

Spring
2021

The Leading Tone

ROPA

Regional
Orchestra
Players'
Association

A conference of the American Federation of Musicians, AFL-CIO

Notes from the President

by John Michael Smith, ROPA President

We are now past the one-year mark of the COVID-19 pandemic. Over the past year in our orchestras we have faced work stoppages; re-imagined seasons; PPP; collective bargaining agreement side letters; Integrated Media Agreement (IMA) side letter agreements, which include a tier system of audio/visual products an orchestra can take advantage of while compensating the orchestra at a percentage of their normal annual wages; and a new relief plan for our American Federation of Musicians and Employers Pension Fund (AFM-EPF) that was part of the massive American Rescue Plan that was signed into law by our new President, Joe Biden.

We now are seeing the rollout of vaccines around the country to defend against the continued spread of COVID and its variants; some relaxing of protocols in our communities; and a gradual re-awakening of our orchestras to performances and increased activity. I have heard of only a few instances of musicians testing positive or getting sick. I applaud our musicians for taking care of themselves and their colleagues when there have been so many who have become ill and died from this horrible disease.

We also have faced the results of underlying racism in our country with the killing of George Floyd by police, the Black Lives Matter movement, and the more recent shootings in Atlanta where eight people were killed, including six Asian American women. This crime highlights increased racism and hate crimes against Asian Americans in the past year. It has been a heck of a year, to say the least. ROPA's new Equity, Diversity and Inclusiveness (EDI) Workgroup has begun meeting and focusing on

awareness, education and activism for racial and cultural diversity, and how best to serve as a resource for our orchestras and musicians.

Many ROPA orchestras have weathered the past year supporting their mission, their musicians and staff; and some have used the pandemic as an opportunity to "reset"

the table. The Metropolitan Opera is probably the most visible organization to take this time to try and gain cuts and concessions from their orchestra and the other unions in the house. ROPA also has had a number of orchestras that have been dealing with similar attempts to gain cuts and concessions, most notably the Knoxville Symphony, Colorado Springs Philharmonic and Fort Wayne Philharmonic. There are reports about the plights of these orchestras that can be found in this issue of *The Leading Tone*.

We have been so supported and led by our excellent AFM staff during COVID! A great thank you goes to all in the Symphonic Services Department of the AFM: SSD Director Rochelle Skolnick, Director of Symphonic Electronic Media Debbie Newmark, Contract Administrator Laurence Hofmann, Negotiator/Educator Organizer Todd Jelen, Negotiator Jane Owen and Negotiator Nathan Kahn. In the AFM-EPF relief campaigns, thanks go to Michael Manley and Alex Tindal Wiesendanger of the Organizing Division of the AFM, and with the support of Antoinette Follett, AFM Communications Director. Huge leadership thanks go to Diversity, Legislative and Political Director of the AFM Alfonso Pollard and AFM President Ray Hair for their tireless work in saving pension benefits from severe cuts if the Butch Lewis Emergency Pension Plan Relief Act of 2021 had not been included in the American Rescue Plan. Thanks to all of you who sent emails and letters, made phone calls and served on the AFM Zoom phone banks that called our AFM member/constituents of legislators whose support was needed to get the bills through to the President's desk. And special thanks to my fellow leaders of the AFM Player Conferences: ICSOM, ROPA, OCSM, TMA and RMA for our combined and

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ROPA President
John Michael Smith

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The Leading Tone

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ROPA

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INFORMATION CENTER

- This newsletter will be posted online at: <http://www.ropaweb.org>
- To subscribe to the ROPA Internet Mailing List, visit <http://groups.google.com/group/ropa-discussion>.
- The list is open to musicians in ROPA member orchestras, and AFM Local officers for those orchestras.

