



OREGON
SYMPHONY®

DAVID DANZMAYR
MUSIC DIRECTOR

2021/22 ANNUAL REPORT

MOVING MUSIC FORWARD



PRESIDENT'S LETTER

This season marked a joyful return to the stage in Portland and Salem for your Oregon Symphony after more than 18 difficult months of closure at our concert hall. We were thrilled to celebrate in person our 125 years of service to this community, sharing music's power to unite, inspire, educate, and heal. As we usher in our next 125 years, we are investing in emerging artists, deep and broad community impact, and innovative ways of reaching new audiences and increasing access to the arts.

I am proud to share this report from our fiscal year which ended June 30, 2022. As we continue to spur on the artistic and economic recovery of Oregon in the wake of pandemic closures, we thank our many public and private supporters who make this impact possible.

Scott Showalter, President & CEO



INSPIRING AND DIVERSE ARTISTRY

Jean Vollum Music Director **David Danzmayr** led the orchestra's triumphant return to the stage, fittingly beginning the season with Mahler's "Resurrection" Symphony and concluding it with Beethoven's "Ode to Joy." The classical season featured exhilarating newly commissioned works from artists like **Kenji Bunch**, **Robin Holloway**, **Wynton Marsalis** and **Gabriel Kahane**. We also showcased our own artists as featured soloists, including Janet & Richard Geary Concertmaster **Sarah Kwak**, Harold J. Schnitzer Principal



Sarah Kwak, Concertmaster

Oboe **Martin Hébert**, Truman Collins, Sr. Principal Second Violin **Chien Tan**, Principal Percussion **Michael Roberts**, and Principal Tuba **JáTtik Clark**. As part of our commitment to equity in our field, every concert on our Classical Series highlighted an artist of color or a female artist—both underrepresented backgrounds in our field—as a composer, conductor, and/or featured soloist.

Beyond our Classical Series, our Pops, Popcorn, and Specials programs treated audiences to a wide diversity of genres including rock, indie, film scores, rap, R&B, Afro-Cuban jazz, and more. Artists from **Nas** to the **Mambo Kings**, **Leslie Odom Jr.** to **Gregory Alan Isakov**, and the **Jazz at Lincoln Center Orchestra** to **Mariachi Sol de Mexico** brought a rich tapestry of musical traditions to our stage. Families delighted in visually engaging shows like the **Kids Series** concerts with youth dancers and actors, films like **Coco** and **Harry Potter**, and **Cirque Nutcracker** with its stunning acrobatics. We



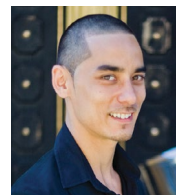
JáTtik Clark, Principal Tuba

also shared works with strong social justice messages. Indie artist **Kishi Bashi** joined us to perform *Improvisations on EO9066*, his thought-provoking multimedia piece exploring the 80 year legacy of the Japanese internment order during WWII. We adapted **Taylor Mac's** Pulitzer-nominated *A 24-Decade History of Popular Music* for its first orchestral staging. This bold work focuses on historically marginalized communities while poking fun at the patriarchal, homophobic, and racist systems that oppressed them.

During the 2021/22 Season we brought to our stage a diverse selection of some of the most celebrated artists of our time



Nas



Andy Akiho



Aniello Desiderio



Wynton Marsalis



Cirque Nutcracker's acrobatics enhance Tchaikovsky's classic ballet



Soloists at the moving premiere of *An African American Requiem*



Legendary drummer Stewart Copeland reimagined his greatest works for *Police Deranged*

An especially meaningful premiere occurred in May, when together with **Resonance Ensemble** we gave the world premiere of *An African American Requiem*, a 20-movement piece for orchestra, choir, and soloists, by Portland composer **Damien Geter**. This work honors victims of racial violence through centuries, from past lynchings to present-day deaths by police violence. We partnered with Black leaders to design opportunities for reflection following the performance, and provided a platform for Black-led

organizations to share resources. The Requiem was also the capstone of a civil rights curriculum in which **Portland Public Schools** students learned about the history of racial violence in America that inspired the piece, attended the concert for free, and afterward discussed their responses. The premiere had national impact thanks to live broadcasts on **All Classical Portland** and **WQXR** in New York, and has already been performed since at the Kennedy Center in Washington, DC.

