



SYMPHONY  
SAN JOSE

2023/2024

# IMPACT REPORT

SYMPHONY SAN JOSE

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Creating live symphonic music  
experiences that inspire  
audiences to connect, reflect,  
and thrive.

[www.symphonysanjose.org](http://www.symphonysanjose.org)

# MESSAGE FROM ROBERT MASSEY

Dear Friends of the Symphony,

What a year! Our 2023/2024 season was marked by a series of exciting “firsts” for the Symphony.

We presented a California Theatre subscription series comprised entirely of pieces that had never been played before in Symphony San Jose’s 21-year history. We launched new engagement and education programs that took us into community schools, hospitals, and senior care centers. We debuted a new brand, logo, and website.

And most important, we engaged with so many of you—our audience, donors, and community members—for the first time.

All of what we do centers on three key objectives:

- 1) Providing outstanding live symphonic performances that enrich the lives of our community members.
- 2) Growing an audience for live music by engaging both new and returning patrons to ensure the sustainability of the Symphony.
- 3) Incorporating our values into all aspects of the organization, onstage and off.

This Impact Report highlights the incredible milestones and successes of the past season. Thank you for joining us on this remarkable journey!

With gratitude,

Robert Massey  
Executive Artistic Director



# SYMPHONY SAN JOSE VALUES



## Engagement

We create musical experiences that inspire audiences to connect, reflect, and thrive.



## Exploration

We explore the horizons of what a symphony can be, taking inspiration from the innovative spirit of our community.



## Education

We foster the appreciation for and understanding of symphonic music.



## Equity

We expand access to the arts.

