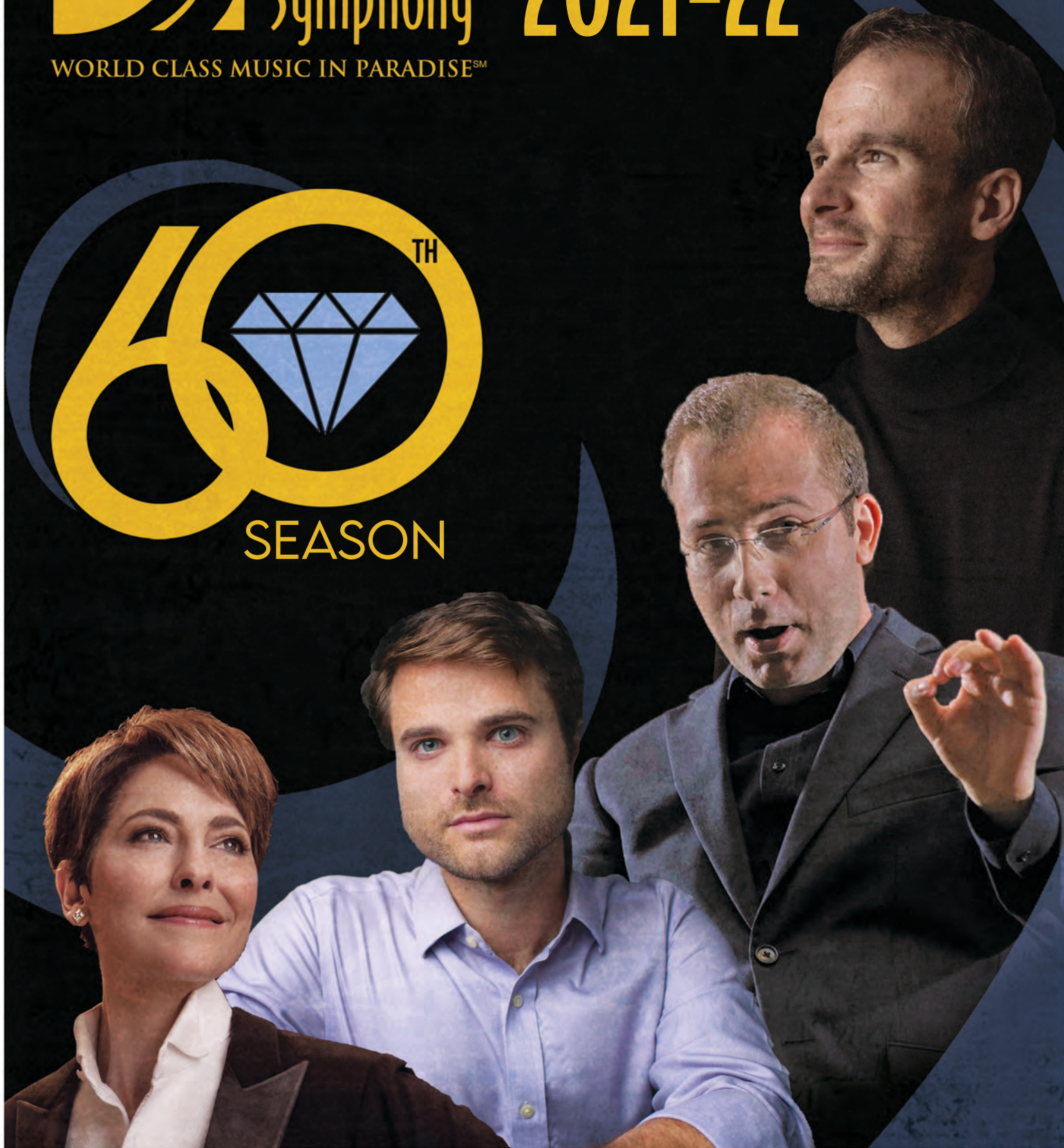




Southwest  
Florida  
Symphony

WORLD CLASS MUSIC IN PARADISE<sup>SM</sup>

# Annual Report 2021-22





**Annual Meeting**  
**October 25, 2022**  
**5:00pm**

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**Annual Meeting  
October 25, 2022  
5:00p.m.-6:00p.m.  
Sanibel Captiva Community Bank Bridge Branch  
9311 College Parkway  
Fort Myers, FL 33919**

**Agenda**

Welcome and Call to Order	Tom Uhler
Approval of 2021 Annual Meeting Minutes	Tom Uhler
Financial Report	Dylan Zsebe
Endowment Foundation Report Executive	Corey Vertich
Director's Report	Amy Ginsburg
Board Chair's Report	Tom Uhler
Adjournment	Tom Uhler



# The Mission of the Southwest Florida Symphony Orchestra is to present outstanding music for the entertainment, enrichment and education of the broadest possible public.

MiniMasterworks



Masterworks 1



Masterworks 2



Masterworks 3



Masterworks 4



Pops 2



# President's Letter – October 2022

Recently one of my electronic devices started acting crazy, so I did what we're always told to do: I rebooted it.

And that's what your symphony has been doing for the past couple of years and is doing again after our visit from Ian... we're rebooting.

Our staff has pivoted from working together every day to working remotely during COVID to working from wherever they are able to access technology after the hurricane. Fortunately, our offices are fine, but some staff have suffered damage to their homes; however, the work is getting done and concerts are going on. Yes, there are venue changes, but we've rebooted to find new spaces.

Some vendors are down, but our staff has found alternatives. As always, the show must go on.

And NOW, if ever, we need the consolation of live classical music. Music to soothe the soul and help us, yes, reboot. Whatever our new normal is, sitting for a while in front of classically trained professional musicians, playing some of the most captivating music ever scored, will make us feel better and give us hope.

In our six decades, the Southwest Florida Symphony has seen many challenges, and we always reboot and move ahead.

Thanks for being here and rebooting with us.

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a large, stylized 'J' or 'U' shape with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Tom Uhler

SOUTHWEST FLORIDA SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA AND CHORUS ASSOCIATION. INC.  
ANNUAL MEETING MINUTES  
OCTOBER 12, 2021  
ARTISTIC & OPERATIONS CENTER AT BELL TOWER  
AND VIA ZOOM

Present: President –Tom Uhler, Trustees, Joseph Broughton, Jeff Cull, Thomas Kracmer, Maureen Malloy, Liz Marnul, Ellen Schneider, David Hall, Anne Wardlow, Jack Martin, Ellie Fox, Anne Kimball. Gary Niethamer, Robert Short

Also Present: Executive Director – Amy Ginsburg; President of Southwest Florida Symphony Endowment: David Hall; Finance Director Contractor: Dylan Zsebe: Staff Members- Keenan Riley, Nora Lastre, Alex Albanese, Marie Crosby, Zach Mahoney, Emer Olivarez. Members of the public also attended.

President Uhler Called the meeting to order at 5:35 PM

#### **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Scott Gregory moved that the Minutes of the October 20, 2020 Annual Meeting be accepted as presented. Tom Kracmer seconded the motion. The minutes were adopted as presented.