“We need the symphony orchestra more than the symphony orchestra needs us. Think of political rhetoric – we do things ‘in concert’ or ‘in harmony’. Well, the place where that actually happens is here on stage. If you see the symphony orchestra eroding, I think you have to worry that civilization itself is eroding. And I think it says a lot for Portland that your orchestra is thriving in the middle of all we’ve been through in the last few years.”

— Ben Folds, stage remarks on 6/15/22



Mambo Kings



Mariachi Sol de México



Missy Mazzoli



Kishi Bashi



Simone Lamsma



Johannes Moser



Leslie Odom Jr.



Gregory Alan Isakov



Ben Folds

THE SYMPHONY AT 125: WHAT THE FUTURE SOUNDS LIKE

Our landmark 125th Anniversary season ushered in a new era in multiple ways. This was the first full season for **David Danzmayr**, who has set about defining a signature Oregon Symphony sound under his baton. Danzmayr has taken an inventive approach to programming by assembling the Symphony's **Creative Alliance**, a group of musical innovators who bring their unique perspectives to art both onstage and off. Featuring extraordinary, diverse artists and cultural thought leaders like



Creative Alliance artist Nathalie Joachim was active onstage and in our community

Nathalie Joachim, Gabriela Lena Frank, Gabriel Kahane, Jun Märkl, Simone Lamsma, and Johannes Moser, Alliance members perform inspiring works onstage and inform and participate in our engagement programs, thereby enriching Oregon's arts ecosystem.

Additionally, we unveiled major upgrades to the concert hall in the form of **Meyer Sound's Constellation Acoustic System**. This \$11.2M public-private partnership between the Symphony, Metro, and the City of Portland uses state-of-the-art technology to address the longstanding acoustic deficiencies of Arlene Schnitzer Concert Hall. The noticeably fuller and more balanced sound has aided musicians' performance and improved the audience experience. Along with restored historic draperies and other aesthetic improvements, these investments benefit the many nonprofit and commercial arts groups who use this historic venue.



Principal Guest Conductor Jun Märkl



Installing Meyer Sound's Constellation Acoustic System

REACHING NEW AUDIENCES

We remained innovative by experimenting with new concert designs and delivery methods to reach new and evolving audiences. **Gabriel Kahane** curated two original chamber performances at the newly opened **Reser Center for the Arts** in Beaverton. He also hosted our new **Open Music** series, which explored the creative processes of three composers on the season: **Kenji Bunch, Missy Mazzoli, and Nathalie Joachim**. These concerts featured chamber ensembles that allowed us to deploy our musicians in different combinations and in more intimate venues like **The Old Church, Mississippi Studios, and Alberta Rose Theater**. We also launched our first **livestream** series of six concerts, an effort to expand music access. People unable to come to the hall due to physical, geographical, or economic barriers can now access Oregon Symphony performances from their homes.



Portland composer Kenji Bunch in conversation with Gabriel Kahane at The Old Church in the season's inaugural Open Music session



Xavier Foley



Taylor Mac



Chris Thile



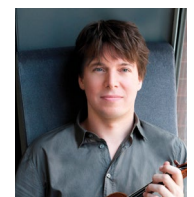
Gabriela Lena Frank



Gladys Knight



Damien Geter



Joshua Bell



The Waterfront Concert reunited thousands of Portlanders in the largest free event since the start of the pandemic

COMMUNITY CONCERTS FOR ALL

Music is an essential part of a thriving community, and we were proud to offer three free, large-scale concerts throughout the year serving thousands of people. Particularly during such fraught times, music creates space for people of all backgrounds to experience art together and heal. The **Waterfront Concert** over Labor Day was our first full performance in 545 days, and a joyful return to the heart of downtown.

In April, more than 700 of our community-based arts, education, and social service partners filled the concert hall during the **125th Anniversary Celebration Concert**, made possible by our Gala patrons. More than 4,200 people tuned in to watch the free livestream, hosted by Grammy-winning mandolinist and radio personality **Chris Thile**. Viewers hailed from around the United States and 11 additional countries. In May,

we were proud to perform the **Rose City Reunion Concert** as part of Portland's iconic Rose Festival. Our musicians performed throughout the season in smaller ensembles across our region. From playing the national anthem at a **Portland Trail Blazers** game to visiting nonprofits as carolers to spread holiday cheer, we are deeply embedded in the cultural, social, spiritual and economic life of our region.