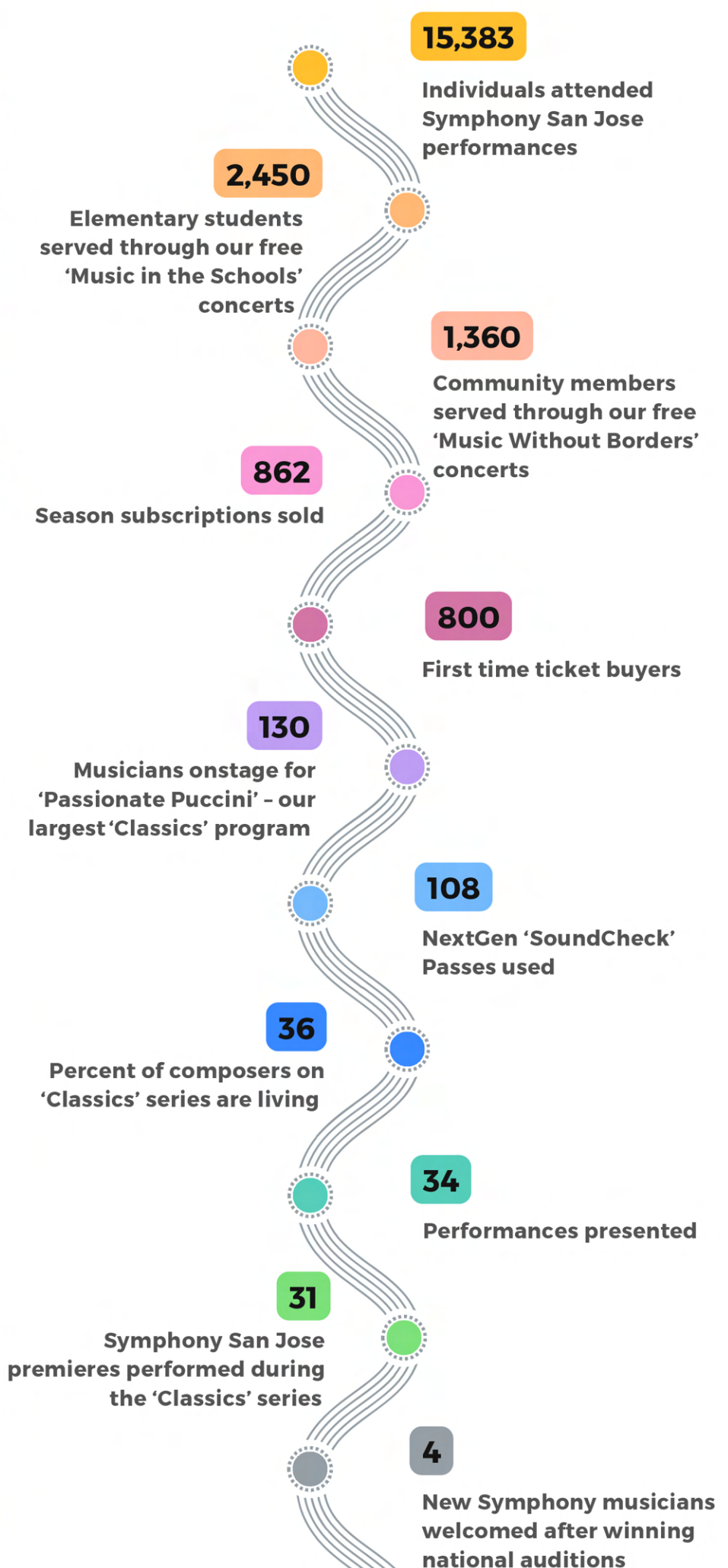


## Environment

We reflect our friends and neighbors, bringing people together and enriching the cultural health of our community.

Impact Report 2023/2024

# 2023/2024 SEASON OVERVIEW: BY THE NUMBERS





Impact Report 2023 /2024

# 2023/2024 SEASON HIGHLIGHTS AS TOLD BY OUR AUDIENCE

At Symphony San Jose, we care about the experience of our audience. That's why we created a season marked by experiences that surprise and delight, connecting patrons to the music and to each other.

Our pre-concert festivities included a beer garden, ballet dancers, and special guests, which fostered a sense of wonder and belonging among our community members. Our thrilling concerts were loved by newcomers and season subscribers.

How do we know? We asked! Our team conducted surveys for each concert, which averaged a 95% response rate with approximately 90% of respondents rating their experience as a four out of five or higher.



Opening Night Dazzles with

## MYTHS, FAIRYTALES, AND LEGENDS

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*"The conductor, the program, the theater—everything was great! It was so touching, it brought tears to my eyes. Loved it!"*

Our magical season opener conducted by the talented rising star Lidiya Yankovskaya charmed audiences. The concert was preceded by a themed Cinderella Ball which raised \$82,000 for our community and education programs.



Beer, Pretzels, and Polka for

## BACHTOBERFEST!

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*"Love, love, love the Bach pieces!! Amazing! Beautiful! The Symphony absolutely shone! Wonderfully done! The polka music was fun! Enjoyed the Bachtobberfest fusion!"*

This concert featured the solo talents of our own musicians, MyungJu Yeo (flute) and Robin Mayforth (violin), as well as our new harpsichord, given to the Symphony by former Symphony flutist and donor, Mimi Carlson. The California Theatre courtyard was transformed into a beer garden with a host of Oktoberfest-themed festivities to engage new and seasoned Symphony goers.

A Journey through America with

## AMERICAN PORTRAITS

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*"I loved the entire program. My favorite was the mandolin concerto. The Symphony sounded tight, energetic, and musical. Great job to everyone!"*

'American Portraits' provided a celebration of what makes our country unique—our unparalleled diversity and beauty. Audiences enjoyed the variety of pieces and mix of darkness and lightness explored in the programming.

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New Audiences Thrilled with a Stunning Exploration of A.I. with

## AUTOMATION

*"The program brought me closer to pieces than I had been before. I applaud the innovation being undertaken and see our Symphony reaching new highs. Bravo!"*

Setting the record for highest single ticket sales for our 'Classics at the California' series, 'Automation' featured an onstage cello battle with an A.I. hologram and examined the nature of humanity's relationship with technology.