#### **FINANCE REPORT**

Our Finance Director Contractor, Dylan Zsebe CPA, helped us to understand the Financial Report that was provided in the annual review which gave us a three year financial comparison.

#### **REPORT OF THE ENDOWMENT**

David Hall, President of the Endowment Foundation provided summary comments in connection to the June 30, 2021 Annual Report. It was noted that the Southwest Florida Symphony Endowment Foundation ended fiscal year 2021 with a market value of \$3, 472,917, which was \$1,243,222 more than \$2,229,695 a year ago.

#### **REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**

Amy Ginsburg was able to secure a new administrative office thanks to the generosity of Sanibel Captiva Bank. She also secured a performance/rehearsal/Youth Orchestra/large instrument storage/event space at a high end, centrally located shopping center at the generosity of Bell Tower. She also secured a long term loan of a baby grand piano thanks to the generosity of Isaac James at the Gulf Theater in Punta Gorda.

Amy publically thanked Bell Tower, Sanibel Captiva Bank Jeff Cull with Florida Weekly and her staff for their help in assuring our success.

Amy highlighted many other accomplishments achieved including performances, managing the budget and continued to strengthening of staff.

#### **CLOSING COMMENTS BY THE BOARD CHAIR**

Tom Uhler reminded the attendees that we have not been idle since the spring of 2020. We moved into our new Artistic & Operations Center at the Bell Tower. We presented Tiny Concerts, we continued and strengthened our youth program and we are preparing for the upcoming Season.

We will be hosting 4 Master Works and the Music Directors conducting these concerts will also be interviewing for the position of Music Director/Conductor of the Southwest Florida Symphony Orchestra. He stressed the importance of all of us attending these concerts as we can play a role in the selection process by letting the Search Committee know what we think of their skill set.

He thanked the group for attending the Annual Meeting as it signals our support and our financial commitments confirm it.

And now, on with the show!

**Fiscal Year End Financial Report**  
**Southwest Florida Symphony Orchestra & Chorus Association, Inc.**  
**Statement of Financial Position Summary**

<b>Assets</b>	<b>2022</b>	2021	2020
Checking/Savings	<b>145,078.39</b>	269,735.99	183,799.00
Fixed Assets	<b>10,566.00</b>	2,038.69	6,066.00
Accounts Receivable	<b>66,014.35</b>	16,310.00	7,610.00
Other Assets	<b>21,279.00</b>	38,074.50	36,029.00
Community Foundation	-	212,462.00	212,462.00
Total Assets	<b>242,937.74</b>	538,621.18	445,966.00

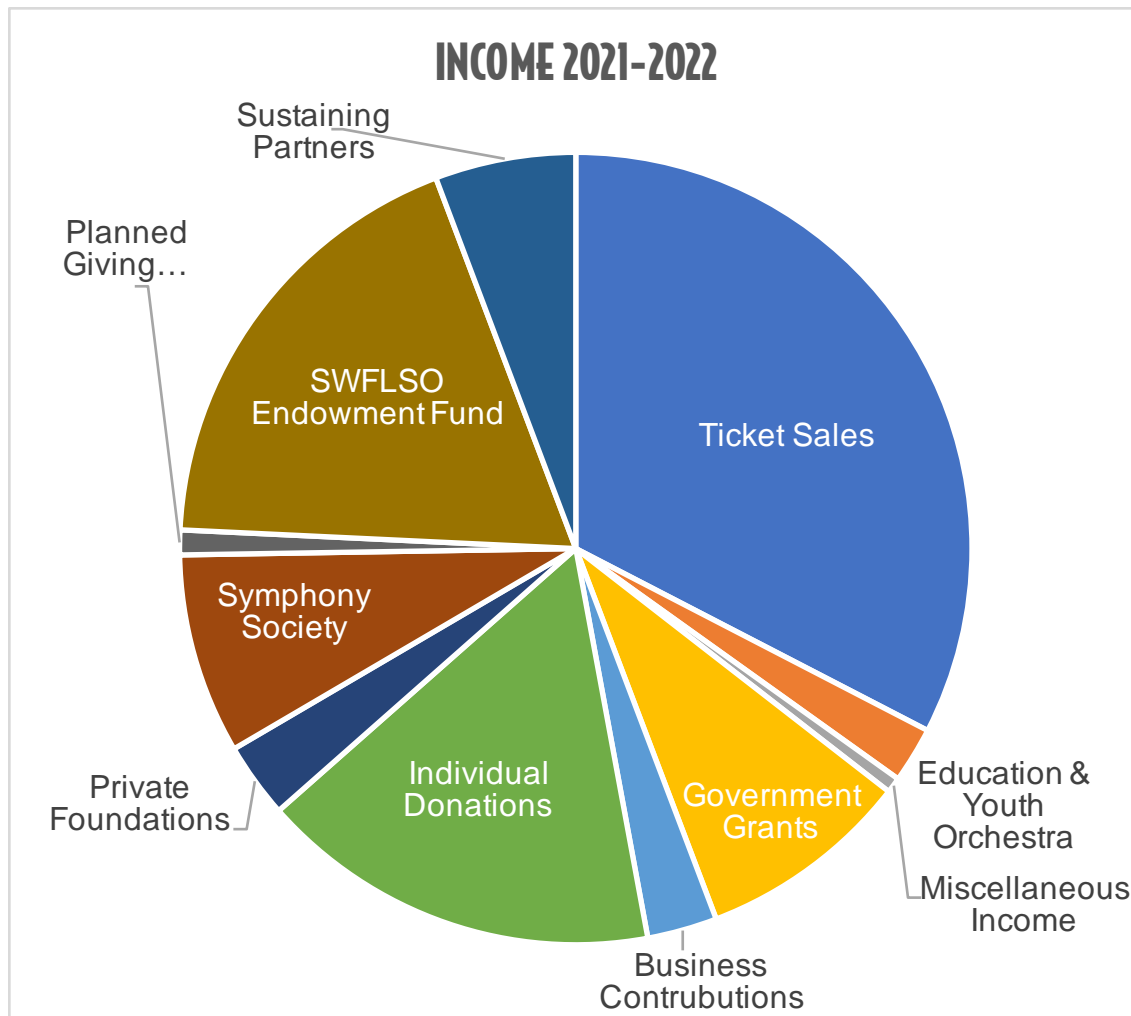
**Liabilities & Equity**

Liabilities			
Accounts Payable	<b>38,225.79</b>	9,380.50	19,091.00
Current Liabilities	<b>7,994.55</b>	3,985.85	184,659.00
Deferred Program Revenue	<b>65,100.56</b>	59,519.70	71,287.00
Notes Payable	<b>122,221.64</b>	149,665.88	159,900.00
Equity	<b>9,395.20</b>	316,070.25	11,029.00
Total Liabilities & Equity	<b>242,937.74</b>	538,622.18	445,966.00