Portland Youth Philharmonic giving the Prelude Performance at the 125th Anniversary Celebration Concert



Chris Thile both performed on and hosted our 125th Anniversary Celebration Concert

SUPPORTING YOUNG ARTISTS

With the return of live performance in our concert hall we welcomed back both **Prelude Performances** and **orchestra rehearsal visits** for students. These opportunities are an important way that young musicians can see performances with no financial barriers to entry. We also arranged for student groups to visit with renowned artists like **Joshua Bell**, and the **Jazz at Lincoln Center Orchestra** with **Wynton Marsalis**. We collectively served more than 1,200 students through these programs, many of whom would be otherwise unable to hear the Symphony perform live.

In addition to providing performance opportunities, Oregon Symphony musicians coach student musicians via masterclasses, sectionals, and individual lessons. They worked with school band and orchestra ensembles and with youth orchestras like **Metropolitan Youth Symphony**, **Portland Youth Philharmonic**, and **BRAVO Youth Orchestras**, to encourage and inspire hundreds of students.



Young composer Nicolas Chuaqui works with his mentor during the EarShot workshop



Elaina Stuppler (center), Luna Composition Lab fellow, with Oregon Symphony musicians following the world premiere of her new piece *Anxious Alignment*

Our support extends to young composers as well as performers, particularly those from traditionally underrepresented backgrounds. We launched a new fellowship opportunity with **Luna Composition Lab**, a national effort that supports young women and nonbinary composers. Our first fellow, 13-year-old Elaina Stuppler, worked closely with her mentor composer, Creative Alliance member **Nathalie Joachim**, and she had a new piece premiered at our 125th Anniversary Celebration Concert. We also partnered with **American Composers Orchestra** to host **EarShot**, a workshop for emerging composers. Four young Latinx composers—two men and two women—had their pieces read by the orchestra, and worked with mentor composers **Kenji Bunch**, **Andy Akiho**, and **Andreia Pinto-Correia** to further develop their compositions.

“For the first time in a while, I felt understood. It was as though my Mexican heritage was accepted by the people [in the concert hall], and everyone could hear the beautiful sound our culture has to represent it.”

— Aaron E., student in Woodburn High School’s mariachi program, on his experience as a Prelude Performance artist



World renowned violinist Joshua Bell (lower right) meeting with students from BRAVO Youth Orchestras

PROMOTING HEALTH AND HEALING

Music has incredible power to support mental health and healthy relationships. Through our **Lullaby Project**, in partnership with **Portland Homeless Family Solutions**, families experiencing housing instability work with Oregon Symphony musicians and local singer-songwriters to write and record original lullabies for their children. These beautiful songs were performed during a



Sharing heartfelt lullabies with the community at Lents Park

free concert in **Lents Park**, allowing many of the families to attend as they shared their songs with the community. The project's goal is to strengthen familial bonds through music, and parents expressed that the process was empowering and gave them hope for the future.

Our musicians also used music as a healing tool for those physically unwell. Through the **Joy Rx Music** program with the **Children's Cancer Association**, a string quartet of Oregon Symphony musicians performed a livestreamed holiday concert that has been shared with 17 children's hospital partners nationwide. This program draws on the universal power of music to buoy spirits and energize young patients. Artist-in-Residence **Simone Lamsma** visited **Marie Smith Adult Day Center**—a therapeutic activity center for seniors and adults with cognitive impairment—as part of our **musicNOW**



Supporting children fighting cancer with Joy Rx Music

program. Music's unique ability to stimulate the brain encourages seniors in our community to engage with the world around them, and this interactive performance promoted healing for dozens of elders.

MUSIC AS A LEARNING TOOL

As schools limited both their field trips and our school visits due to COVID, we continued to invest in digital music education tools to support students, teachers, and families. We produced a digital version of our Young People's Concert called **¡Sinfónica!**, which we offered for free on our website in May and distributed in partnership with **Music Workshop**, a nonprofit that shares music education videos

with teachers around the world. These four 20-minute episodes are fully bilingual and take students on a journey across Latin America and the Caribbean.