Music Legend Danny Elfman Makes a Surprise Appearance for

## FROM SCREEN TO STAGE

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*"Sandy Cameron's technical expertise and bravado were wonderful to behold."*

Audible gasps filled the hall when renowned composer Danny Elfman stepped onto the stage for the Symphony's pre-concert discussion of 'From Screen to Stage.' Elfman, a four-time Oscar nominee best known for his work for 'The Simpsons' and 'Nightmare Before Christmas,' took questions from the audience and shared the stories behind composing his violin concerto, which later came to life in a stirring performance by soloist Sandy Cameron.



Delivering an Unforgettable Night of Opera with

## PASSIONATE PUCCINI

*"Best concert ever from beginning to end! The orchestra, soloists, and chorus were in perfect sync. I especially like that conductor. It was an unforgettable event."*

Audiences were so blown away by the powerful performances in 'Passionate Puccini' that a standing ovation broke out, even before the singing had even concluded! The rousing retrospective featured a once-in-lifetime performance of 'Nessun Dora' sung by rising star tenor Ben Gulley.



Out with a Bang: Season Closer a Best Seller

## REMEMBER THE TITANS

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*"All three pieces were performed beautifully, emotionally, and passionately. Jon Nakamatsu was superb!! Maestro Lopez-Ferrer was an unexpected treat!! We are SO lucky to have such a wonderful orchestra right here in San Jose."*

Our highest attended concert of the season delivered some well-known favorites for Symphony patrons—the music of Márquez, Mozart, and Mahler, with an extraordinary performance from San Jose's own Van Cliburn Gold Medalist, Jon Nakamatsu.

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Popular Concerts Spark a Love of the Symphony

## E.T. & CHRISTMAS AT THE CALIFORNIA

*"I'm still smiling from the Sunday afternoon Christmas concert!! It was wonderful! We can't wait for the next one!"*

This season, we expanded upon our beloved 'Carols at the California' concert to unveil 'Christmas at the California,' a new holiday extravaganza featuring ballet dancers, audience sing-alongs, and cherished Christmas classics. Our Film with Orchestra presentation of 'E.T. - The Extraterrestrial' delighted audiences young and old with its heartfelt story of friendship and moving film score.



# COMMUNITY AND EDUCATION PROGRAMS

## Harmonizing Our Programs for Greater Impact

To share the transformative power of music with a wider audience and to foster a lifelong appreciation of symphonic music in young people, our team revitalized our community and education initiatives in 2023/24. We launched new pilot programs and revamped existing initiatives, staying true to our core values of education and equity.

### MUSIC IN THE SCHOOLS: ENGAGING YOUNG MINDS WITH MUSIC

*"Today was spectacular. I have never seen a group of 4th and 5th graders sit so attentively for 45 minutes at an assembly. Your musicians were patient, talented, and totally on-point with how much talking vs playing to do for a young audience. Thank you, thank you, thank you!" - Fourth-Grade teacher*

Our string quartet visited five San Jose public schools across four different Santa Clara County school districts to introduce elementary schools students to foundational music concepts and spark an interest in symphonic music. Our goal is to provide an "up close and personal" experience that captivates students, before inviting children to attend a full orchestral concert at the California Theatre in the following year.

### MUSIC WITHOUT BORDERS: SHARING THE HEALING POWER OF MUSIC

*"I'm a grandma supporting my daughter and grandson who is getting treatment. I'm so grateful for this opportunity to listen to beautiful music, thank you." - Ronald McDonald House participant*

There is nothing more effective than the experience of live music to connect with others or lift one's spirit. At Symphony San Jose, we want to share that experience widely. 'Music Without Borders' brings our music to communities who face barriers to attending our concerts. In its inaugural season, the program brought a string quartet to perform for children and families at Stanford Hospital's Ronald McDonald House and at two aged-care facilities. We also leveraged the program to promote our programs to new audiences at the NVIDIA and Microsoft headquarters.



