EUGENE SYMPOHNY

2019/20
SEASON

Annual Report
Enriching lives through the power of music

Francesco Lecce-Chong, Music Director & Conductor
Leslie Odom, Jr., Guest Artist
Sandra Weingarten, Donor, Subscriber, Volunteer, and Ian Kerr, Principal Timpani
Accepting your feedback...
“This goes down as one of our family’s favorite memories!”
— Patron comment following Star Wars film concert

NEW VOICES HEARD
Although the season’s biggest undertaking of brand-new music—the PWK premiere of Matt Browne’s Symphony No. 1, “The Course of Empire”—was postponed, audiences were introduced to four works never before heard in Eugene, including: Portland-based composer Kenji Bunch’s Groovebox Fantasy; Browne’s earlier work Banstorming Season; rising American composer Jessie Montgomery’s Sinfonia (for Orbiting Spheres);

MOVING MASTERWORKS
The foundations of the orchestral tradition were well represented and the orchestra got to flex their artistic muscles in such revered works as Mahler’s Symphony No. 1 (“Titan”), Saint-Saëns’ Symphony No. 3 (“Organ”), Brahms’ Symphony No. 1, and Rossini. Kahane’s unannounced encore, his own extemporaneous musings on “America the Beautiful,” left the audience with moist eyes and inedible memories.

CINEMATIC SCORES
Eugene Symphony’s series of films with live orchestral accompaniment continued with two soundtrack scores by American treasure John Williams. First, Star Wars Episode V: The Empire Strikes Back led by guest conductor Norman Hyshon, Oregon Symphony’s Associate Conductor, followed by two performances of Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire in a joint production with Portland Youth Orchestra. For both programs, enthusiastic fans and families turned out in costume, and many newcomers were introduced to the incomparable world of live symphonic music.

SINGULAR SOLOISTS
Stunning violinists anchored the lineup of visiting guest soloists—Bulgarian-born Bella Hristova captivated us with Max Bruch’s Scottish Fantasy and Finnish star Elina Vähälä delivered a soul-stirring rendition of Jean Sibelius’ Violin Concerto. Identical twin sisters Christina and Michelle Naughton took the stage for Mendelssohn’s Concerto for Two Pianos and firebrand pianist Aristo Sham gave an exhilarating performance of Prokofiev’s Piano Concerto No. 3. Plus, two of our own Eugene Symphony musicians, Anne Browne’s Symphony No. 2, and the original version of Schumann’s Piano Concerto No. 4. Plus, Francesco led a stirring performance of Mozart’s Requiem, as completed by noted scholar Robert Levin, which featured the Eugene Symphony Chorus.

Finally, as our unintended cease of the season, Tony- and GRAMMY Award-winning singer Leslie Odom, Jr., who originated the role of Aaron Burr in Broadway’s Hamilton, transplanted a rapturous audience prior to the annual Gala fundraiser on February 29.

GRACIOUS GUEST CONDUCTORS
Two especially memorable guest conductors visited us this year. Maestro Andrew Grams led the orchestra in a stirring program of Berlioz, Prokofiev, and Saint-Saëns on just one day’s notice, as he was tapped to replace an injured Jessica Cottis in December. Eugene favorite Jeffrey Kahane graced the stage in February to both perform and conduct Beethoven’s Piano Concerto No. 4, along with music by Schumann and Rossini. Kahane’s unannounced encore, his own extemporaneous musings on “America the Beautiful,” left the audience with moist eyes and inedible memories.

MUSIC FROM PREVIOUS CONCERTS
Performers and conductors interspersed with highlights through listening parties and games incorporated interviews with composers, performers, and conductors interspersed with music from previous concerts.

ROSEBURG RESIDENCY
Through a four-month residency with Douglas County Youth Orchestra in Roseburg, Symphony musicians provided advanced artistic instruction in the community.

MUSIC EDUCATION VIDEO SERIES
Due to stay-at-home ordinances and distance learning, Francesco created a weekly online music education video series for the whole family to enjoy, plus hosted watch parties that eventually turned into Thursday Night Live with KLCC. Nearly 11,000 people engaged with Musical Mondays, now archived for viewing on the Symphony’s website.

SYMPHONY HAPPY HOUR
Nearly 120 patrons attended Symphony Happy Hour, where Francesco shared upcoming concert highlights through listening parties and games at First National Taphouse.

NEW RADIO SERIES LAUNCHED
Partially inspired by the shutdown of performances, Eugene Symphony launched a limited edition broadcast series on KLCC-FM, the local NPR station. Hosted and produced by Executive Director Saint Freek, the programs incorporated interviews with composers, performers, and conductors interspersed with music from previous concerts.

COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS
First Symphony Project composer Matt Browne connected with nearly 200 regional students through partnerships with the University of Oregon, Thurston High School, Eugene-Springfield Youth Orchestras, and Academy of Arts and Academics.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR INSPIRED GIFT TO THE COMMUNITY:
— Marty Beyer, new donor, Portland

YOUTH CONCERTS
2,391 students and teachers from 41 schools in Benton, Coos, Douglas, Harney, Lane and Linn counties experienced our Fall Youth Concert. World Beauty! 14% received scholarships to cover the $5 ticket fee.

JOIN THE SYMPHONY’S GUILD
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COMPOSER-IN-RESIDENCE
This year, Eugene Symphony welcomed several new partnerships, including presenting the first-ever Music Educator Appreciation Night for Lane County music teachers, hosting the Latino Professional Connect network at a dress rehearsal, and facilitating a Meet & Greet with Broadway star Leslie Odom Jr. for Eugene-Springfield MAAP students and families.

SYMPHONY HAPPY HOUR
Each concert’s guest artist and conductor.

EDUCATION & COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT
GUILD CONCERT PREVIEWS
The Eugene Symphony Guild Create Preview engaged 1,530 people through discussions with each concert’s guest artist and conductor.
23% of 2019/20 season donors were first-time donors to Eugene Symphony—welcome!

21% of 2019/20 season donors increased their gift from the previous season—thank you!

Thanks to a generous Matching Challenge from Eben Dobson and Betty Soreng Dobson, all new and increased donations from April 15 to May 30, 2020 were matched dollar-for-dollar up to $25,000. With an outpouring of support, we met the challenge thanks to:

Matching Challenge from Eben Dobson and Betty Soreng Dobson

Sabrina Madison-Cannon, Dean of UO School of Music & Dance

Ted Baker admires the 2020 Advocate for the Arts Award he received on behalf of the Baker Family

IN-KIND $37,116

INCOME $5,014,497

ARTISTIC $1,075,947

SYMPHONIC SINGLE TICKETS $230,374

SPECIAL SINGLE TICKETS $160,578

TOTAL EXPENSES $3,050,292

$169,150 PAYCHECK PROTECTION PROGRAM

$69,161 ENDOWMENT

$258,107 EVENTS

$389,090 INSTITUTIONAL GIVING

$1,077,721 INDIVIDUAL GIVING (INCLUDES ESTATE GIFT)
THANK YOU TO OUR CORPORATE SPONSORS AND FOUNDATION SUPPORTERS:

Celebrate the 2019/20 season with Francesco, Scott, and fellow Symphony fans, and hear about plans for the 2020/21 season. Plus, enjoy a performance by one of the winners of this year’s Eugene Symphony Guild Young Artist Competition!