

About Me2/Orchestra

Me2/Orchestra is the world's only known classical music organization created for individuals with mental illnesses, and the people who support them. The organization currently hosts two full orchestras in Burlington, VT, and Boston, MA; an affiliate program in Portland, OR; and a flute ensemble in Boston, MA. Currently, the organization has more than 100 members.

They perform in concert halls as well as nontraditional venues, including hospitals, prisons, and rehabilitation centers. Its mission is to erase the stigma surrounding mental illness through supportive rehearsals and inspiring performances.

Me2/Orchestra Founders

Ronald – Music Director and Conductor

Ronald Braunstein is an American orchestra conductor. He is currently the Music Director and Conductor of Me2/Orchestra, the world's only known classical music organization created for individuals living with mental illnesses, and the people who support them. He lives in Massachusetts with his wife and orchestra cofounder, Caroline.

Diagnosed with bipolar disorder, Ronald decided to create his own ensemble for people living with mental illness, and those who fight stigma surrounding mental illness. The flagship ensemble, Me2/Burlington, was launched in the fall of 2011 in Burlington, VT.

Three years later, the organization grew to include an orchestra that soon became its central hub. Ronald serves as Music Director and Conductor of both orchestras. The organization has since expanded with additional orchestras throughout the Northeast.

Caroline – Executive Director

As the Executive Director and cofounder of Me2/Orchestra, Caroline Whiddon is classically trained in French Horn, but did not play for eighteen years due to panic attacks, depression, and anxiety, which cut short her classical performance career.

When Ronald came to Caroline with the idea of starting an orchestra for those with bipolar disorder, Caroline suggested broadening the profile, and this classical music organization was born. Me2/Orchestra serves as a model for people with and without mental illnesses to work together in an environment where acceptance is an expectation, patience is encouraged, and support for each other is a priority.