## MUSIC NOTES: GOING BEYOND THE SCORE

*"I really enjoy the preconcert talks. The repartee between the conductor and the soloists makes them seem more relatable, wanting to share their joy in the music."*

Attending the symphony for the first time can feel a little daunting. Questions about what to expect, when to clap, and the meaning behind the music can prevent patrons from getting the most out of a performance. Through 'Music Notes,' we work to demystify orchestral music and create a welcoming and informative atmosphere for audience members. Before each 'Classics at the California' concert, audience members have the opportunity to participate in an informal discussion designed to enrich their experience, including fun facts and interviews with special guests.

## NEXTGEN SOUNDCHECK PASS: CULTIVATING THE NEXT GENERATION OF SYMPHONY LOVERS

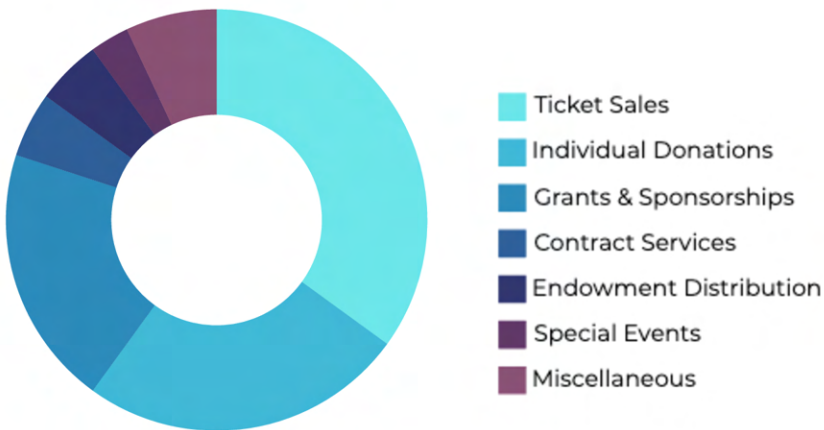
*"For just about \$4 a concert, my boyfriend and I saw every Symphony concert this year. Definitely the cheapest and best date in town!"*

This season we launched our NextGen 'SoundCheck' pass, offering patrons aged 25 and under access to all Saturday evening performances in our 'Classics at the California' series for just \$25.

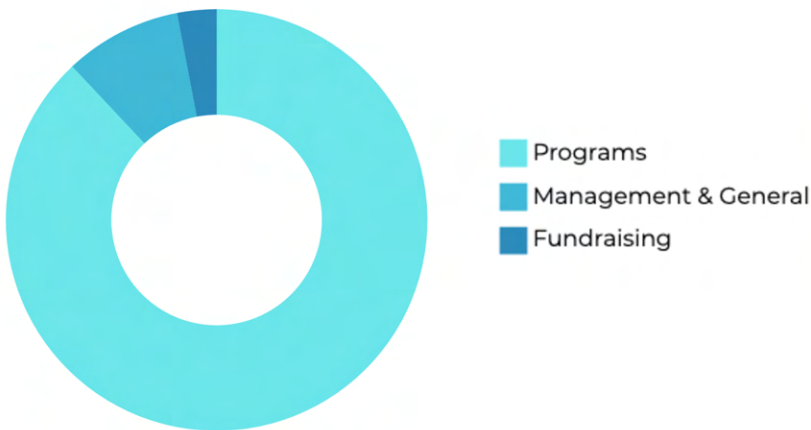
# FUNDING THE MUSIC

Revenue and expenditure sources for our fiscal year, July 1, 2023, to June 30, 2024.  
Total Operating Budget: \$2.9 million

## Revenue:



## Expenses:



## THANK YOU FOR MAKING THE MUSIC HAPPEN!

Symphony San Jose extends a special thank you to our Platinum and Diamond donors.

- Applied Materials Foundation
- Arcadia Foundation
- Brandenburg Family Foundation
- Mimi & Eric Carlson
- City of San Jose Office of Cultural Affairs
- Bunny Laden & Glen Gould
- Marianne & Carl Salas
- San Jose Symphony Foundation

**We look forward to seeing you next season!**