governance in this critical stage of growth for our organization. Working with the staff, board committees ranging from engagement to finance set goals and help gather support to make them happen. One of the most important components of this is our Strategic Plan, which received a critical update in 2024.

OFFICERS

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John Stewart
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Marshall Winn
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Gustavo Nieves

Iliana Rose

Andrew Sigal

Debra Strange

Susan Thompson

Craig Walker

BOARD TESTIMONIAL

John S. Beckford
Chair of the Board of Directors

When I joined the Board of Directors in 2019, I firmly believed in the organization's mission and was excited to contribute to its success, but little did I anticipate the great strides that would take place over the next half dozen years. With the generous gift of the Marlowe Sigal collection and several other major collections, the museum's reputation quickly became known around the world. Not just because of the size of the collection, but because of its curation and restoration of many of these priceless instruments. Programs, performances, and educational activities were developed by a talented and dedicated staff and the museum became much more than a collection of old instruments. It has been a hub of musical activity and celebration. Sigal Music Museum's growth has been a remarkable journey for which Greenville and all who have supported the museum should be proud.

In the forthcoming year, the museum will enter a new era as we reach a few milestones. In 2026 we will complete nearly all of our goals established in the 2022 Strategic Plan that were to be achieved in four years. We will identify a new home for hundreds of instruments that are not currently on display. We want this secondary facility to be more than a warehouse, but a study and engagement center where one can have physical access to most instruments in our collection for examination and study. Next year will also see a new exhibition to highlight instruments that tell the American story to coincide with our nation's 250th birthday celebration.

I have been fascinated by the growth of interest in our museum. Children from area schools have now visited our museum and their teachers are bringing new classes back to Sigal every year. News of Sigal's special holdings have prompted scholars and aficionados to travel to Greenville from around the world, some producing articles in professional journals. Our gifted curator, Dr. Tom Strange, has developed his own international reputation through his articles and presentations at conferences around the world.

As a professional musician who taught music history at the collegiate level for four decades, I have admired how Sigal tells its stories, creates themes for exhibits, and displays instruments that one can not only see but hear in their original sound. Our concerts often showcase these instruments which enable one to experience music as it was heard in another era (So this is what Mozart heard when he played one of his sonatas!). The museum has even embarked on a project that samples each note of some of our most famous keyboards so that you can hear and "play" these instruments from your own computer when attached to a MIDI keyboard.

Sigal Music Museum is another great reason to live in or visit Greenville. Our collection and programming have and will continue to enhance our quality of life and understanding of the world of music. It is an extraordinary museum with exceptional programming. We have something of interest for everyone and every age!

Chair, Board of Directors

CONCERTS

Photo: Tuba Gin

Sigal Music Museum is able to offer a hard-to-find commodity in Greenville - an intimate music venue that features a wide variety of genres. Not only that, but our concertgoers are surrounded by rare musical instruments! A world-class museum deserves world-class musicians, and our concert series brings them to Greenville audiences throughout the year.

Vista Players
Kristin Olson
Louise Dubin
Dena Levine
David Gross
Tuba Gin
Gabriel Merrill-Steskal
Iliana Rose Trio
Vox Cor Duo
Art Lande
Andy Jurik
Danielle Knox & Jon Grier
Johnnie Felder
Mitchell Wolfe
David Zasloff
Keith Davis Trio
Free Planet Radio
Greenville Chamber Players
Bootleg Jazz
Min Xiao Fen & River Guerguerian
Trio Risoluto
Grant Knox
Joe Davidian
Linda Li-Bleuel
DeAnna LeTourneau
Meisha Whitlock
Duo Beaux Arts
Carrera Stamile
Zoe & Cloyde

Photo: Zoe & Cloyde

LECTURES

Our Distinguished Lecture Series is offered to the public, free of charge, usually twice a month. Experts, musicians, and scholars share their knowledge and talents with an intimate audience in our second-floor Conference Room. In 2025, lecturers shared a variety of topics, including music therapy, conducting, synthesizer technology, the process of making vinyl records, writing musicals, historic woodwinds, and many more. We would like to thank The Woodlands at Furman for becoming the lead sponsor for this series beginning in Fall 2025 and continuing for the 2026 season!