## ACTUAL INCOME 2021-2022

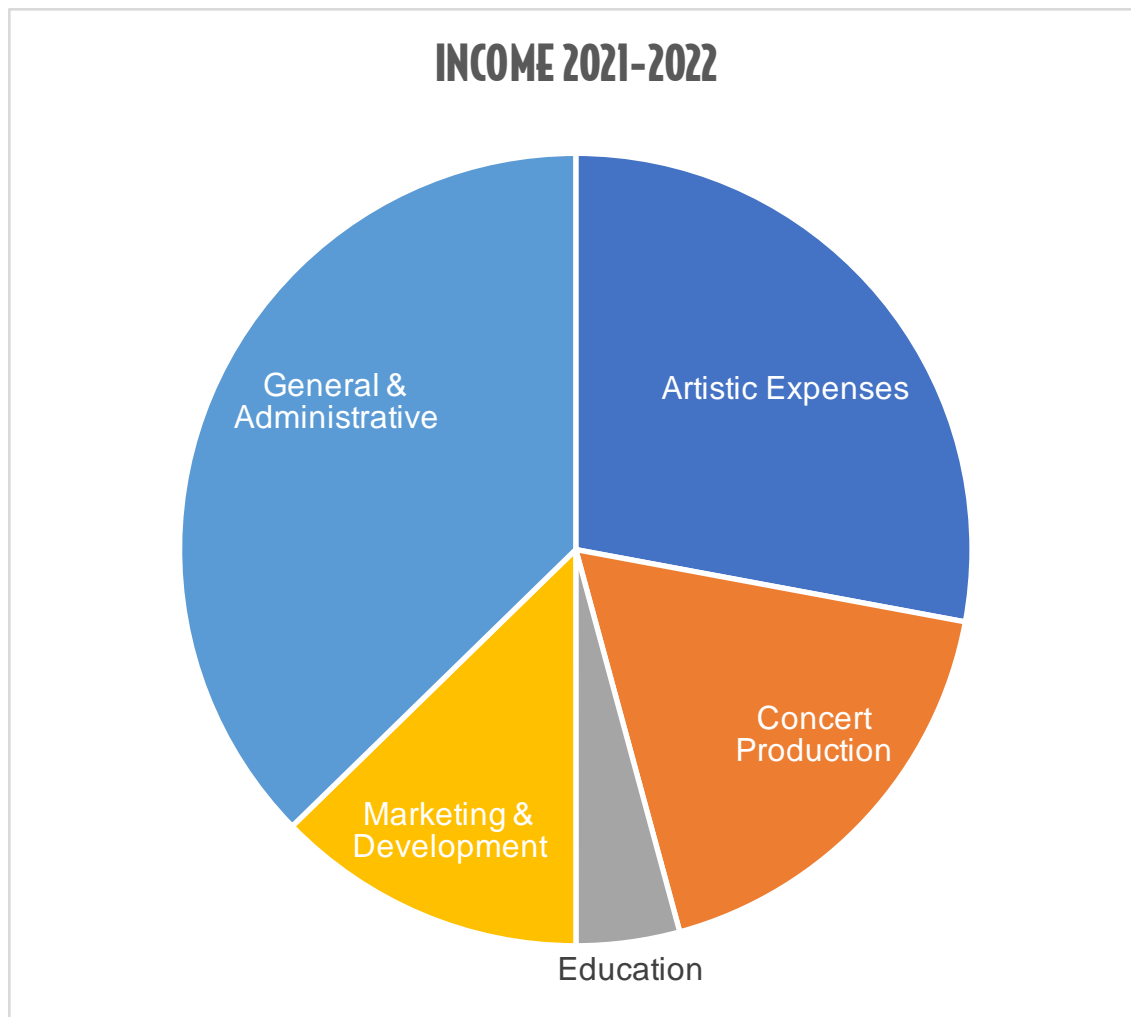
Categories	Income	
Ticket Sales	371,606.72	33%
Education& Youth Orchestra	26,005.71	2%
Miscellaneous Earned Income	7,189.35	1%
Government Grants	99,469.00	9%
Business Contributions	32,522.00	3%
Individual Donations	187,020.71	16%
Foundations	35,000.00	3%
Society	93,256.00	8%
Planned Giving	11,516.76	1%
SWFLSO Endow Fund	210,900.00	19%
Sustaining Partners	65,500.00	6%
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>1,139,986.25</b>	<b>100%</b>



## ACTUAL EXPENSES 2021-2022

Categories	Amount	
Artistic Expenses	317,366.33	28%
Concert Production	202,904.25	18%
Education	47,976.53	4%
Marketing & Development	144,358.93	13%
General & Administrative	<u>424,001.96</u>	37%

<b>Total Income</b>	<u><u>1,136,608.00</u></u>	100%
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**Southwest Florida Symphony  
Endowment Foundation**  
7500 College Parkway, Suite 200  
Fort Myers, Florida 33907  
239-910-3673  
dch2273@gmail.com

**Annual Report  
June 30, 2022**

The Southwest Florida Symphony Endowment Foundation ended fiscal year 2022 with a market value of \$2,898,185, which was \$574,732 less than \$3,472,917 a year ago. The General Fund (unrestricted) totaled \$2,725,272 and the Van Sickle Fund was \$172,913. The General Fund included \$22,878 for the John Hudson Fund.

The total known estate commitments are approximately \$4 million to \$4.5 million.

During the year ended June 30, 2022, the Endowment Foundation had the following cash flow:

Total Assets as of June 30, 2021	\$3,472,917
Grants Paid to the Symphony (an additional \$61,650 was accrued as a payable as of June 30, 2022 and paid in August)	(147,000)
Grants Paid by the Van Sickle Fund	( 10,000)
Grant Paid by the Hudson Fund	( 1,000)
Operating Expenses (including \$2,250 for marketing reimbursement)	( 5,189)
Donations Received	31,600
Investment Results:	
Interest, Dividends	65,109
Realized Net Gains due to repositioning portfolio	110,006
Unrealized Net Decreases in Investment Values	<u>(556,608) (381,493)</u>
Total Assets as of June 30, 2022	<u>\$2,959,835</u>

During the last fiscal year, the Endowment Foundation made a grant to the Symphony of \$147,000. The \$147,000 grant represented 6.02% of the average balance in the general fund during the prior fiscal year and was slightly more than the 4% to 5% range that the Endowment Foundation set as a target grant amount. During the current fiscal year ending June 30, 2022, the Endowment Foundation committed to granting \$175,000, or 5.45% of the average balance in the general fund during the prior fiscal year. The amount of the grant was determined using average assets during the past 15 months of \$3,213,205. This was paid to the Symphony in July 2022.

During the fiscal year ended June 30, 2022, the Van Sickle Fund made \$10,000 of grants to college students who are music majors. The Van Sickle Fund is currently supporting four college students with grants.

The Endowment Foundation continues to be managed by volunteers. Corey Vertich is our newly elected President and Chairman of our Investment Committee. Thomas Kracmer is Vice President. Scott Gregory is Secretary. David Hall is now Treasurer. Also on the Board are John Wright (the Symphony's Treasurer), Katherine Caldwell, Cynthia Duff, and Robert Diefenbach.

