EUGENE SYMPHONY



C

Francesco Lecce-Chong, Music Director & Conductor

Leslie Odom, Jr., Guest Artist



Enriching lives through the power of music

Sandra Weingarten, Donor, Subscriber, Volunteer, and Ian Kerr, Principal Timpani

Seugene symphony

ORCHESTRA

MUSIC DIRECTOR & CONDUCTOR Francesco Lecce-Chong

VIOLIN I

Jenny Estrin, Concertmaster Lisa McWhorter, Assistant Concertmaster Jamie Chimchirian Stephen Chong Della Davies Anthony Dyer Rosemary Erb Clara Fuhrman* Yvonne Hsueh Nathan Lowman Sophie Therrell Alwyn Wright Vacant

VIOLIN II

Matthew Fuller, Principal Julia Frantz, Assistant Principal Claudia Miller Dan Athearn Alice Blankenship David Burham Mitchell Drury Virginia Kaiser Marilyn Tyler Jannie Wei Vacant

VIOLA

Holland Phillips, Principal Miriam English Ward, Assistant Principal Pamela Burovac Devin Burgess* Lauren Elledge Anamaria Ghitea Shauna Keyes Kim Uwate Vacant

CELLO

Anne Ridlington, Principal Eric Alterman, Assistant Principal James Pelley Dale Bradley Kathryn Brunhaver David Chinburg Ann Grabe Christine Sears* Noah Seitz

BASS

Keith Wymer, Principal Forrest Moyer, Assistant Principal Tyler Abbott Rick Carter Richard Meyn Greg Nathan∞ Nathan Waddell

FLUTE

Kristen Halay, Principal Wendy Bamonte Jill Pauls (Piccolo)

OBOE

Kelly Gronli, Principal Cheryl Denice Annalisa Morton (English Horn)

CLARINET

Michael Anderson, Principal Isaac Beu (E-flat Clarinet) Carol Robe (Bass Clarinet)



BASSOON

Benjamin Greanya, Principal Anne Kosanovic-Brown** Daniel Yim** (Contrabassoon) Steve Vacchi (Contrabassoon)∞ David Hattenhauer

HORN

David Kruse, Principal Jonathan Kuhns-Obana** Lydia Van Dreel Scott King Vacant

TRUMPET

Sarah Viens, Principal∞ Joseph Klause** David Bender TROMBONE Henry Henniger, Principal

Carson Keeble Vacant

TUBA Michael Grose, Principal

TIMPANI Ian Kerr, Principal

PERCUSSION

Tim Cogswell, Principal Brian Scott Sean Wagoner Vacant

KEYBOARD Christine Mirabella, Principal

HARP Jane Allen, Principal

CHORUS DIRECTOR Sharon J. Paul ∞

Melissa Brunkan, Acting Chorus Director

CONDUCTING FELLOW Daniel Cho

Dr. Sharon J. Paul. Chorus Director∞

Rick Carter. Piano Technician

∞ Leave of Absence

Bill Barnett, Recording Engineer

Dr. Melissa Brunkan, Acting Chorus Director

* University of Oregon Graduate Employee ** One-Year Appointment ∞ Leave of Absence

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Dear Eugene Symphony supporters,

It is often said that in adversity we find our strength. We have found since adapting to the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic that the strength of Eugene Symphony Association has been there all along: in our solid foundation of talented musicians, dedicated Board of Directors, resilient administrative staff, and YOU—our passionate supporters.

We are far from finished with our work to recover from the pandemic. But before we outline our plans moving forward, we invite you to reflect with us on how we delivered on our mission—*enriching lives through the power of music*—up to and even beyond March 2020. Despite the loss of five concerts due to COVID-19, the 2019/20 season featured spectacular and memorable moments that rival any year in recent memory.

Let's begin our reflection with recognition of our outstanding orchestra. Between the 2018/19 and 2019/20 seasons, we said farewell to musicians retiring after many years of service, including: Section Cello Nancy Sowdon; Second Bassoon Mike Curtis; Bass Trombone James Meyer; and Third Percussion Randal Larson. We also bid adieu to Second Clarinet Lou DeMartino, Second Horn Jennifer Harrison, and Section Viola Karlie Roberts, all pursuing career and education opportunities near and far.