Update From the Boise Philharmonic

by Phyllis Saunders, Delegate, Boise Philharmonic

Here in Idaho the musicians of the Boise Philharmonic are enjoying the fruits of our recent unionization, having formed AFM Local 423 in 2019 and negotiated our first CBA for the 2019-22 seasons. The 2019-20 season was interrupted in March of 2020 by COVID-19 and our last few concerts were canceled, though our newly created CBA was honored and payments to musicians continued.

In May through July of 2020, our Orchestra Committee, Local 423 and SSD Negotiator Todd Jelen worked together to negotiate a fair side letter for the 2021 season. We are one of very few orchestras that have enjoyed continued employment through the creation of a Digital Stage. Musicians are receiving monthly payments realizing 85% of the guarantee in the CBA. The Boise Phil is presenting a series of chamber music programs based on themes that reflect our community, highlight social consciousness and showcase classical masterworks. *Women's Suffrage Centennial*, featuring works by Higdon, Price, Clarke and others; *Sounds of Idaho*, with compositions by local composers; *Latin American Dances*, with works by Piazzola and Ponce; and the *Basque Block* are among the programs we are presenting. Both salaried and per-service players are involved in the performances, and we are finding it a joyful and revealing experience to collaborate with each other in this more intimate way.

Thanks to an excellent and hardworking technical crew, the product we are presenting is polished and attractive, with wonderful variety and artistry in the visual settings. *Sounds of Idaho* features a slideshow of our beautiful state; historical photos decorate the *Women's Suffrage* tribute; tango dancers accompany the Piazzola; and photos of our Basque heritage reflect a set of dances by Mieloxin. Two or three productions are released on the Digital Stage each month through June 5th, and patrons may purchase access on a monthly or full season basis.

Of course, there have been challenges in this process. Health and safety is a big priority, and our safety team works hard to ensure a protective working environment. Occasionally a musician has had to be replaced at the last minute because of suspected exposure, and everyone involved in all aspects of production wears a mask. Sitting six feet apart while playing in an ensemble presents obvious problems; giving up one of only a few rehearsals to technical concerns is a sacrifice; and the recording itself can be stressful, performing not for an audience but for a camera crew, with only one or two takes for the capture. Production techniques and procedures have steadily improved as we progress through the season because of continued diligence on the part of management and crew to assess and reassess what we are doing.





Photo on opposite page courtesy of Chris Thometz. Photo above left courtesy of Peppershock. Photo above right courtesy of Will Bowers

The Boise Philharmonic is proud of our Digital Stage, and we feel fortunate in this difficult time to work with a management that is concerned with keeping us playing in this creative way and ensuring our doors remain "open." We musicians believe that, when it is time to resume the stage, these experiences this

year will enable us to come together as an orchestra with a new level of ensemble awareness.

We are dedicated to reaching out to our community in new ways, and delivering the live music we are all craving.

The Knoxville Symphony Orchestra Returns to Performing

by Audrey Pride, Delegate, Knoxville Symphony Orchestra

On February 1st, Knoxville Symphony Orchestra musicians resumed their 2020-21 season after being furloughed a week before the season's start in September. There were countless meetings with KSO management, including a new round of mediation, all while the musicians embarked on the process of arbitrating over KSO's illegal furlough. In December, the musicians accepted an offer of 80% pay for the remaining weeks of the season (47% of the yearly salary or guaranteed

services), provided they dropped the pending arbitration that sought to award back pay for the period the musicians were illegally furloughed. The musicians were eager to return to making music. It would seem that the desire to protect those musicians who were struggling financially, and the uncertainty of arbitration, outweighed the need to fight the furlough for a majority of the musicians. The weeks following mediation and the resulting agreement were spent in more

meetings with management, establishing a protocol for safely performing together. Significant time was also spent clarifying the media payments (as outlined in the Integrated Media Agreement) that the musicians could expect from the KSO's planned live-streaming of concerts. The remainder of the 2020-21 season looks to be similar to previous KSO seasons, and includes pops, masterworks, chamber orchestra and chamber ensemble programs.