Photo: Kristin Olson Historic Woodlwinds

Photo: Chris Meyer

Kristin Olson
Gar Ragland
Elizabeth York
Dr. Gary Robinson
Gene Berger
Kristi York Wooten
Tom Strange
David Sims
Keith Groover
Jon Grier
Thomas Carroll
Jane Bruce
Chris Stack
Chris Meyer
Gary Malvern
Jeff Arnal
Kelly Ward

THE Woodlands AT FURMAN

EXHIBITIONS

A FAVORABLE WIND

featuring Woodwinds from the collections of Eldred Spell, Sidney Forrest, & Marlowe Sigal.

MAY 2025 - MARCH 2026

The museum has been fortunate to receive two major woodwind collections recently: the Flute collection of renowned collector Eldred Spell, and a Clarinet collection of esteemed educator Sidney Forrest. In May, Dr. Caroline Ulrich led a special concert "Spectacular Spell: The Historic Flutes from the Eldred Spell Collection," which built interest and momentum for a wonderful exhibition opening concert with Kristin Olson and an excellent woodwinds ensemble. The opening weekend was capped off with a lecture on the clarinet by Thomas Carroll. The exhibition has been seen by thousands of students, scholars, and music-lovers in 2025, and will continue through March 2026. Visitors are also able to visit our STEAM corner, which features the Digital Samples Library and the beloved Theremin!

SIGAL LIVING PRESENCE

ONGOING

This semi-permanent exhibition, found on the first floor, features instruments from the Sigal collection that are still in playable condition, many of which are played in concert. Marlowe Sigal had a deep love for pianos, harpsichords, and saxophones. Highlights include a rare collection of saxophones from Adolphe Sax's workshop, Queen Charlotte's personal harpsichord (played by Mozart), and an 1845 Broadwood & Sons piano played by Chopin. From March-Dec 2026, the first floor will transform into the ***American Voices: Lost & Found*** exhibition. ***Sigal Living Presence*** will return in 2027.

IMPACT

7% Increase in overall Admission since 2024

Increase in Memberships since 2024 **65%**

EDUCATIONAL TOURS

Brevard Academy
Chapman High School
Charleson School of the Arts
Christ Church Episcopal School
Clemson University
Furman University
Lakeside Middle School
Laurens Middle School
Laurens High School
Oklahoma University
St. Christopher Academy
Southern Wesleyan University
University of South Carolina
8 Home School Groups

Deerfield Community
The Cascades
The Cliffs at Glassy
Foothills Retirement
Greenville Orchids
Heritage Hills
Merrill Gardens
OLLI
The Woodlands at Furman

54% of Sigal visitors are tourists from 37 States and 14 countries

LOCAL ORGANIZATIONS

Sigal Music Museum is the perfect location for meetings and events for local businesses. Here are our presenting partners for 2025:

Fine Arts Center Partners
Furman University
Girl Scouts of South Carolina
Greenville Newcomers
Greenville Symphony Guild
Greenville Unitarian Universalist Fellowship
Heller Heritage on the Green
J. McLaughlin
SC Bach
SMC Troubadours
Upstate International

AFFILIATIONS

AASLH American Association for State and Local History
MUSEUMS for ALL
American Alliance of Museums
EMA Early Music America
Blue Star Museum arts.gov/bluestarmuseums
NARM Association
North American Reciprocal Museum (NARM) Association
AMIS
ascap We Create Music

ES MUSICAL EDUCATION PROGRAM

Throughout her life, Elise C. Sigal was an avid and passionate supporter of arts education. Her wishes were that the Sigal legacy continue to have a deep connection with schools, which is why the Elise C. Sigal Music Education Program was created: to support the museum's education programming for generations to come.

DIGITAL SAMPLE LIBRARY

You may recall the debut of this program in 2024, when the museum was awarded a grant from the Institute of Library and Museum Services (IMLS) for the installment of digital music stations in ten Greenville County Schools. You may have had a chance to play the prototype at the museum, or at iMAGINE STEAM Fest in April. In 2026, we will be recording another group of rare instruments with Tempest Instruments, who will issue Sigal Vol. 2 later in the year. Stay tuned for more exciting developments with the program!

