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Carolyn Kuan, Music Director

MEMORANDUM

DATE: September 20, 2021
TO: HSO Musicians; cc AFM Local 400
FROM: Steve Collins, Executive Director
RE: Fall Opening Updates

The purpose of this memo is to provide updates on fall season-opening plans, beginning with our first Masterworks concerts on October 1-3 at The Bushnell's Belding Theater. While there will be some overlap with concepts covered in this memo and the October Executive Director's Report, (to be distributed on or about October 12), I wanted to provide this information prior to the season opening. As always, feel free to reach out to me or any member of our administrative team for further information or to share your thoughts on how we can work together to make the 2021-22 season as successful as possible.

General Season Programming Strategy

With The Bushnell Performing Arts Center and most, if not all, other area performing arts venues open for business, as well as workable federal, state and local health safety mandates in place, the HSO will strive to present a full season of concerts and events – with some caveats. Obviously, if the public health situation changes for the worse and venue restrictions or closures are put in place, concert and event restructuring and/or cancellations may be considered.

All nine Masterworks, three Sunday Serenades, and two Intermix concert programs are scheduled or in process, guest artists hired, etc. Pops concerts have been adjusted to account for a very heavy reliance on single tickets sales, (as opposed to subscriptions), and rapidly changing venue health and safety protocols throughout August and earlier this month. The decision was made to delay a planned Tribute to Aretha Franklin concert from October 2021 to June 2, 2022 and limit the number of Pops concert programs to three instead of our usual four. There is the possibility of adding a fourth program later in the season, but difficult to execute with very busy venue and orchestra calendars in the spring months, and the Talcott festival occupying the summer season.

Additionally, there is considerable concern that audience vaccination and testing requirements may have a substantial impact on family audiences at the December Holiday Cirque concerts. We will keep a close eye on early ticket sales and create back up plans in the event the Cirque program is not a financially viable production this season.

***The orchestra's "winter season" begins September 27th and the previous season furloughs are no longer in effect.

Health Safety Protocols

Orchestra Protocols for Rehearsals and Concerts

Discussions with the Player Safety Committee have occurred throughout the summer months and continue. The principal protocols proposed by management and discussed with the committee are the following. Keep in

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mind there are additional line items and many details to be considered. We await a response to our September 8th proposal.

- Vaccine mandate for all musicians, with testing required for those with an exemption for a medical condition or a closely held religious belief, or those who decline to provide vaccination status. (This is required by The Bushnell.)
- Alternate work may be available for any rostered HSO musician who is either unvaccinated or declines to provide vaccination status. Musicians may also make use of the leave of absence policy for a full or partial season.
- Masks are required for all musicians at all times indoors. Wind and brass players may remove masks to play when in a designated performance area.
- String players will sit two to a stand, wind and brass players will be distanced to the greatest extent possible and in consultation with the Music Director.
- All conductors and guest artists will follow the same protocols.

Audience Protocols at The Bushnell

With the season launching October 1st, health safety protocols at The Bushnell for concerts and events are in place and are being tested by Bushnell staff with several “preview” events. All audiences need to provide proof of vaccination or test negative to enter the building and wear a mask while inside except while eating or drinking. For more information: [Health and Safety Protocols | Hartford Symphony Orchestra](#) Protocols at the Wadsworth Atheneum for Sunday Serenades concerts will be similar, details to be finalized shortly.

Attendance Protocols at Board and Committee Meetings

For Board and committee meetings, and the Annual Meeting on 10/26/21 at the Mark Twain House, proof of vaccination will need to be provided and masks worn in most cases. Details are being finalized and a separate memo will be distributed shortly. Zoom remains available for all committee meetings in the coming weeks.

Strategic Planning Work

Following the June 22nd Board meeting the focus of this work has been on implementing the key strategies in each administrative team member’s season workplan, and advancing financial analysis and planning work to address our persistent operational deficits. There are key meetings of the Finance Committee and Executive Committee on September 21st and 23rd, as well as close collaboration with our planning consultant, Joe Kluger. This work will help set the agenda for our October 13th Board meeting to drill down into planning progress and identify next steps.

Musician Updates

Congratulations to HSO Musicians Jeff Krieger, Mickey Reisman, Martin Elster, and Maggie Francis on their retirements! We also wish the best to HSO Musicians Nuri Lim, Allyson Michal, Yue Sun, Georgina Rossi, Jiawei Yan, Emma Resmini, and Aaron Albert who have resigned their positions. Current open positions:

- First Violin – Section, 1 Basic & 2 Service

- Second Violin – Section, 1 Service
- Viola – Section, 2 Service
- Cello – Principal, Core
- Flute – Principal, Core
- Bass Trombone – Basic
- Percussion – Section, Basic
- Piano - RFR

Musicians' Portal

The portal has been updated for the 2021-2022 season, so please remember to log-in regularly for access to Call Sheets, Rosters, Music, Service Schedules, and more.

- Username: hsomusician
- PW: bach

Finalizing the Master Agreement

The 2021-2022 collective bargaining Agreement, (Master Agreement), has been finalized and fully executed by management and AFM Local 400 as of last Friday (see a copy attached to this memo). Individual contracts for the 2021-2022 season will be mailed to all HSO musicians shortly.

Core Musician Sexual Harassment Prevention Training

***This is a reminder that all Core musicians must complete this online training prior to September 27th or they may not participate in Masterworks 1. Please complete this important, state-mandated training at your earliest convenience.

Town Hall Meeting

There will be a Basic Orchestra town hall meeting on November 8th, 7pm, to discuss our season plans and related matters. An agenda will be provided closer to the meeting date.

Fall Promotional Videos

“I’m going to the symphony!” These words form the basis of a series of promotional videos to encourage people to join us for a concert this fall. The videos feature short scenes of people traveling to a concert via different means of transportation – some traditional and others not so much so..... They will air on HSO social media and CT Public 9/27 – 10/31. Keep an eye out for these entertaining videos, you never know who you might recognize on screen!

Sincerely,



Steve Collins
Executive Director