Regional Orchestra Players' Association

What's Going On With the Fort Wayne Philharmonic?

By Dennis Fick, ROPA delegate, Fort Wayne Philharmonic

The Fort Wayne Philharmonic has been silent for nearly a year as we musicians have tried to negotiate conditions to keep the music alive in the community and provide us with some limited employment during the pandemic. We have offered temporary concessions in compensation and working conditions to accommodate the restrictions demanded by the public health emergency, even offering last August to accept nearly all of their demands in order to deliver our art to the public. That wasn't enough. Management also demanded that we abandon permanently most of the terms of our Collective Bargaining Agreement. In September, management followed up that demand with a proposal for a new CBA that would:

- Permanently reduce the number of contract positions from 63 to 15, including a reduction of the full-time core from 44 to 15 contract positions and the complete elimination of 19 per-service contract positions;
- Reduce the number of weeks in the season from 33 contiguous (winter) weeks to 28 weeks that could be scheduled at the discretion of the Philharmonic any time between September 1 and August 31;
- Freeze wages at 2019 levels; and
- Make meaningless the peer review of artistic dismissals. They even proposed a management rights clause that would permanently remove from the arena of collective bargaining many issues of work conditions.

We had been bargaining a new CBA since June of 2019, building on the agreement that was set to expire in August 2019. Progress was slow, and as the new season began in October of 2019 we agreed to keep working under the terms of the expired agreement while talks continued. In February 2020, the Philharmonic offered a proposal that we thought had brought us very close to a final agreement. When in

March COVID-19 caused the cancellation of the last two months of the season and the summer services, the pandemic became the focus of bargaining for temporary conditions to accommodate public health restrictions.

The tactics employed by the Philharmonic against its musicians have been ruthless and unwarranted, resulting in several unfair labor practice claims and the listing of the Philharmonic and its Managing Director James Palermo on the International Unfair List. Their regressive proposal of September 2020 trampled on all of the progress made in nearly a year of bargaining, leaving us with no choice but to bring a complaint of unlawful bargaining (unfair labor practice) before the National Labor Relations Board. Because the Philharmonic has refused to withdraw its proposal, we have been unable to resume bargaining until the matter before the NLRB is concluded. As of this writing, the regional office of the NLRB has brought a charge against the Philharmonic for regressive bargaining. That charge is set to go to trial June 2nd.

You may ask why any board of directors and management of a symphony orchestra would want to take such measures. We are asking the same thing. The Philharmonic has no debt and recently raised over \$10 million in a capital campaign. The endowment stands at more than \$22 million (in support of an operating budget of \$6 million in 2020-2021) and net worth is more than \$26 million. In fact, they are planning to begin construction as early as this month on a new headquarters that's expected to be ready by October of 2022, in time for what should be the start of the season. We don't know the cost but it no doubt will be in the hundreds of thousands of dollars, if not more, and fundraising is already complete. This clearly indicates that money is available in the community and that the Philharmonic knows how to get its share.

However, we do know that they have a stubborn annual budget shortfall of sever-

al hundred thousand dollars (12% of the budget) and have had to cover the difference through extraordinary fundraising. We also know that they are concerned that some of the foundations they rely on may cut back their support in the future. In true bean-counter fashion, they would like to identify "reliable" (i.e. safely predictable) income and make that their budget, thus reducing the annual budget from \$6 million to \$4 million. Even more puzzling, we believe that the Philharmonic, which last year received PPP money to pay musicians, may not apply for the latest round of available funds. Perhaps if they received that money and paid us that would put them in disaccord with their own regressive CBA proposal.