Because we are a volunteer organization, our operating expenses are minimal at less than half of 1% of assets. Expenses predominantly include: (1) the cost to prepare and file our tax return; (2) the cost of the music competitions to select the grant recipients; and (3) the reimbursement to the Symphony for shared marketing costs.

Endowment assets are currently invested in a widely diversified portfolio of both Exchanged Traded Funds (ETFs) and Open-End Mutual Funds. The portfolio is monitored quarterly and performance is measured against customized benchmarks.

If you would like to talk with someone about including the Endowment Foundation in your estate plans, or another long-term donation, please call Corey Vertich at 239-848-5411.

# Executive Director's Message

This time last year, we postponed our opening Pops Concert due to pandemic related complications. That was the first of several hairpin turns we gracefully made during our 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary season. During subsequent COVID spikes throughout two thirds of our Diamond Jubilee year, we made venue changes for conductor candidate meetings and reimagined our Chair Sponsor Benefit, the latter of which exceeded its fundraising goal and set a record for the amount raised. While audiences were tentative about returning to large scale indoor performances, we still managed to balance a budget through community generosity and belief in us and fiscal responsibility. We retained valuable members of our administrative staff and recruited exceptional new talent to the office to fill vacancies left by those who moved on to other opportunities outside of Southwest Florida. We forged a beautiful Youth Orchestra partnership with the Heights Center so our most important youth education program is able to eradicate more barriers to accessing music education; eliminating tuition and the need for after school transportation by offering YO rehearsals at the Heights Community Center. Most importantly, we welcomed vibrant new artistic leadership – our new Music Director, Radu Paponiu, to the symphony family. He arrived with an exceptional programming lineup, a willingness to collaborate with Nora and me on organizational evolution, a creative spirit and an open mind.

This year, we hairpin turned again at the beginning of our season thanks to a visit from (the wrong) Ian. (In October 2016, my son Ian helped us transform our technology infrastructure through a Foulds Foundation Grant. A visit from that Ian was much more joyful and productive.) This October, our MiniMasterworks became benefit concerts that raised more than \$4,500 for hurricane relief and helped bolster food banks and cleanup supply resources for those in need. In the literal days leading up to a storm of historic proportions, we held some of our auditions, which led to the appointment of, among other musicians, a new concertmaster, Orin Laursen, who will provide invaluable leadership and relationship building between the orchestra and Maestro Paponiu. This new appointment will elevate the sound and quality of the Southwest Florida Symphony to soaring new heights.

It's fair to say we do our best work under the worst circumstances. Making last minute changes as a result of emergencies isn't something anyone ever wants to get good at, but we have certainly mastered that art during the past three years and change. Let's hope the universe is done testing our resilience, but if it's not, we've got this. We are stronger, smarter and more determined than ever because of, not in spite of, the challenges we've overcome. From the plague and tempest we've all endured will bloom the most exquisite beauty you've ever witnessed. Season 62 will redefine this orchestra and as a result, this community. Brace yourselves.

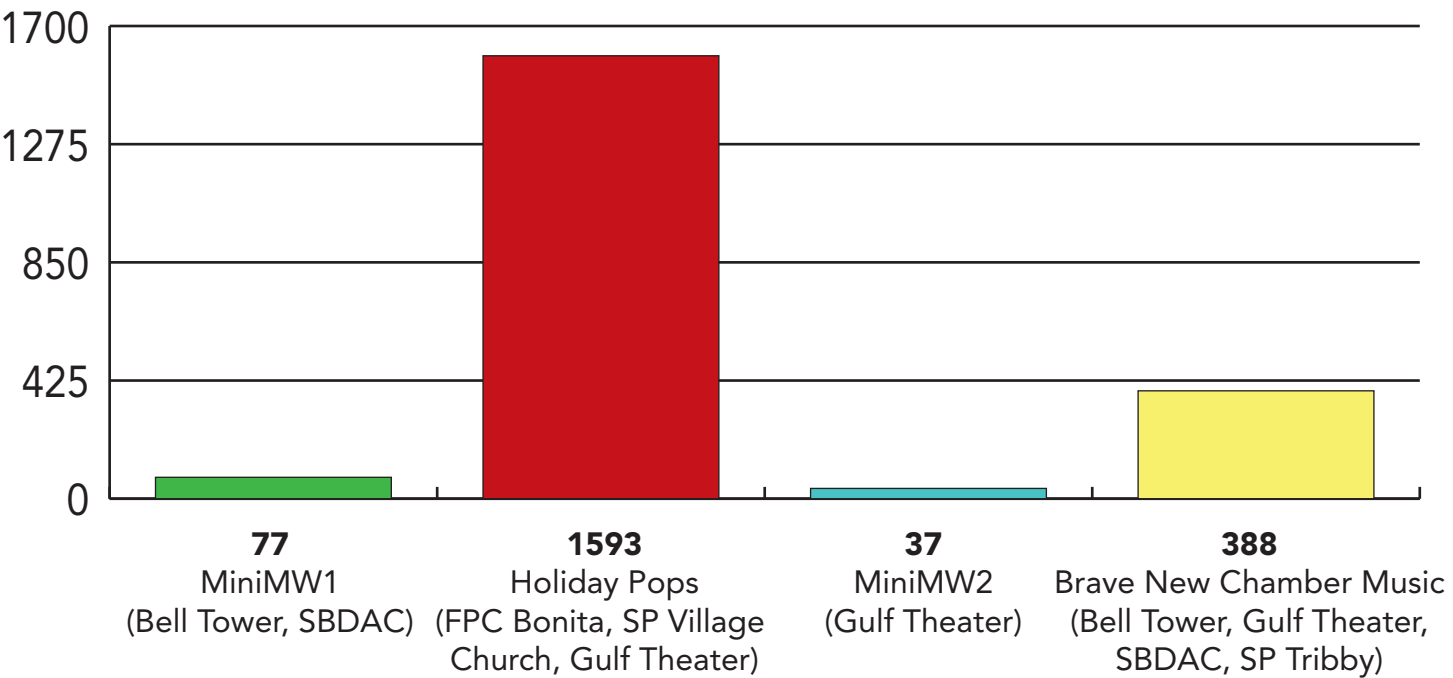
Ever onward,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Amy", with a stylized, flowing script.