SCHOOL TOURS

Sigal Music Museum hosts tours for school groups from the upstate and surrounding areas. We have a unique ability to tailor learning experiences to the needs of each class because our collection covers music, history, science, and art history - and with over 1,300 instruments to choose from, we can tell a variety of stories. While our relationship with Greenville County Schools continues to grow, we also welcome groups from the larger region throughout the year. Whether a public or private institution, K-12, university, college, or home school, we provide a valuable resource for teachers. Part of the Elise C. Sigal Musical Educational Program provides assistance with transportation costs for any Title 1 school in Greenville County.

EDUCATIONAL VIDEO SERIES

An early initiative of the Elise C. Sigal Musical Education Program was put in motion earlier in 2024, when we embarked on the creation of a video series for students in grades 3-5, which is just before most children begin learning an instrument. This series explores each major instrument, how it produces sound, and its aligning genres. Each video is hosted by young actors from the SC Children's Theatre, who interview musicians from the Greenville Symphony Orchestra. It is important for children at this age to see working professionals in the field of music, and there is no better local example than the GSO! The videos also include animation to help to illustrate how each instrument works. Due to roll out to Greenville County schools in early 2026, this series will be a free resource to be used at each school's discretion. The first six videos will feature the saxophone, trumpet, oboe, bassoon, flute, and harpsichord. The second series will be filmed in 2026, and include the violin, clarinet, percussion, and more!

CONTRIBUTIONS

In 2025, we were proud to offer a new tiered system for contributions, with exciting benefits at each level! If you're looking for a way to support the museum beyond Membership or Instrument Adoption, we encourage you to peruse the options below. At each level, contributors receive access to exclusive online content.

GIVING LEVELS

GOLD CIRCLE
$10,000 +

- Quarter Notes (quarterly newsletter for donors)
- Unlimited museum visits
- 12 Concert vouchers
- Invites to "Meet the Artist" events
- Preferred lecture seating
- The choice of a private tea or dinner with Chef Debra Strange for up to 8 people
- A private Collections Tour of the museum with Curator Tom Strange
- Invitations to donor events

SILVER CIRCLE
$5,000 +

- Quarter Notes (quarterly newsletter for donors)
- Unlimited museum visits
- 6 Concert vouchers
- Invites to "Meet the Artist" events
- The choice of a private tea or dinner with Chef Debra Strange for up to 4 people
- A private Collections Tour of the museum with Curator Tom Strange
- Invitations to donor events

BRONZE CIRCLE
$1,000 +

- Quarter Notes (quarterly newsletter for donors)
- Unlimited museum visits
- 4 Concert vouchers
- Private Movie Night at the museum for up to 8 people
- A private Collections Tour of the museum with Curator Tom Strange
- Invitations to donor events

BENEFACTORS
$250 +

- Quarter Notes (quarterly newsletter for donors)
- Unlimited museum visits
- Invitations to donor events

INSTRUMENT ADOPTION PROGRAM

Looking for a fun way to support the museum? Adopt an instrument over a multi-year period, for yourself or in honor of a loved one! See our website for available instruments!

Interested in becoming a contributor?

(864) 250-8807

wendy@sigalmusicmuseum.org

2025 SUPPORTERS

Fran Dunn and Tom Strange, Curator accepting the Rolla Dyer Violin

INSTRUMENTS

Anne Acker
Hugh Gough, Cembal d' Amour, New York, 1964

Cal Poly University
Action models of various harpsichords and pianos

The Estate of Richard Dunn
Rolla Dyer Violin , Tryon, NC, 1929

Suzanne Goller
Filippo Molitor Square Piano, Naples, Italy, 1796

Patrick Hawkins
Gibson & Davis Square Piano, New York, c. 1810

Nancy Kraus
Mason & Hamlin Reed Organ, c. 1886

Nancy Lohr
Rollmonica, 1928; Bakelite Case; paper rolls

Todd Manley
Samuel Moreland Square Piano, Dublin, Ireland, 1829

Roger Mortimer
Harris & Done Spinet Harpsichord, London, 1784

Carol & Jim Smeaton
Xavier Spang Flattop Melodeon, c. 1860

Charles Wingo
Pierre Erard Grand Piano, Paris, 1852

DONORS

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Andrew Sigal
Tom and Debra Strange