So what does the Philharmonic plan to do with its \$22 million endowment, a new building and only 15 musicians? We can only speculate because they have not shared their thinking with us. In fact, they have not even announced the 2021-2022 season, nor have they told us when they want to resume giving concerts and under what conditions. In making their decisions, the Philharmonic has not talked to us, and we believe that they have not revealed the scope of their Draconian measures outside of their own ranks. They certainly have not brought the concert-going public into the picture. The leadership seems to believe that with a core of 15 they can fill out the ranks with extra musicians whenever they want and no one will know the difference. It is unlikely that they have acknowledged that there is not a great depth of classical music talent in our region outside of the orchestra, and that many qualified classical musicians are at least 100 miles away. By offering full-time work, the Fort Wayne Philharmonic is able to compete for the best talent at our national auditions. Most of our musicians have moved to Fort Wayne to play in the orchestra, and many would not be able to remain here without the full-time income of the Philharmonic. If the regressive proposals made by management were to become reality, the fertile garden of the Fort Wayne Philharmonic would become a desert.

What are we musicians doing about all of this? We are organizing to get the word out and gathering together the forces to prevail upon the Philharmonic to maintain and grow the orchestra. We are using social media and our website; we are reaching out directly to our supporters; we are picketing and demonstrating when we can; we are finding ways to keep music alive through performance; we are reporting the news to the newspapers and other media; and we are seeking to enlist government leaders and community leaders. We are using all

available tools and methods to get the Philharmonic to treat us fairly and with respect, and to preserve the legacy of classical music for the benefit of the community.

We are grateful to our friends and neighbors and fellow citizens of Fort Wayne and Northeast Indiana for their continuing support. We are thankful for all of the messages of encouragement and offers of help we have received from our fellow musicians and sister orchestras, the AFM, other musician locals and ROPA, and for

the solidarity that we enjoy with our own local labor community.

Some of you who are reading this may have played with us in the Fort Wayne Philharmonic at one time, or you may know some of us in the orchestra. We invite you and all of our friends to post messages of support at our website, <https://www.fwpmusicians.com/> and to do the same at our Facebook page: https://www.facebook.com/MusiciansOfTheFortWaynePhilharmonic/?ref=page_internal.



Photo courtesy of Dennis Fick

The Renovation of the Erie Philharmonic's Warner Theatre

by Karen Barker Ferren, ROPA Delegate, Erie Philharmonic Orchestra

The Warner Theatre in Erie, PA, was constructed as a modern movie theatre in 1942. As such it had a good-sized auditorium that would seat close to 2,000 people and a stage that was suitable for musical performances, though hardly big enough for today's modern orchestras. The Erie Philharmonic, now more than 100 years old, first rehearsed and performed at other sites. However, in the 1970s, rehearsals and performances were moved to the Warner Theatre.

Eije Oue was our conductor in the early 1990s, and I remember his surprise when the wind began to blow and the rafters above made a loud ruckus as we rehearsed. Maestro Oue requested this be corrected, and it was. Then he drew attention to the need for some serious updating and soon thereafter, a fund drive was begun to make the necessary improvements. It took some time before anything happened, but eventually the decision was made to upgrade the seating in the auditorium. None too soon in this writer's opinion, as we could see some seats were close to possibly collapsing when one sat down in them! New seats were installed, and the ornate Art Deco era fixtures were cleaned in the ceiling above and the walls surrounding, making the interior much more appealing to the audience. There were also some changes which included a more modern entrance at the rear, with new restrooms, and a new community room, which became the place where pre-concert talks were held and, more recently, where meals were served to musicians between dress rehearsals and concerts. All of this made the Warner a better place for our audience, but it did not address the size of the stage or backstage issues.

When musicians would arrive at the Warner, we entered on the same level as the stage, but dressing rooms were all either a few flights upstairs or downstairs in the moldy basement, where all the ladies shared one small bathroom, not even connected to a dressing room, and the guys had a larger room with its own bathroom. Both bathrooms were designed for one person only, so you can quickly realize this was not a pleasant place to unpack or change. There was no

monic programmed our season to end in April of 2020 so that reconstruction could begin. Of course, we didn't make it to the end of our season due to COVID-19, but in June 2020 the first hole was created by knocking out the back wall. By September, the back wall and stage were entirely demolished. Last February, steel supports for the new stage were installed, along with a new curved front of the stage and a working elevator. The seats in the Warner will be just on the other side of that.