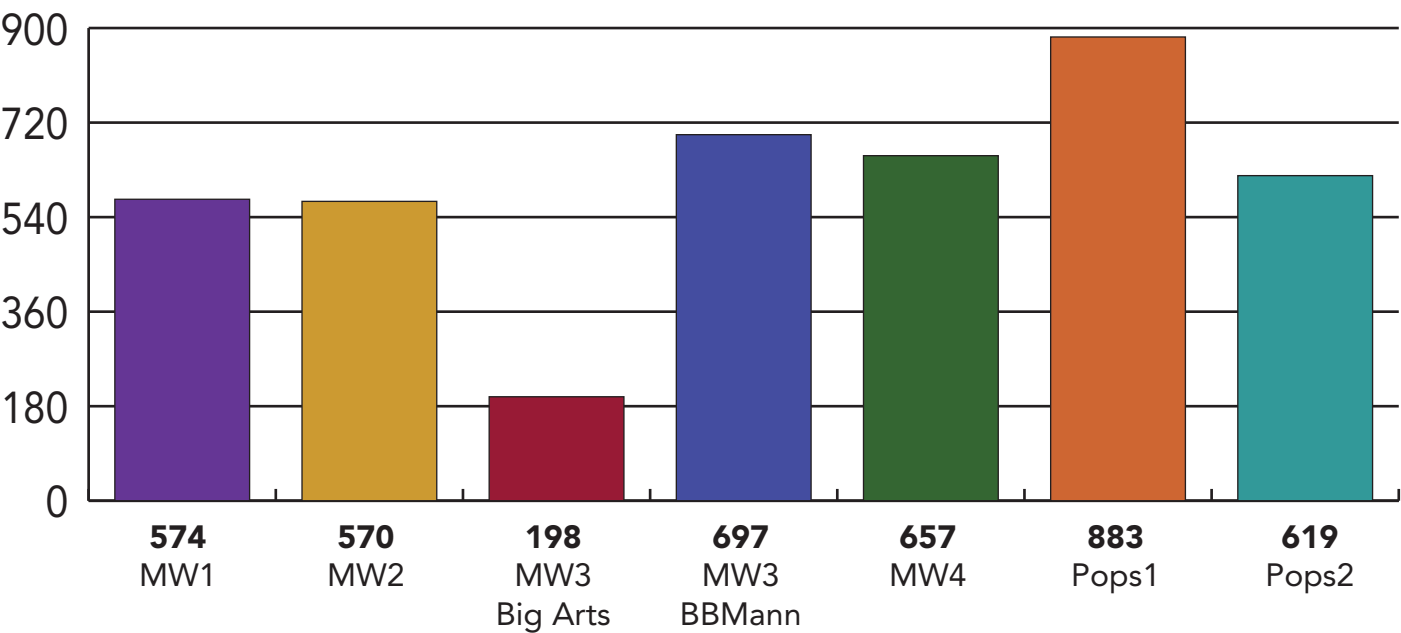
Amy



# TinyConcerts & Holiday Pops Ticket Sales



# MainStage Ticket Sales





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## **NEWS RELEASE**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Date: June 24, 2021

Contact: (239) 418-0996

Media contact: Amy Ginsburg, Executive Director: [aginsburg@swflso.org](mailto:aginsburg@swflso.org)

### **The Southwest Florida Symphony Announces its Long Awaited 60th Concert Season**

**Fort Myers, FL** – The Southwest Florida Symphony, Lee County's only professional orchestra and the fourth oldest in the state, announces its long awaited 2021-2022 season lineup of performances. The highlight of the Symphony's 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary season, ***Diamond Jubilee***, is the impressive list of guest conductors who will lead the orchestra during an artistically transitional year. In addition to celebrating a milestone anniversary, the orchestra will finally embark on a search for its new Music Director after the pandemic forced the postponement of the search process last season. Guest conductors include Maestro Vladimir Kulenovic, Maestra Laura Jackson, Maestro Stephen Mulligan and Maestro Radu Paponiu.

In addition to initiating its search for new artistic leadership, the Symphony bookends its 60<sup>th</sup> season with a high energy Pops Series featuring “experience artists” that pay tribute to some of the greatest music of the 70s; The Bee Gees and Elton John.

The Masterworks Classical Concert Series has been expertly curated by all four guest conductors along with the guidance of the orchestra's Music Director Search Consultant, Bob Moir. Mr. Moir served as the Senior V.P. for Artistic Planning and Audience Engagement with the Pittsburgh Symphony for 26 years, facilitating the recruitment of Manfred Honeck and Marvin Hamlisch to Pittsburgh. The Diamond Jubilee Masterworks Series will feature familiar, well-loved works like Stravinsky's Firebird Suite, Beethoven's Symphony No. 7 and Haydn's Cello Concerto No. 1. The visiting conductors and Mr. Moir have also masterfully woven undiscovered compositions throughout the Masterworks Series to complement familiar works. Included in Masterworks repertoire are the St. Georges Symphony No. 1, Op. 11 by Joseph Bologne and Fiesta! By Jimmy Lopez Bellido. Masterworks Series concerts happen on December 11, 2021 January 22, 2022, February 19, 2022 and April 23, 2022.

The Pops Series also honors symphonic classics of a different kind; the sweeping strings of the disco era with The Music of The Bee Gees on October 23, 2021 and the ornate Music of Elton John on April 30, 2022.



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Holiday Pops programs travel to venues throughout Lee, Charlotte and Collier Counties from Wednesday, December 1 through Tuesday, December 14. Holiday string quartet performances will take place at the Sidney & Berne Davis Art Center's annual Festival of Trees, at the Bell Tower's tree lighting and at Mercato's tree lighting in Naples. A larger ensemble will deliver sparkling holiday performances with a big band twist featuring guest vocalist Heather Ivy at the Gulf Theater in Punta Gorda, the Village Church at Shell Point and First Presbyterian Church in Bonita Springs.

The Symphony continues its collection of TinyConcerts, which proved to be quite successful as we emerged from the pandemic. These performances will also span three counties; The Goldberg Variations will be performed from November 11-13, 2021, pianist Andrew Armstrong returns to perform with a Southwest Florida Symphony string quartet in V.I.Piano from March 10-13, 2022 and guitarist/singer/composer/arranger/storyteller Andrew Lipke returns with Rock & Roll and the String Quartet Remastered from May 11-15, 2022.

Further details on the Symphony's 60<sup>th</sup> season are available by calling 239-418-1500 or online at [WWW.SWFLSO.ORG](http://WWW.SWFLSO.ORG). Season subscriptions and single tickets to some individual concerts are currently on sale.



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## **GUEST CONDUCTOR BIOS**

### **About Maestro Vlademir Kulenovic**

Distinguished as “Chicagoan of the Year in Classical Music” by the Chicago Tribune, **Vladimir Kulenovic** is recognized as one of the finest conductors of his generation. Engagements include the symphonies of Chicago, San Francisco, Houston, Indianapolis, Utah, Jacksonville, Bonn, Leipzig, and Taipei; the national orchestras of France, Spain, Basque, and NAC/Ottawa; as well as the philharmonic orchestras of Reutlingen (Germany), Malaysia, Minas Gerais (Brazil), Slovenia and Zagreb, among others. Festival appearances include Verbier, Aspen, Mozarteum, Cabrillo, Kuhmo and Round Top.

**Mr. Kulenovic** has been Music Director of the Lake Forest Symphony, Associate Conductor of the Utah Symphony, Resident Conductor of the Belgrade Philharmonic, and Principal Conductor of the Kyoto Festival. Commercial discography includes CDs on the Cedille, Tōrō, and Slovenia-RTV labels.