We provided Carnegie Hall's **Link Up** curriculum to more than 2,600 students at partner schools across and beyond metro Portland. Students in grades 3-5 learned to sing songs and play the recorder throughout the year, culminating in a pre-recorded

version of the final concert which allowed them to play along virtually with a full orchestra. We completed production on the third season of our beloved series **Symphony Storytime**, and new episodes in English and Spanish will be premiered throughout the fall. Collectively, our digital programs have reached hundreds of thousands of classrooms and households around the world.



¡Sinfónica! brings the musical heritage of Latin America into the classroom



Symphony Storytime combines music with children's books to promote literacy

2021/22 SEASON BY THE NUMBERS

As the largest performing arts organization in the largest city in Oregon, your Oregon Symphony catalyzes an arts and culture sector that contributes to a thriving civic life and a robust economy. We could not do this without our many concertgoers, donors, and community partners in Portland, Salem, and beyond who share our belief in the power of music. Thank you for making this tremendous impact possible.

- Ticketed performances: 103
- Total concert season audience: 149,313
- First-time ticket buyers: 19,070
- Free community concerts: 3
- Reach of community programs, in person & online: 86,763 people
- Broadcast reach: 25 million+ listeners
- Total unique donors: 10,358
- Record-setting Gala fundraising total: \$1.5 million

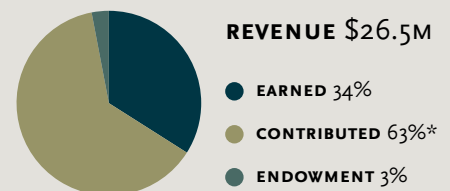
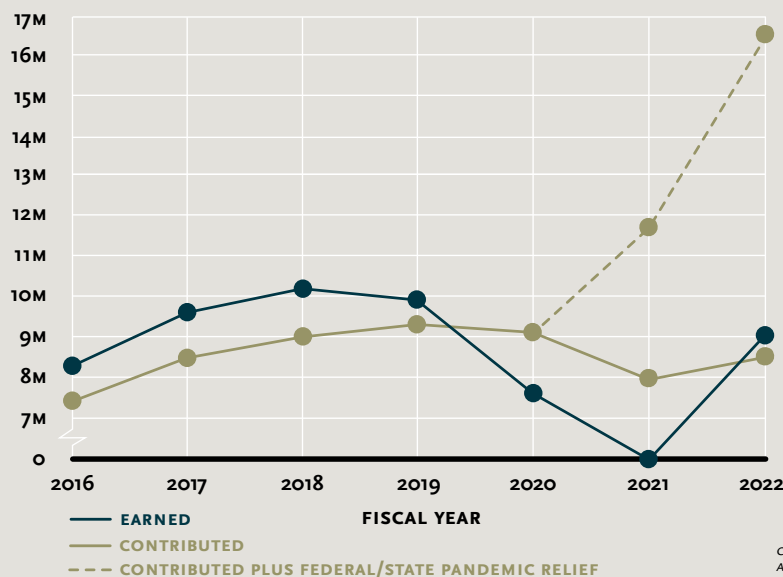
COVID-19 AND FINANCIAL IMPACT

While we were able to return to live performance, the pandemic continued to impact our operations. We were forced to cancel several concerts, though we were ultimately able to present more than 100 performances in Portland and Salem. We faced many challenges due to international travel disruptions, positive COVID tests, and contingency planning for possible artist absences. Additionally, we correctly anticipated that audience numbers would not fully return to pre-pandemic levels, as people both remained cautious of

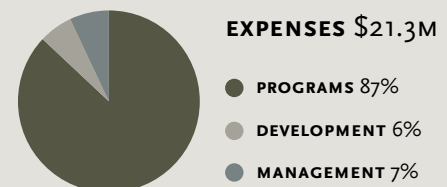
large, indoor events and had safety concerns about downtown.

At the same time, we continued to secure federal COVID relief through the CARES and American Rescue Plan Acts. Programs like the Paycheck Protection Program loan forgiveness, Shuttered Venue Operators Grant, and Employee Retention Tax Credit significantly bolstered finances for this fiscal year, helping us invest in our musicians and our mission while planning for future seasons.

REVENUE



*Includes one-time government pandemic relief funds



COMBINED UNAUDITED FINANCIALS FOR OREGON SYMPHONY ASSOCIATION AND OREGON SYMPHONY ASSOCIATION IN SALEM 7/1/21 THROUGH 6/30/22.

921 SW Washington Street, STE 200, Portland, OR 97205-2800 | 503-228-1353 MAIN