June 2020: Construction begins! Photo courtesy of Karen Barker Ferren

ambience in those areas and few seats when one had time on their hands before or during concerts.

The Erie Philharmonic does not own this hall, so we had no control over the funds that were raised or how they were used. Time passed and our audience was completely unaware of what things were like for the performers on stage, or backstage. And many other groups would come to the Warner to perform, so this didn't just affect the Erie Philharmonic, though we are probably the group most often using these facilities.

There was a long struggle between the city and state over spending money to make the necessary changes at the Warner. But prior to the 2019-2020 season an agreement was reached, and the Philhar-

The plan was that we would perform in the arena across the street while the Warner was under construction. Since we've all been locked out of our halls, that was impossible and instead we have been recording for local PBS television during the 2020-2021 season, at least up to now. Our management is planning a robust summer season of 10 concerts outdoors on the shores of Lake Erie, in a park in downtown Erie and at sites in small towns surrounding the city. The plans are to continue to hire small ensembles. If cir-

cumstances will permit, we would like to perform the previously scheduled concert with Cirque de Symphonie in the arena and possibly show "Mary Poppins" with the orchestra playing. However, that will depend on COVID restrictions, and the hall will not be completed before Dec. of 2021. We have high hopes that we will be able to perform our first concert in the renovated hall in December of 2021, and return to a full schedule through June of 2022.

It's been a different year for all of us, but I'm pleased that our management persevered, and that the modernization of our concert hall has continued during a year when not much else has. Now we hope it will be as exciting and wonderful as planned and lead us into a brighter, more pleasant place in which to perform.



Clockwise from top left: by September 2020, the back wall and stage had been entirely demolished; Music Director Daniel Myer touring the site in December 2020 and standing in what used to be the basement of the Theatre; on February 2021, steel supports for the new stage were installed. Photos courtesy of Karen Barker Ferren

Do you have news about your orchestra?
 An article to submit?
 A letter to the editor?
 We'd love to have you contribute
 to the *Leading Tone*!
 Submit articles to Sharon Jones at
bellsauf@gmail.com

The Leading Tone is the official voice of ROPA and reflects ROPA policy. However, we do appreciate and encourage the contribution of articles and letters by others. These submissions may cover topics on which ROPA has no official position; the opinions expressed therein are solely those of the author(s) and not necessarily of ROPA, its officers or members.

You'll Like These Parking Tickets: Michigan Opera Theatre Performs Wagner in Garage

By Andrew Wu, delegate, Michigan Opera Theater

In October 2020, Michigan Opera Theatre's new Artistic Director, Yuval Sharon, conceived and directed "Twilight: Gods": a site-specific adaptation of Richard Wagner's "Götterdämmerung" designed specifically for the Detroit Opera House Parking Center. Inspired as much by the brutal utilitarianism of the parking facility as the safety precautions of the coronavirus era, "Twilight: Gods" transforms Wagner's six-hour masterpiece into an hour-long series of scenes. Live singers and

members of the MOT orchestra performed the scenes in intervals throughout the Parking Center. From the safety of their cars, audience members had the opportunity to watch Wagner's drama unfold scene-by-scene. The live performance (sung in English) was broadcast to car stereos. Leading American soprano Christine Goerke starred as Brünnhilde. Each scene of "Twilight: Gods" was accompanied by original narrative verse by Detroit-based poet Marsha Music.

The final work in Wagner's "Ring" cycle, "Götterdämmerung" is, at its essence, about the dismantling of a corrupt old order and the establishment of a new beginning. Beyond linking the scenes of the abbreviated opera, the poetry of the effervescent Marsha Music re-contextualizes the climactic unraveling of Wagner's cosmic mythos against the evolution of the city of Detroit.

"Twilight: Gods" was co-commissioned by MOT and the Lyric Opera of Chicago.