Awards received by **Mr. Kulenovic** include the highest Solti

Conducting Award, the Bruno Walter Award, Juilliard's Schiff Prize, and the Second Grand-Prix at the Rubinstein Piano Competition in Paris. He was honored by the League of American Orchestras to be a participant in the 2013 Bruno Walter National Conducting Preview. **Vladimir Kulenovic** is a graduate of The Juilliard School, where he studied with James DePriest, and the Peabody Institute of Johns Hopkins University, where he studied with Gustav Meier.

### **About Maestra Laura Jackson**

Laura Jackson is described by audiences as "passionate, personable, engaging, innovative, charismatic, musical, and effervescent". Now in her eleventh season as Music Director and Conductor of the Reno Philharmonic, she continues to win praise for her artistry, leadership, innovative programming, and creative community engagement.

Her passion and drive have helped the Reno Philharmonic reach new heights with engaging composer-in-residence projects, vibrant performances of traditional repertoire, and collaborations that captivate the enthusiasm of the local community as well as the symphonic industry nationwide.



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In addition to classical, pops, ballet, and educational concerts with the Reno Philharmonic, Ms. Jackson guest conducts nationally and internationally. Recent performances have included

concerts with the symphonies of Eugene, Hartford, Charlottesville, Hawaii, Flint, the Philly POPS, and *L'Orchestre symphonique de Bretagne* in France. In addition, Jackson recently returned to perform with the Atlanta Symphony, where she previously served as their first-ever female assistant conductor from 2004–7, working closely with Music Director Robert Spano.

Jackson recorded Michael Daugherty's *Time Cycle* on Naxos with the Bournemouth Symphony in partnership with Marin Alsop and received an invitation from the U.S. State Department in 2013 to serve as the first American to lead the Algerian National Orchestra. Other international engagements include concerts in China and the Philippines. In North America, she has performed with the symphonies of Alabama, Baltimore, Berkeley, Detroit, Phoenix, San Antonio, Toledo, Toronto, Windsor, and Winnipeg, among others.

Prior to her appointment in Atlanta, she studied conducting at the University of Michigan and spent summers at the Boston Symphony Orchestra's Tanglewood Music Center in 2002 and 2003. As the Seiji Ozawa Conducting Fellow at Tanglewood, she conducted numerous concerts featuring both traditional and contemporary repertoire.

Ms. Jackson spent her early childhood in Virginia and Pennsylvania before moving at age 11 to Plattsburgh, New York, where she grew up waterskiing, swimming, and sailing on Lake Champlain. She fell in love with the violin in public school, later attending the North Carolina School for the Arts to finish high school. She pursued an undergraduate degree at Indiana University where she studied both violin and conducting before moving to Boston in 1990 to freelance as a violinist and teach at Phillips Exeter Academy in New Hampshire. She holds a DMA in orchestral conducting from the University of Michigan, where she studied with Kenneth Kiesler.

### **About Maestro Stephen Mulligan**

American conductor Stephen Mulligan recently concluded his tenure as Associate Conductor of the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra and Music Director of the Atlanta Symphony Youth Orchestra. Mulligan served as a Dudamel Conducting Fellow with the Los Angeles Philharmonic in the 2018-19 season, leading the orchestra on the Toyota Symphonies for Youth series and assisting Music Director Gustavo Dudamel, Conductor Laureate Esa-Pekka Salonen, and guest conductors Lionel Bringuier, Mirga Gražinytė-Tyla, Zubin Mehta, and Michael Tilson Thomas.





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In the 2021-22 season, Mulligan debuts with the Detroit Symphony Orchestra, Arkansas Symphony, Southwest Florida Symphony Orchestra, and the Lakes Area Music Festival. Highlights of recent previous seasons include leading the National Symphony Orchestra, St. Louis Symphony Orchestra, Phoenix Symphony Orchestra, Virginia Symphony Orchestra, Charlotte Symphony Orchestra, Memphis Symphony Orchestra, Portland Symphony Orchestra, Florida

Orchestra, Amarillo Symphony Orchestra, Reading Symphony Orchestra, London Symphonia, and Aspen Philharmonic Orchestra, and the Rochester Philharmonic.

During the 2017-18 season, his first with the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra, Mulligan stepped in on short notice for three classical subscription programs over the course of six weeks, working with mezzo-soprano Jennifer Johnson Cano and pianists Jorge Federico Osorio and Behzod Abduraimov to critical acclaim. Mulligan is a two-time recipient of the prestigious Solti Foundation U.S. Career Assistance Award.

From 2014-16, Stephen Mulligan served as Assistant Conductor of the Winston-Salem Symphony and Music Director of the Winston-Salem Symphony Youth Orchestras Program. In the summer of 2015, after winning the Aspen Conducting Prize, he served as the Assistant Conductor of the Aspen Music Festival.

A native of Baltimore, Maryland, Stephen Mulligan began his music studies with his father Gregory, former concertmaster of the San Antonio Symphony and current violinist with the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra. He studied conducting at Yale University with Toshiyuki Shimada, at the Peabody Institute with Gustav Meier; Markand Thakar; and Marin Alsop; and at the Aspen Music Festival and School with Robert Spano.

#### **[About Maestro Radu Paponiu](#)**

Radu Paponiu is the Associate Conductor of the Naples Philharmonic and Director of the Naples Philharmonic Youth Orchestra. Since 2017, Radu has conducted the Naples Philharmonic in nearly forty different classical, education, and pops programs. As a guest conductor, Radu has appeared with Transylvania State Philharmonic in Romania, Southwest Florida Symphony, Colorado Music Festival Orchestra, North Carolina Symphony, and National Repertory Orchestra. Radu regularly serves as cover conductor with the Dallas Symphony, St. Louis Symphony, and Konzerthaus Orchestra Berlin, and has assisted conductors including Andrey Boreyko, Iván



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Fischer, Stéphane Denève, Hans Graf, Donald Runnicles, Cristian Măcelaru, Bernard Labadie, and Leonidas Kavakos. As former faculty of the Juilliard Pre-College Division, Radu continues his collaboration this season as conductor for the Southeast Asia Music Festival in Hanoi, Vietnam, and Summer Performing Arts with Juilliard in Shanghai, China.

Radu completed his Master of Music degree in orchestral conducting at the New England Conservatory of Music in Boston, where he studied with Hugh Wolff. While in Boston, Radu was also conductor apprentice with the Handel and Haydn Society. In the summer of 2017, Radu was appointed assistant conductor for the National Repertory Orchestra in Colorado as well as conducting fellow for the Cabrillo Festival Workshop in Santa Cruz, California. For two consecutive summers, Radu participated in the prestigious American Academy of Conducting at

the Aspen Music Festival and School as the recipient of both the Albert Tipton Aspen Fellowship and the David A. Karetsky Memorial Fellowship. In Aspen, Radu furthered his studies under the guidance of Robert Spano, Larry Rachleff, Leonard Slatkin, Hugh Wolff, Patrick Summers, and Federico Cortese. Additionally, Radu served as assistant conductor for the Aspen Opera Theater Center's full production of Mozart's *Così fan tutte*.

