

STATE OF THE SYMPHONY ANNUAL REPORT
For PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION
Santa Rosa Symphony 2022-2023
by President & CEO Alan Silow
June 20, 2023

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY: MOVING ONWARDS



Opera in Concert Special Event of Mozart's Magic Flute

In this our 95th year, we moved 'happily and freely through this dark, deadly "COVID" night', celebrating the final season of our retiring President & CEO and Principal Pops Conductor while still navigating a season impacted by COVID-19. It tested our ingenuity and commitment to artistic and educational vibrancy, diversity and relevancy within a fiscally sound environment. In the end, we passed the test with flying colors.

Top Organizational Highlights this year included:

- President & CEO Alan Silow retires after 21 years at the administrative helm
- Principal Pops Conductor Michael Berkowitz retires after 15 years conducting the Symphony Pops Series
- Produced the first Opera in Concert *Magic Flute* special event
- Ended in the black for 20thth consecutive record year
- Education Showcase concert features all youth ensembles
- Individual contributions set a record high

CHANGING OF THE GUARD

During my 21-year tenure, we have successfully confronted two major recessions, several wildfires and the COVID pandemic, while successfully managing a major capital campaign to build the Green Music Center, and a major endowment campaign. The SRS is now solidly on the state and national orchestral map for organizational excellence - artistically, educationally, and financially.

- Maintained close budget oversight leading to 20 consecutive annual years of surplus, unsurpassed by any other CA orchestra
- Oversaw budgetary growth from \$1.5 million to \$5 million with primary growth going towards expanded education offerings and new performances serving diversified community interests—chamber music, pops, family, opera, film score, free community concerts
- Implemented four international concert tours by SRS Youth Orchestra
- Established record-breaking ticket sales and donations in every category over the years

A local search committee, led by co-chairs Keven Brown and Jamei Haswell, did a thorough national search that culminated in the selection and Board approval of Andrew Bradford, currently executive director of the Los Angeles Childrens' Chorus as the next President & CEO. He begins his tenure on July 10.

After leading his 15th season as principal pops conductor of the Symphony Pops Series, Maestro Michael Berkowitz retired. He presided over some of the most dynamic entertainment experiences for orchestra novices and aficionados alike, helping make the Santa Rosa Symphony's partnership with Luther Burbank Center for the Arts a vital element to the Sonoma County arts and culture scene. A search process culminated in the selection of four experienced and reputable Pops conductors who will 'audition' next season with a final selection expected in May 2024.

OPERA IN CONCERT – THE MAGIC FLUTE:

The program featured SRS Music Director Maestro Francesco Lecce-Chong conducting a Symphony first - an Opera in Concert production of *Die Zauberflöte [The Magic Flute]* by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart. The production highlighted numerous vocal soloists in the cast, and was a collaboration with the Santa Rosa High School ArtQuest program with student actors, dancers and a chorus who rehearsed extensively during the school year with Francesco Lecce-Chong. Maestro Lecce-Chong also created supertitles for text of the libretto that was effectively displayed on a digital screen suspended on stage above the orchestra.

FISCAL VITALITY CONTINUES AND THE STOCK MARKET COMES BACK

Though faced with a board approved FY23 budget deficit of \$282,375, through sheer perseverance and dedication we again will end the fiscal year in the black with a comparable six figure surplus.

Our endowment fund was fully invested and continued to be overseen by TWP Wealth Management based in San Francisco. The stock market revived this fiscal year with a May 2023 return at +6.11%, exceeding the benchmark of +6.09%. Our current endowment IS valued at \$16,852,330.

ALL SRSYE SHOWCASECONCERT

The highlight of the year was the Youth Ensembles Showcase Concert on March 19 at the Green Music Center. All members of the Training Young Musicians program performed on stage, many for the very first time. Coordinated by Elena Sloman, the event ran smoothly, and students had a chance to observe other groups. The audience of over 500 was the largest of the season, with many people enjoying their first concert in Weill Hall. We collaborated with the Green Music Center to present a first-of-its-kind relaxed, sensory sensitive performance. We invited neuro-diverse children and adults, and encouraged people to bring babies. Before each piece, the conductor announced from the stage when the music might be especially loud or surprising. Each ensemble performed individually, with commentary and interviews by the conductors while the orchestras took the stage. The Jazz Band, making its first public appearance, was undoubtedly a hit of the show.

INDIVIDUAL GIVING AT RECORD BREAKING LEVEL

The capstone of giving this fiscal year was far and away a record level of individual giving, the core anchor and typically the largest component of contributed revenues. Without exception, all of the Symphony's major donors (\$5,000 and above) maintained or increased their giving level from last year. The majority of repeat donors from last year gave again this year, which indicates that our most important constituents continue to feel loyal and connected to the organization and its mission. The Donor Relations Committee met regularly this year to discuss ways in which to deepen ties with the donor community, wrote personal handwritten notes to major donors of \$5,000 and up, and made phone calls to thank all donors.

FY23 Individual Gifts Actual to Date (May 31): \$1,323,202

FY23 Budget: \$971,549

LOOKING AHEAD

I am confident that the Santa Rosa Symphony is going to continue to flourish and evolve in sustainable service to our community as it enters its 96th season on the road to 100.

Thanks for the memories,



Alan Silow
President and CEO