We also welcomed new orchestra members: Principal Bass Keith Wymer; Principal Bassoon Ben Greanya; Second Clarinet Isaac Beu; Section Cellos Kathryn Brunhaver and Noah Seitz; and Section Violins Nathan Lowman, Alwyn Wright, and Mitchell Drury.

We launched the *First Symphony Project*, a four-year commissioning collaboration that provides four rising composers with the rare opportunity to create and premiere their first large-scale orchestral works. The first of the four, Matt Browne, joined us in October 2019 for school visits and public talks, and the orchestra also performed an extant work, *Barnstorming Season*. We were all eager to hear his Symphony No. 1, "The Course of Empire," in March, and now we await its rescheduled premiere with even more anticipation.

Virtuosic guest artists graced our stage alongside our orchestra's own incomparable talent, and we welcomed new audiences for two film concerts. More season highlights continue in the pages that follow.

On March 23, 2020, Governor Brown's "Stay Home, Save Lives" executive order and restrictions on large gatherings caused us to begin thinking creatively about how we could continue safely delivering on our mission. Thanks to the cooperation of our orchestra membership and local union, on April 25 we were able to release a free, on-demand video recording of our sold-out performance from February 2018, "The Four Seasons of the McKenzie River," featuring images of the McKenzie River region as captured by 65 local photographers while the orchestra performed Vivaldi's *The Four Seasons*. More than 2,200 households tuned in from throughout Oregon, other states, and even other countries! We felt the vibrancy of our community once again, as we did for the original production, reminding us of music's ability to bring us together like nothing else can, even while we are physically apart.

We also launched a Virtual Hub on our website to house other digital engagement opportunities, like radio broadcasts on KWAX and KLCC and Thursday Night Live with Francesco. Join in as many of these initiatives continue into the 2020/21 season.

Welcome!

What now? We were all hopeful that the pandemic would have subsided by now. That has not happened, and large gatherings of people will not be possible until some time into the future. Over the summer, the ESA admin team along with Board leadership considered a wide variety of planning scenarios and the financial ramifications for each. We turned to our institutional values of Excellence, Service, Passion, and Optimism, and also four key tenets: deliver on our mission; ensure musician, patron, and staff safety; offer employment to musicians and staff when and how it is safe to do so; and focus on long-term sustainability.

These ideals, coupled with a detailed understanding of our funding streams, led us to make the positive decision to keep moving forward and continue planning activities even though they may need to be revised. Accordingly, here is an excerpt from a resolution adopted by the Board of Directors on July 22:

ESA's Board of Directors supports the continuation of planning for performances, and music education and community engagement activities during the 2020/21 season that are civically allowable, medically advisable, and financially feasible ... The Board expressly rejects the concept of shuttering all activities for the season, as doing so would be damaging to ESA's short- and long-term future.

What does this mean for musicians, and for you, our audience?

At the time of this publication, we plan to schedule concerts at the Hult Center once a month beginning this fall. Initially these performances will involve a small number of players, safely distanced onstage, using chamber orchestra-appropriate repertoire. These concerts may have a very small audience if allowed by current civic restrictions. We are planning to video the concerts and make them available online about a week after the performance. Over time, our expectation is to gradually grow the size of the orchestra onstage and the number of patrons we are able to welcome into the hall. As the pandemic and its impact on the country continues to evolve, we will adapt our plans as needed.

We have also initiated Symphony*GO!* to continue our music education and community engagement work outside the concert hall. We began in late August with a quartet performing at downtown's Broadway Streatery and are continuing to present small ensemble performances in public, outdoor spaces. Orchestra musicians will also provide virtual lessons and other educational activities to local students and schools.