Photo courtesy of Andrew Wu

(President's Notes, continued from Page 1)

concerted efforts together with our musician members. This may have been one of the strongest examples of the AFM pulling in one direction. We are stronger together!

This fall, ROPA was represented in the discussion and creation of the recent National Alliance for Audition Support (NAAS) Recommended Audition and Tenure Guidelines, a collaborative project of the Sphinx Organization, the League of American Orchestras, the New World Symphony, and the AFM US symphonic player conferences. Its purpose is to offer

some assistance in creating greater diversity and inclusion in the areas of auditions and tenure processes of our orchestra organizations. The document was sent out first to NAAS partner orchestras, but has circulated throughout the orchestral community.

The 38th Annual ROPA Conference is still tentatively scheduled to be held at the Hilton Costa Mesa Hotel in Orange County, California, on July 27-29, 2021. This is the same location that we had planned for 2020. The ROPA Executive Board will be

monitoring where we stand with COVID, and will make a decision by mid-May as to whether we can safely hold an in-person conference this summer, or if we will again be virtual. If we are the former, we would also make virtual attendance by Zoom possible for those unable to travel and attend the conference at this time. We'd sure like to meet in person!

Get your vaccinations, wear your mask, wash your hands – strength, patience, good thoughts and prayers for us all. Keep Calm and Carry On!

SAVE THE DATE! 2021 ROPA Conference

Tuesday, July 27th—Thursday, July 29th

Negotiating Orchestras Workshop: Monday, July 26th

Hilton Orange County/Costa Mesa Hotel, Orange County, CA

Hosts: AFM Local 7 Orange County Musicians' Union and the Pacific Symphony Orchestra

Offices up for election: Four (4) Member-at-Large positions; Vice President; Secretary



Hilton Orange County/Costa Mesa Hotel, Orange County, CA. Photo courtesy of Mike Smith

Welcome, Ballet West Orchestra!

by Erin Voellinger, Delegate, Ballet West Orchestra

The Ballet West Orchestra is excited and honored to be part of the ROPA community! Ballet West added a live orchestra to their performances in 1978, using the existing Utah Symphony at the time. In 1990 the Utah Chamber Orchestra was formed, and it served as a separate orchestra that performed with Ballet West and in other capacities around Northern Utah. As the years went by, the orchestra became more full time with the ballet and the orchestra name was officially changed to the Ballet West Orchestra in 2014. The current Ballet West Orchestra has a core of about 46 members, and performs for nearly 100 of

the ballet's performances each year. The cornerstone of our season is always a six-week "Nutcracker" production, the longest running "Nutcracker" in America. We celebrated the 75th anniversary of our "Nutcracker" production in 2019 with a full studio recording and TV movie, which was also broadcast this year due to COVID restrictions on live performance.

We have been part of the AFM for many years; however, we did not have an official Orchestra Committee until 2017. Once this was formed, discussions began about joining ROPA and the benefits that membership would offer. The pandemic spurred our efforts to join ROPA, as we knew we would need the support of other orchestras to get through the new and unusual circumstances we were facing. It is clear to us how valuable ROPA is, as we have already learned so much from the discussion forums and other member orchestras.



We are hopeful about resuming our ballet productions next season. We are all currently missing our orchestra family, including interacting with the audience, sharing treats in the green room and, of course, performing together! We look forward to attending our very first ROPA conference this summer.

Photo of conductor handing a baton to the girls in the audience courtesy of Cassie Olson. Remaining photos courtesy of Kenny Hodges

Welcome, Oregon Ballet Theatre Orchestra!

by Casey Bozell, Delegate, Portland Opera Orchestra and Oregon Ballet Theatre Orchestra

The Oregon Ballet Theatre orchestra is comprised of 47 core musicians. In addition to our annual "Nutcracker" season, which comprises of anywhere between 10 and 15 performances, there are a fall performance and a spring production that use the full orchestra.