Radu began his musical studies on the violin at age 7 studying privately with Carmen Runceanu and Stefan Gheorghiu. After coming to the US at the invitation of the Perlman Music Program, Radu was accepted to the studio of Robert Lipsett at the Colburn School Conservatory of Music in Los Angeles, California, where he earned both a Bachelor of Music degree and an Artist Diploma degree in violin performance. As a chamber musician, Radu has appeared in festivals throughout Europe and North America, collaborating with artists such as Itzhak Perlman, Clive Greensmith, Martin Beaver, Merry Peckham, and Vivian Weilerstein. Radu is currently on the chamber music faculty for the Perlman Music Program.

Beginning his conducting studies in Los Angeles with Maxim Eshkenazy and continuing with Yehuda Gilad and Alexander Treger, Radu was appointed assistant conductor of the American Youth Symphony in spring 2011. While in Los Angeles, Radu frequently conducted the Colburn Conservatory Orchestra, Colburn Chamber Orchestra, Colburn Youth Orchestra and the Colburn Contemporary Players. An active supporter of community engagement, Radu conducted the Herbert Zipper Outreach Orchestra in numerous in-school performances throughout the greater Los Angeles area.



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### **About the Southwest Florida Symphony**

The Symphony made its debut as a community orchestra on April 15, 1961, playing in schools and community centers, with a roster of just 24 musicians. Today, the symphony has a roster of 70 world-class musicians, and is Lee County's only fully professional orchestra. This promises to be the most exciting season of spectacular performances yet as the orchestra emerges healthy and strong from the pandemic. The Southwest Florida Symphony's 60<sup>th</sup> year includes re-initiating a search for its next music director, a reinvigorated education department that includes a vibrant Youth Orchestra program and chamber concerts that will span three counties.

More information about the Southwest Florida Symphony may be found [HERE](#). A full season overview is attached to the email containing this press release.

### **Our Generous Sponsors**

The Southwest Florida Symphony's 2021-22 sponsor list includes The City of Fort Myers, The State of Florida Division of Cultural Affairs, The Florida Council on Arts & Culture, The Lee County Visitors Convention Bureau, The Southwest Florida Symphony Endowment Foundation, The Cape Coral Community Foundation, The Southwest Florida Symphony Society, The L.A.T. Foundation, Uhler & Vertich Financial Planners, Ellie Fox, The Bell Tower, Gary Niethamer and Sue Purcell, Radiology Regional, Liz Marnul, Burgess Brant Consulting Engineers, Florida Weekly, Sanibel Captiva Community Bank, The Friends of the Symphony on Sanibel, Scanlon Lexus, The Bell Tower, Business Professional Insights, Ernie Fogg Sr. and Margot Flinn, Mr. Jeff Cull and Ms. Ella Naylor, Rob Diefenbach and Mr. Eric Diefenbach and JK Brown and Robert and Reina Schlager.

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## ANNUAL REPORT – 2021-2022

Planning for the Symphony Society's program year of 2021-2022 began in early Summer 2021 when the Executive Committee and the Ways & Means Committee met to discuss our strategy to fulfil the Society's financial commitment to the SWFL Symphony Orchestra. Associated goals were to develop opportunities for social engagement and to support the Orchestra in general. We acknowledged that the Covid-19 pandemic was still a negative influence on membership, as well as on participation in social and fundraising events by both members and the community at large. The fluctuating Covid environment continued to create uncertainty. However, the decision was made to move forward with plans for an active year. We were rewarded with the tremendous efforts of Society members and the wholehearted support of SWFLSO fans in the community.

Highlights of our 2021-2022 fund raisers include:

- The Key Signatures Campaign to kick off the year.
- "The Year of the Tiger," a gala party at Cape Coral Yacht Club.
- "Spring Into Fashion," our annual spring fashion show at The Landings.
- Four "Meet & Greet" receptions to introduce the guest conductors of the Masterworks concerts who were candidates for Music Director of the SWFLSO.
- An exciting array of small-group activities called Symphony of Treats.
- A Bridge Marathon group.
- A full schedule of monthly luncheons with musical features to bring our members together.

### **THE SOCIETY'S AMAZING 2021-2022 CONTRIBUTION TO THE SWFLSO: \$93,256**

After a two-year hiatus caused by the pandemic, we restored the two premier music awards programs the Society administers and produces: the Jillian Prescott Music Awards, and the Marilyn VanSickle Voice Awards. These awards are funded by two different endowments. The Van Sickle was held in February, and the Prescott in March. Both give aspiring young musicians the opportunity to win significant awards or scholarships.

The SWFLSO's Artistic & Operations Center at Bell Tower Shopping Center became the location for a Society "Welcome Back" reception for members, and the four Meet & Greet events for the guest conductors. It was also the site for an end of year "Volunteer Appreciation" reception for Society members, hosted by the Symphony Board of Trustees.

As with all community groups, the two years of the pandemic severely curtailed the social and fundraising activities that rally volunteers and build membership and group participation. The Symphony Society has survived this challenging period, thanks to a dedicated core of volunteers. As we move into a new program year, we all look forward to an exciting time rebuilding for the future. Our sincere appreciation goes to all who contribute to our efforts to support great music in Southwest Florida!

### **2021-2022 Symphony Society Executive Committee**

Ellen Schneider, President	Joanne Hostetter, Treasurer
Janet Hladik, First Vice President	Pat Obermiller, Assistant Treasurer
Stacia Featherston, Second Vice President	Richard Quodomine, Secretary
June Gibson, Corresponding Secretary	

# Youth Orchestra Annual Report

## 2021-2022

Auditioned 65 total players

Youth Orchestra 34 members

Sinfonietta 17 members

3 concerts:

- November 14th Bell Tower Courtyard
- February 20th Bell Tower Courtyard
- May 23rd First Assembly Church.

String Quartet performed 3 times  
before SWFLSO Masterworks  
We had 9 graduating seniors

2021-2022 Budget \$25,139

2022-2023 Budget \$22,750





Dear Youth Orchestra Students & Families,

We hope you've enjoyed your year of music education with the Southwest Florida Symphony Youth Orchestra Ensembles. It's been a great pleasure hearing about the growth you've experienced through working with Mr. Fernandez, Ms. Rozmus and Mr. Forti and our patrons raved about the quartet performances your ensembles have given in the lobby preceding Masterworks Concerts. Thank you for your commitment to this program and for sharing your talent with us.

We have exciting news about the Sinfonietta's and Youth Orchestra's next chapter and we hope you'll all join us on this journey of growth and collaboration. Beginning this fall, we will pool our resources with the Heights Center, combining our respective ensembles. All programs will be offered at the beautiful, new facilities of the Heights Center, which is just off Gladiolus Boulevard. This collaboration is beneficial to both institutions in many ways.