In closing, on behalf of the musicians, Board of Directors, and staff, we offer our deepest gratitude for your support during the 2019/20 season and for your confidence as we chart a sustainable path forward. We are buoyed by the progress we've made thus far through a core belief in the values and mission of this organization.

Stay safe and stay connected,

David Pottinger, President, Board of Directors

Francesco Lecce-Chong, Music Director & Conductor

Scott Freck, Executive Director

SEASON Highlights



"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 PNW 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 *Barnstorming Season*; rising American composer Jessie Montgomery's contemplative *Records from a Vanishing City*; and Missy Mazzoli's mesmerizing *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 favorites as Tchaikovsky's Symphony No. 5, Mahler's Symphony No. 1 ("Titan"), Saint-Saëns' Symphony No. 3 ("Organ"), Brahms' Symphony No. 2, and the original version of Schumann's Symphony 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.



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 Hyunh, Oregon Symphony's Associate Conductor, followed by two performances of *Harry Potter and the Sorceror's Stone* in a joint production with Hult Presents. 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 soulstirring 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 Ridlington and Eric Alterman, took center stage to tackle Vivaldi's glittering Concerto for Two Cellos. Finally, as our unintended close of the season, Tony- and GRAMMY Award-winning singer Leslie Odom, Jr., who originated the role of Aaron Burr in Broadway's *Hamilton*, transfixed 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 sterling 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 indelible memories.

MCKENZIE FOUR SEASONS STREAMING

This online event invited nearly 10,000 visits to Eugene Symphony's website—61% were new visitors—and it welcomed 22 brand-new donors who gave because of their appreciation for making the concert available while shelteringin-place.

"Thank you so much for last night's magnificent broadcast of *The Four Seasons of the McKenzie River*. The entire family—my daughter, son-in-law, granddaughter and grandson—loved every moment! Thank you for your inspired gift to the community."

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT Highlights



YOUTH CONCERTS

2,981 students and teachers from 41 schools in Benton, Coos, Douglas, Harney, Lane and Linn counties experienced our Fall Youth Concert: *World Beats!* 54% received scholarships to cover the \$5 ticket fee.

LINK UP

2,013 regional students participated in Carnegie Hall's *Link Up* program: *The Orchestra Sings*. Students learned orchestral curriculum in schools, and Symphony teaching artists taught *Link Up* in Eugene 4J's BEST Afterschool Program.

ENCOURAGING YOUNG MUSICIANS TO ACHIEVE

527 students at six Lane County middle and high schools worked with Symphony musicians in specialized sectional and chamber group coaching sessions.

ROSEBURG RESIDENCY

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

LAURA AVERY VISITING MASTERS

17 outstanding middle-school to college-aged musicians worked with Eugene Symphony guest artists in master classes through this program.

INSTRUMENT PETTING ZOOS

340 people of all ages tried a variety of orchestral instruments at our summer concerts, regional libraries, and other community events.

GUILD CONCERT PREVIEWS

The Eugene Symphony Guild Concert Preview engaged 1,530 people through discussions with each concert's guest artist and conductor.

SYMPHONY CONNECT

Symphony Connect engaged more than 150 community members at Cornerstone Community Housing sites, Eugene Mission, Laurel Hill Center, Looking Glass Riverfront School and Career Center, and a retirement home. Through interactive performances designed in consultation with a music therapist, Symphony Connect creates opportunities for musical connection and enrichment for traditionally underserved populations.

COMPOSER-IN-RESIDENCE

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.

COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

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 NAACP students and families. *Thursday Night Live* continues weekly on Francesco's Facebook and YouTube channels—join in!

MUSICAL MONDAYS & THURSDAY NIGHT LIVE

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 FLC*. 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 Scott Freck, the programs incorporated interviews with composers, performers, and conductors interspersed with music from previous concerts.

Thank You DONORS MAKE A DIFFERENCE





23% of 2019/20 season donors to of 2019/20 season donors **Eugene Symphony—welcome!**













21% of 2019/20 season

donors increased their gift from the previous season—thank vou!