OBT was founded in 1989 as the result of a merger between Pacific Ballet Theatre, led by James Canfield, and Ballet Oregon, led by Dennis Spaight. Under the direction of Canfield, a former principal dancer with the Joffrey Ballet and the company's first Artistic Director, OBT quickly developed a distinctive style and unique repertoire that grew to comprise over 80 ballets. Today, OBT's repertoire includes



Logo courtesy of Casey Bozell

evening-length classics, 20th-Century masterpieces and groundbreaking contemporary works. From 2003-2012, under

the direction of Christopher Stowell, OBT presented nearly 350 performances and added 51 ballets, including 20 world premieres, to its diverse body of work. Stowell created 10 ballets for the company and further expanded its repertoire with notable works by George Balanchine, Jerome Robbins, William Forsythe and Lar Lubovitch.

During this pandemic, management has been very uncommunicative in moving forward with the orchestra. Several changes in leadership have left us confused as to what changes we can anticipate next. We're optimistic that joining ROPA can provide the support we need to lead ourselves in a positive direction.

The Latest from the Toledo Symphony Orchestra

By Casey Gsell, Delegate, Toledo Symphony Orchestra

The Toledo Symphony Orchestra, its parent organization The Toledo Alliance for the Performing Arts (TAPA) and Local 15-286 have worked hard to keep going and innovating through the pandemic.

Working with our county's health department, we have had socially distanced concerts using only about 10%-15% of our hall's capacity. When COVID numbers were higher in our county, we performed concerts livestream only. We staged two socially distanced performances of the "Nutcracker" – one of only a few ballet companies in the country to do so – and the 80th anniversary of our show.

Our streaming platform launched in September with Apple TV, Roku and in-browser streaming. We have a three-camera team along with a vision mixer and a backstage musician giving cues from the score. Concerts can be viewed as a livestream or on-demand later. We have over 2,700 unique customers from 45 states and 25 countries around the world, including Iran, India, South Korea, China, Hong Kong, Taiwan, Japan, most of Europe, Canada, Australia and New Zealand. We've had a lot of community interest in our platform, and many of our audiences are interested to see how we can

keep this technology going after the pandemic. Educational groups and older audience members who can no longer travel to our concert hall are two groups where we've seen interest.

Because we have remained on stage and present for our community, we are on track to surpass our fundraising goals for the season. All musicians, ballet and staff have all been paid 100% during this time and no positions were cut. Our Music Director, board and community stepped up in many ways to support us, including increased donations and allowing extra endowment draw. We recently learned that TAPA will receive a second round of PPP small business loan money, allowing us to slow our extra endowment draw.

Our Toledo Symphony School of Music is working on a lot of exciting educational projects and adjusting to COVID. We did our best to still offer something for all of our programs virtually, livestreaming, socially distanced or outside when the weather allowed. We are launching an online educational platform called "TAPA Classroom" that will serve as an online resource for music and dance education. Our pilot episode "The Nutcracker: Intro-

ducing Ballet through a Timeless Tale" was very well received with our test schools and audiences. We've filmed videos with our MD interviewing principals in each of the orchestra sections about their instruments. Our work is structured to supplement the activity that is being done in the classroom and support the teachers. Field trips to concerts and ensemble visits to schools are unable to happen right now, so meeting the students and teachers in this way keeps us relevant. We hope it will encourage them to visit us, or hire us to visit them, once restrictions are lifted.

Our Diversity and Inclusion Committee was formed last summer and is already meeting and expanding targets for board and staff diversification, repertoire and guest artist/conductor selection. Discussions around inclusive venues and marketing strategies are ongoing also. We are working on creating new partnerships with other local arts organizations that already directly serve minority communities in our city.

While we have a long road of recovery ahead, I'm proud to be a part of the Toledo Symphony and its accomplishments this year.