Through partnering with The Heights Center, we are now able to offer all programs **TUITION FREE**. The highest level of instruction will be provided through combining our educational resources; teachers, curriculum and repertoire. Katrina Rozmus will continue to provide leadership and instruction for MOSAIC students (formerly Sinfonietta) and Roland Forti will do the same for the Southwest Florida Symphony Youth Orchestra.

Participating in the Youth Orchestra program for older, more advanced students will continue to be determined through audition and acceptance. Rehearsals will continue to take place on Mondays from 5pm-7pm, except during school closures.

The Heights Center program provides Musical Opportunities Supporting the Arts In Our Community (MOSAIC). Every child who wants to pursue learning how to play a string instrument will have access to the program regardless of skill level, which means Sinfonietta students no longer need to audition for the program. MOSAIC is an El Sistema inspired music education program that places students in classes based on their skill level. More advanced young string players continue to be challenged while musicians who are beginning their journey as string players can work together with an instructor who will focus on the basics. String players will have access to small group instruction twice a week. The days of instruction for each instrument and level will depend on the number of students who enroll. The final rehearsal schedules will be released by the end of August.

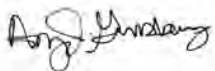
As this program collaboration begins to come together, we'll keep our YO families informed on next steps for enrollment and the audition process for those of you who wish to participate in the advanced YO program. In the meantime, the Heights Center has extended an invitation to our YO students and families to visit and tour their facility. We've arranged to hold an "open house" performance of the Southwest Florida Symphony's Rock & Roll and the String Quartet TinyConcert at the Heights Center on Wednesday, May 11<sup>th</sup> at 6:00pm, so we hope all of you can join us to see this beautiful facility, meet MOSAIC students and families and enjoy a free concert and refreshments. If you plan to attend, we ask that you register for free admission by visiting this link: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/rock-and-roll-and-the-string-quartet-at-the-heights-center-tickets-314695762497>

You'll find the address and a map to the Heights Center on the registration page.

We're working with Melissa Barlow, the Director of Arts and Community Programs, on fine tuning details relating to this YO collaboration so that our programs are the best they can possibly be, offering exceptional music instruction to every child who desires access.

Looking forward to seeing you all at the Heights Center on May 11<sup>th</sup> and to another stellar YO concert on May 23<sup>rd</sup> !

All my best,



Amy Ginsburg  
Executive Director

# **Youth Orchestra Transition Summary**

## **Basic YO history**

Originally called the Palm Coast Youth Symphony, The Southwest Florida Symphony Youth Orchestra was founded in 1988. It was an organization that afforded young people in the greater Fort Myers area the opportunity to learn and perform great classical music. In 1999, the Palm Coast Youth Symphony merged with the Southwest Florida Symphony and continues today as part of the Symphony's family of affiliates. The Southwest Florida Symphony's Youth Orchestra's mission is to provide the opportunity for individual growth of musically talented youth. This is made possible through training and performance of the highest quality orchestral literature, developing pride and self-esteem in young people from all cultural backgrounds through individual musical achievement, instilling values and discipline through musical experiences that can be carried through life, and by perpetuating support of professional classical music by enriching local culture and by cultivating future musicians and audience members for orchestras.

## **Current YO structure**

Our Youth Orchestra programs consist of two ensembles; Sinfonietta, which provides beginning string players with the opportunity to engage in large group instruction under the leadership of Katrina Rozmus, the Sinfonietta's conductor. The Youth Symphony provides more advanced musicians in every instrument family with large group instruction under the leadership of Roland Forti. The Youth Symphony Program supplements public school music instruction by bringing a string orchestra together with students who play wind, brass and percussion in band programs to study and perform classical repertoire in an orchestra setting.

The Youth Orchestra Programs have been managed this year by Isaac Fernandez-Hernandez. Isaac is responsible for overseeing the administrative duties associated with the YO; tracking attendance, collecting tuition, recruitment, scheduling, planning and executing all performances, managing YO payroll, YO social media and fundraising for the program.

This year, we have 56 students enrolled in our program in total; 38 Youth Symphony students and 18 Sinfonietta students. Tuition costs \$250 per year. Eight students participate through scholarships. Scholarship funding is provided by one business foundation and several individuals who earmark specific donations to the Symphony for YO scholarships. We also solicit for donations at each YO performance. Tuition and scholarships largely cover the costs associated with operating the YO.

The YO year runs from late August/early September through mid- to late-May, depending on the timing of each school year. Our YO calendar follows the public-school calendar, meaning rehearsals and concerts are not held during school closures.

## **Future YO structure**

This year, we/the Symphony planned a Young People's Concert to be performed at Cypress Lake High School Center for the Performing Arts on February 9, for which our musicians were hired months prior to the event. About two weeks before the concert was scheduled to happen, we experienced a spike in COVID cases, which led to the closure of public-school campuses for outside visitors. In the interest of preventing another COVID related cancellation that would negatively affect the musicians we had already hired for this concert, Nora and I sought an alternate venue, ultimately discovering an opportunity at the Heights Center for YO collaboration. Nora arranged for us to meet with the Heights Center's management, tour the facility and explore this opportunity. Since the Heights Center is also home to a municipal charter elementary school, we eliminated the need to bus students to the performance venue, thereby having a literal built-in audience for the kids who utilize the community center for after school activities. We ended up being able to hold our YPC at the Heights Center on the same day we originally planned, providing access to approximately 200 elementary school students who have very limited access to this type of arts education.

During our visit and tour to pivot the YPC, Melissa Barlow, the center's Director of Arts and Community Programs, gave us an overview of their current music instruction programs, called MOSAIC, an acronym for **M**usical **O**pportunities **S**upporting the **A**rts **I**n Our **C**ommunity. We discovered ways our programs could enhance and provide support for one another, which led to formulating a revised structure for both programs.

MOSAIC currently consists of small group instruction for beginning musicians in all families of instruments. It's a tuition free after school program that is completely managed by the Heights Center staff. It also has instruments available for participating students. What they don't currently have to offer is more advanced instruction for kids who outgrow their current level, large ensemble rehearsal/performance opportunities or access to transportation to send their students to a program like ours for additional learning opportunities. Through this collaboration we accomplish the following:

- Shift program management to the Heights Center staff
- Provide additional learning opportunities to advancing young musicians by bringing our conductors and coaches (teachers who provide smaller group instruction) to their campus
- Eliminate the tuition burden for all participating families
- Financial support for the entire program is shared between both organizations
- Deliver the highest level of instruction possible to a community in great need
- Provide overall access to arts and culture for a community in great need, exponentially expanding our diversity, equity and inclusion efforts

Included with this overview is a letter that was collectively composed by me, Nora, our YO staff and Melissa Barlow at the Heights Center. This will be distributed to YO families in the coming weeks. The first open house opportunity will come in the form of an invitation for everyone invested in and involved with the YO to attend a free performance of Rock & Roll and the String Quartet featuring Andrew Lipke at the center on Wednesday, May 11 at 6pm. In addition to the performance, a tour will be offered and refreshments will be served. The Heights Center is also inviting its board, major donors and MOSAIC families so everyone will have an opportunity to become acquainted.

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