



LEARNING AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT PROGRAMS

2019/20 YEAR-END REPORT



OREGON
SYMPHONY®

CARLOS KALMAR, MUSIC DIRECTOR

MOVING MUSIC FORWARD

Edna Vázquez and the Oregon Symphony with Mariachi Una Voz and Mariachi Tradición



The 2019/20 Season saw the Oregon Symphony respond to unprecedented community need. In deep partnership with our community, our remarkable musicians reached far beyond the concert hall to bring moments of inspiration, healing, and learning to more than 60,000 people in-person and online. Thanks to the investment of generous donors, we continue to meet our mission of bringing music to more people in new ways, even as the world changes before our eyes. As we face the unexpected challenges of a global pandemic, your Symphony remains committed to strengthening our community through the irreplaceable and irrepressible power of music.

INSPIRING THROUGH PERFORMANCE

Seeing the orchestra perform in the historic Arlene Schnitzer Concert Hall or Smith Auditorium in Salem is a special experience. Each year we welcome students, teachers, community groups, and patrons of all backgrounds to feel the thrill of live performance. This communal setting helps us explore the intersections of art and society, celebrate artists in our community, and promote deeper understanding of the music and artists on our stage.



- 34 Prelude Performances offered young musicians and community members the opportunity to perform in the lobby prior to Oregon Symphony concerts. 640 tickets were provided to artists and their family members, enabling them to attend the concert free of charge after their performance. Each group of performers was recognized and thanked from the stage by President Scott Showalter during his pre-concert remarks.
- In January, we featured local singer-songwriter Edna Vázquez in her first headline appearance with the Symphony, as part of our Pops Series. The performance also welcomed to our stage two acclaimed youth performance groups: Mariachi Una Voz from Hillsboro and Mariachi Tradición from Forest Grove. We hosted the performers and their families for a special reception that honored Latinx leaders in our community alongside the future leaders among our student performers. This was part of our ongoing effort to better connect with and meet the needs of this growing segment of Oregon's population.
- 945 students from 18 different school orchestras, bands, and college programs joined us in the concert hall to experience a live Oregon Symphony rehearsal. Students enjoyed a behind-the-scenes look at the collaboration between musicians and conductor as they prepared for the weekend's concert. This unique look into the work of professional musicians is available free of charge to our educational partners.
- 33 Concert Conversations prior to each classical concert reached 5,580 audience members this season. Hosted by our partners at All Classical Portland, these in-depth conversations with Jean Vollum Music Director Carlos Kalmar, guest conductors, and visiting artists provided fascinating context to each concert program.

UNITING, HEALING, AND BRINGING JOY THROUGH MUSIC

Shared musical experiences have the incredible power to forge bonds among community members. We strive to harness the power of music to improve lives in our community, particularly for populations who have limited access to arts participation. In diverse venues throughout Oregon, we are creating life-enhancing experiences using music-based community engagement.



- The Lullaby Project, in memory of Doris Cecilia Storms, empowered families experiencing homelessness to create beautiful, original lullabies for their children. Eight new families worked with 10 musicians and singer-songwriters on this newest collection of lullabies. All of these moving and hopeful songs are available to listen for free on our website. The Lullaby Project facilitates parent-child bonding, resulting in maternal health gains and improved outcomes for children.
- Our string quintet, accompanied by Associate Principal Timpani Sergio Carreno, performed for and with the women of Coffee Creek Correctional Facility in Wilsonville. Our musicians performed alongside the Coffee Creek choir and also led the audience of 250, made up of inmates and their families, in a lively sing-along. This partnership works to connect women with community choirs, using music as a tool to support their reentry into society and prevent recidivism.
- 12 Symphony Storytimes were hosted at public libraries throughout metro Portland. 720 pre-school aged children and their families enjoyed an engaging children's story that was brought to life by a youth librarian and an Oregon Symphony musician. Children also had the chance to ask the musicians questions, and to explore the instruments of the orchestra up-close via an "instrument petting zoo."
- Our Artist-in-Residence, cellist Johannes Moser, returned for a second year of engagement with our community. Among his appearances, he performed at OHSU's campus and the Lan Su Chinese Garden, led a guided musical meditation in Hillsboro, hosted masterclasses in Portland and Salem serving 100 musicians, and performed an interactive recital for the youth in treatment at St. Mary's Home for Boys. In all, his performances moved and delighted 610 community members.

“My son, Oliver, first saw a cello at Symphony Storytime when he was 2½. Four years later, cello is his most beloved activity. I firmly believe he’s taken up this musical passion because of the Oregon Symphony’s education programs. We feel so fortunate to have these wonderful opportunities in our community.”

– REBECCA CHUNG AND OLIVER, AGE 6½



- In partnership with EarthtonesNW Music Therapy, musicNOW brought a series of music therapy-informed engagement sessions to community members experiencing cognitive and physical decline. These hour-long sessions enrich social and emotional well-being using a program of music, movement, and communication. Our musicians participated in four weekly musicNOW sessions at Lambert House Adult Day Center.
- We worked with Maybelle Center for Community, and particularly their resident choir the Maybelle Community Singers, to use music as a tool for community building and belonging. Artist-in-Residence Johannes Moser and Creative Chair Gabriel Kahane both collaborated on musical projects with the choir in support of the Maybelle Center’s mission to disrupt social isolation.
- Our partnership with American Public Media continues to grow, expanding the Oregon Symphony’s reach and introducing Oregon’s vibrant cultural scene to the world. Our orchestra was heard by more than 26 million listeners worldwide on public radio, and live concert re-broadcasts reached more than 45,000 listeners on our local radio station All Classical Portland.
- We collaborated with community nonprofits like Rose Haven Women’s Shelter, IRCO, Latino Network, Outside the Frame, and Cascadia Behavioral Health to bring the healing power of music to some of our most vulnerable neighbors. Our musicians helped mark meaningful community celebrations for people in difficult situations like housing insecurity, battling addiction, or escaping domestic violence. In this way, our music provided hope and joy for people who most need it.