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Kathy McKinney
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Stephanie Schmidt
Erica Sigal
Nancy Stanton
Craig and Bianca Walker
Greg and Tracey Welborn
Susan Thompson
Tracey and Greg Welborn
Susan and Andrew White
Marshall and Jeannette Winn

a full list of 2025 donors is available on our website

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David and Christian Sims
John and Jackie Warner
John Watson
Douglas Weeks
Jeff Whitehead
Andrew Willis
Wendy Winn
Thomas and Michele Winter

MEMBERSHIP

Becoming a member of Sigal Music Museum is a great way to stay involved and up-to-date on our programming. Members receive a newsletter at the beginning of each month and receive many benefits based on their level. We are proud to report that the museum's active memberships grew by 65% in 2025! Thank you to all who joined!

2025 MEMBERS

Anne & Chris Acker
Guy & Alisa Adamson
Linda Archer
William Asbury
Myriam & Dwight Baldwin
Ashley Batson
Boris & Jane Bauer
Reid & Laura Becker
John & Barbara Beckford
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Linda Lee
Ralph Leonard
Margot Leroy
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Lauren Luneckas
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Meisha Whitlock
Bev Whitten
Dennis Wiese
Betty Williams
Marshall & Jeanette Winn
Wendy Winn
Sylvia Woodall
John Worthington
David Young
Kurt Young
Richard Young
Beth & Ronald Zweigoron

A LOOK AT 2026

American Voices: Lost and Found

Opening March 28, 2026, ***American Voices: Lost & Found*** will present a comprehensive look at what music was present during the first 25 years of the United States. Anchored by the Berent Piano, this exhibition will tell the Colonial story, as well as the Gullah and Indigenous stories through music. Guest artists and other collaborators will help curator Tom Strange explore how music became an integral part of our developing nation, and was guided by innovative makers. It is presented as part of the SC250 initiative.

New Platinum Circle of Giving

In 2024, we started a giving circle program to provide tiered benefits to donors. This program has been a great way to continue close relationships with supporters of the museum throughout the year. To our delight, a few patrons have come forward to give at a higher level in 2026 to some exciting new programs. With this increased level of support, we are creating a Platinum Circle for donations of $20,000 +. Stay tuned to our website in 2026 for what this entails and news about future programs!

FIRST QUARTER CALENDAR

Concerts	Lectures	Teas
THURSDAYS - 7:30PM	SUNDAYS - 3:00PM	Wednesdays - 3:00PM
Adults: $30 Students: $10	Free to the public Reservations required	$30 a seat

JAN 15	**Concert: Darby Wilcox,** *Singer-Songwriter*
JAN 18	**Lecture: Benjamin Barker:** *The Hammer Dulcimer*
JAN 27	**Concert: Andy & Friends Series, at the Fine Arts Center**
JAN 28	**January Tea**
JAN 29	**Concert: Justin Page,** *Cello*
FEB 1	**Lecture: Alex Davis:** *Digital Sampling*
FEB 5	**Concert: Ronn McFarlane & Carolyn Surrick,** *Viola da Gamba, Lute*
FEB 15	**Lecture: Iliana Rose:** *The Evolution of Cuban Music, pt. 1*
FEB 19	**Concert: Contraband,** *Modern Jazz*
FEB 25	**February Tea**
FEB 26	**Concert: Patricia Gil,** *Early Piano*
MARCH 1	**Lecture: Bill Kopp:** *Music Journalism*
MARCH 12	**Concert: Elaine & Eric Funaro:** *The Harpsichord Diaries Live!*
MARCH 15	**Lecture: Geert Bevin:** *MIDI Polyphonic Expression*
MARCH 25	**March Tea**
MARCH 26	**Concert: Kylee Slee & Linda Li-Bleuel,** *Mezzo Soprano, Piano*
MARCH 28	**OPENING NIGHT: AMERICAN VOICES: LOST & FOUND**
MARCH 29	**Lecture: Tom Strange:** *American Voices Exhibition*

RESERVE YOUR TICKETS NOW!

THANK YOU FOR SUPPORTING SIGAL MUSIC MUSEUM!

SIGAL MUSIC MUSEUM

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Greenville, SC 29601
(864) 250-8807
info@sigalmusicmuseum.org

Sigal Music Museum is a registered 501 (c)(3) organization

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