Report from the ROPA Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Workgroup

by Casey Bozell, Delegate, Portland Opera Orchestra and Oregon Ballet Theatre Orchestra

The first EDI workgroup meeting on Monday, January 25th, 2021 was well-attended, and a great introduction to the ROPA orchestra members involved. Many of us shared an opinion of wanting to help, wanting to act, but often not knowing how. We are all dedicated toward figuring out how to be both an ac-

tivist organization and a resource for all who need it. As attendee Maya Stone so eloquently put it, we all really believe in the "power of classical music."

Our next meeting will be focused on:

- finding ways to think outside of the box in terms of community engagement;

- writing and codifying a mission statement; and
- putting together a one-page summary of the workgroup, as the AFM Diversity Committee is trying to catalog and reach out to all of these EDI workgroups being created.

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ROPA Member Orchestras

Full Members

Akron Symphony Orchestra
Albany Symphony
Allentown Symphony
Annapolis Symphony
Ann Arbor Symphony
Arizona Opera Orchestra
Atlanta Ballet Orchestra
Atlanta Opera Orchestra
Austin Symphony Orchestra
Ballet West Orchestra
Binghamton Philharmonic
Boise Philharmonic
Boston Ballet Orchestra
Boulder Philharmonic
California Symphony Orchestra
Canton Symphony Orchestra
Cape Symphony
Central City Opera Orchestra
Chattanooga Symphony & Opera Orchestra
Colorado Springs Philharmonic Orchestra
Dallas Opera Orchestra
Dayton Philharmonic
Delaware Symphony Orchestra

Duluth Superior Symphony Orchestra
East Texas Symphony Orchestra
Elgin Symphony Orchestra
Erie Philharmonic Orchestra
Eugene Symphony
Fort Wayne Philharmonic
Fresno Philharmonic Orchestra
Harrisburg Symphony Orchestra
Hartford Symphony Orchestra
Houston Ballet Orchestra
Houston Grand Opera Orchestra
Huntsville Symphony Orchestra
Illinois Philharmonic Orchestra
Kalamazoo Symphony Orchestra
Knoxville Symphony Orchestra
Lansing Symphony Orchestra
Las Vegas Philharmonic
Lexington Philharmonic
Long Beach Symphony Orchestra
Los Angeles Opera Orchestra
Madison Symphony Orchestra
Marin Symphony
Memphis Symphony Orchestra
Michigan Opera Theatre Orchestra
Minnesota Opera Orchestra

Mississippi Symphony Orchestra
Monterey Symphony
New Haven Symphony Orchestra
New Mexico Philharmonic
New West Symphony Orchestra
Oakland Symphony
Omaha Symphony Orchestra
Opera Philadelphia
Orchestra Iowa
Oregon Ballet Theatre Orchestra
Pacific Symphony
Palm Beach Opera Orchestra
Pasadena Symphony Orchestra
Pittsburgh Opera Orchestra
Portland Opera Orchestra
Portland Symphony Orchestra
Reading Symphony Orchestra
Rhode Island Philharmonic
Richmond Symphony
Sacramento Philharmonic & Opera
Santa Barbara Symphony
Santa Rosa Symphony
Sarasota Orchestra
South Bend Symphony
Southwest Florida Symphony Orchestra

Southwest Michigan Symphony Orchestra
Spokane Symphony Orchestra
Symphony Silicon Valley
Symphony Tacoma
Toledo Symphony Orchestra
Tucson Symphony Orchestra
Vermont Symphony Orchestra
West Virginia Symphony
Wichita Symphony Orchestra
Wisconsin Chamber Orchestra

Associate Members

Eastern Connecticut Symphony Orchestra
El Paso Symphony
Flint Symphony Orchestra
Glimmerglass Opera Orchestra
Hudson Valley Philharmonic
Lincoln Symphony Orchestra
Milwaukee Ballet Orchestra
Opera San Jose
Pittsburgh Ballet Orchestra
Tri-Cities Opera Orchestra
Tulsa Opera