1 Ruth Erickson of Chambers Construction, Silver Table Sponsor of Gala 2020 2 Guest Artist Sponsor and Board Member Dr. Ray Englander with his wife, Libby, and their friends with Leslie Odom, Jr. 3 Ted Baker admires the 2020 Advocate for the Arts Award he received on behalf of the Baker Family 4 Founders Society members Otto and Joanna Radke at the summer concert 5 Guest Artist Bella Hristova with Dr. Keyhan Aryah of Oregon Eye Consultants (Concert Sponsor), Dr. Lauren Aryah, and Francesco 6 Board Director Emerita Mary Ann Hanson and her husband Niles, Founders Society members 7 Sabrina Madison-Cannon, Dean of UO School of Music & Dance

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:

Adrienne Borg Alix Morris in Memory of My Brothers Amy Humphrey Andy & Debbie Bissonnette Anita Fletcher Ann Baker-Mack & Donovan Mack Anonymous (2) Antonia Lewis Arlen & Patricia Salthouse Barbara & James Walker Barbara Clauson Barbara Harris Barbara Hazen Barry & Maradee Girt Bernard & Ginger Bopp Bill & Judy Freck Brenda Gilmer Brian & Laurel Allender Brian & Nancy Davies Brian Price & Elizabeth Radke Bruce Klepinger Bryce & Sandy Halonen Camilla Pratt Carol Anderson & Britt Anderson Carol Horn Carol Williams Caroline Passerottti

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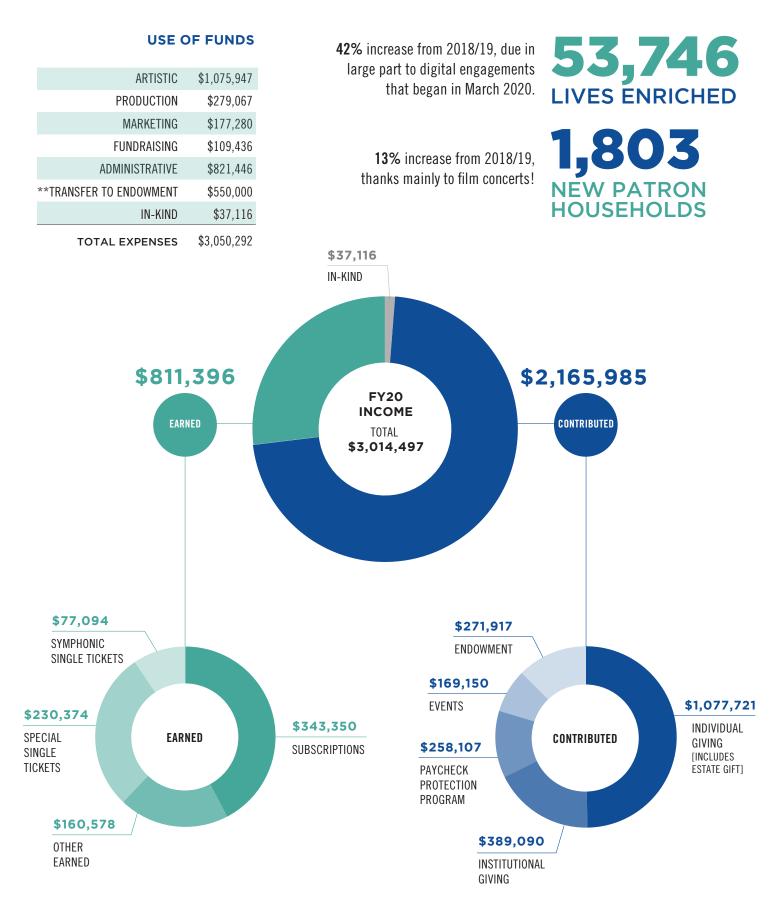
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This list reflects all Matching Challenge gifts received prior to May 29, 2020, when the match was met.

FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS* & MPAC





2019/20 Annual Meeting & 2020/21 Kickoff Celebration

Thursday, September 24 4:00–5:45 pm | Virtual via Zoom Directions emailed by Sept. 21

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!



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