SUPPORTING EDUCATIONAL NEEDS

A major focus of our learning and community engagement work is to help young people become engaged, active participants in music. Countless studies confirm that childhood music participation has lifelong, positive benefits for cognitive, social and emotional well-being. During the 2019/20 Season we were proud to serve more than 24,000 students with music participation and performance opportunities.



- In partnership with local nonprofit Cymaspace, we developed a special concert for deaf and hard of hearing students. Using Cymaspace's innovative technology that renders live sound using light, color, and movement, more than 400 students from Grout Elementary, Tucker Maxon School, and Oregon School for the Deaf enjoyed a special, adaptive concert experience with the Oregon Symphony brass quintet.
- Symphony musicians were actively engaged in coaching student ensembles and providing 1-on-1 support for student musicians in our schools. Musicians visited six Salem-Keizer high schools where they supported 360 student musicians. Additionally, musicians served 325 students in the David Douglas School District with sectionals and ensemble coaching. A further 26 students received free private lessons from Oregon Symphony musicians at this Title 1 district, removing financial and transportation barriers to participation in music study.
- 8,000 students in grades 3–5 learned to play the recorder as part of our Link Up program, in partnership with Carnegie Hall's Weill Music Institute. Our 50+ school partners implement this acclaimed music education curriculum in their classrooms, with professional development support provided by the Oregon Symphony. We were unable to hold the program's final concert due to the pandemic, however students were able to learn valuable musical concepts and take their first steps as performers as they worked on the Link Up program's suite of songs.
- The majority of our programming is available to students free of charge. For ticketed performances, we waive ticket costs for any children enrolled in federal free/reduced lunch – approximately 65% of the students we serve. Additionally we provided transportation subsidies to several Title 1 school partners that helped remove transportation barriers for more than 1,500 students.
- We presented five Young People's Concerts to 9,400 students in grades 3–8: two at Arlene Schnitzer Concert Hall in Portland, two at Smith Auditorium in Salem, and a first-time presentation in Newberg on the campus of George Fox University. Students across an eight-county region joined us for an engaging performance of Benjamin Britten's classic Young Person's Guide to the Orchestra, along with an assortment of popular and classical favorites.
- The Symphony's string, percussion, and brass ensembles presented 27 Kinderkonzerts throughout the school year at three host school locations: Lincoln Street School in Hillsboro, Faubion School in NE Portland, and Woodstock School in SE Portland. More than 5,800 students in grades K-2, hailing from more than 40 different public, private and home schools, took their first steps of musical discovery thanks to these engaging and interactive concerts.

RESPONDING IN TIMES OF CRISIS

When the COVID-19 pandemic hit Oregon, the Oregon Symphony quickly stepped up to respond. With our community suddenly forced into isolation, the Symphony used technology to spread joy, build and maintain connections, and create opportunities for learning through music. These are just some of the ways the Oregon Symphony used music as a tool for hope, togetherness, and gratitude.



- We developed and launched a new, online musical series entitled Essential Sounds. Each episode uses a unique combination of music, visuals, and personal stories to express our gratitude for a group of people who are holding our community together at this time of crisis. Episodes were available to watch on our website and social media free of charge, and have earned more than 115,000 views thanks in part to partnership with NPR Live Sessions. Each episode encourages audiences to donate to an Oregon nonprofit doing essential work at this difficult time.
- In an effort to provide accessible educational content to families and educators, we launched Symphony Storytime in a new digital format. 13 video episodes – nine in English and four in Spanish – debuted on the Oregon Symphony website. Each episode features a well-loved picture book, creative accompaniment from an Oregon Symphony musician, followed by a short Q&A. These stories have delighted more than 35,000 viewers, not only across Oregon but also across the country.
- Working in partnership with several assisted living facilities in the area, Oregon Symphony musicians created digital Musical Greetings to share with residents. As some of our highest-risk community members, many elders have been coping with extreme isolation for months. Our musicians offer these special video performances and conversations, available to view on demand, as a chance to connect to the world, and to one another, through music.
- The Oregon Symphony social media has been more active than ever, with our musicians creating unique ways of offering joy and inspiration to thousands through engagement online. Our Minute for Music series brought bite-sized performances from our musicians in their homes to an audience of thousands. Jean Vollum Music Director Carlos Kalmar hosted Mondays with the Maestro, a weekly chat about the ways composers depict different emotions in music. Harold & Arlene Schnitzer Associate Conductor Norman Huynh developed a weekly Ask a Musician program on Instagram Live, where he hosted weekly chats with different Symphony musicians to answer audience-generated questions. More than 9,000 viewers tuned into these programs.
- Small ensembles of musicians gave 10 pop-up performances of Pomp and Circumstance in honor of graduating high school seniors throughout our community. Each performance honored a graduate or group of graduates, nominated by our partners Portland Youth Philharmonic, Metropolitan Youth Symphony, and David Douglas High School. Music is an important component of community celebrations and we were proud to help celebrate the accomplishments of young people in our community.

To learn more about these programs, please contact:
Monica Hayes, Hank Swigert Director of
Learning & Community Engagement
mhayes@orsymphony.org 503-416-6312



Pomp and Circumstance in honor of graduating high school seniors

THANK YOU TO OUR LEARNING AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT DONORS

These programs would not be possible without thousands of individual donations from community members. We would especially like to recognize the following individuals and organizations who made lead gifts in support of this work.

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