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The Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra balances budget for 2015-16 and embarks upon new strategic plan

- Organization served a record number of unique households
- Net ticket revenue reached an all-time high
- Contributions from individuals to the Annual Fund reached an all-time high
- Overall giving to the Annual Fund grew by over five percent
- Three new musicians joined the orchestra
- Musicians ratified a two-year contract extension
- Jon Limbacher and Kyu-Young Kim assumed leadership of the SPCO and led strategic planning process
- Organization balanced FY16 budget with a surplus of \$244,908

Saint Paul, MN, December 6, 2016 — At its Annual Meeting of Members today, The Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra (SPCO) announced a balanced budget with an operating surplus of \$244,908 for the fiscal year ended June 30, 2016. This balanced budget – the 21st in the past 23 years – continues a long history of financial discipline for the SPCO. Total expenses for the period were \$10,094,560 and net assets decreased to \$40,031,377, largely due to the impact of challenging market conditions on the organization’s endowment funds.

The SPCO served a record high number of unique attendees throughout the 2015-16 season and both net ticket revenue and individual giving to the Annual Fund reached all-time highs, with the total amount contributed to the Annual Fund increasing by over five percent from the previous year. In total, \$6,360,907 was contributed to the SPCO by individuals, foundations, corporations and institutions. 5,395 donors contributed to the SPCO in the fiscal year, with over 1,000 making recurring monthly gifts as Sustainers. As part of its three-year *Next Stage Campaign*, the SPCO made significant progress toward increasing the Annual Fund to \$4 million, raised over \$3.6M in special project funding to date to support ambitious artistic and organizational initiatives, and raised an additional \$1 million in commitments for the endowment through legacy giving.

MUSICIAN LEADERSHIP

The SPCO continued to make great strides in its transformation to a primarily uncondacted ensemble led by its own musicians, with 64 uncondacted, musician-led performances and six SPCO musicians featured as soloists with the orchestra in the 2015-16 season. Three new musicians were hired, including violinist Maureen Nelson, violist Hyobi Sim, and oboist Barbara Bishop. In addition, the SPCO welcomed British conductor, keyboardist and cellist Jonathan Cohen to its roster of Artistic Partners. In the beginning of the 2015-16 season, the SPCO announced a two-year extension of its contract with musicians, achieved without traditional negotiations. The contract extension includes a 10 percent increase in the musicians' guaranteed minimum base salary over the course of the two-year period.

"The level of engagement and commitment from the SPCO musicians is at an all-time high, and it is leading to more passion and more risk-taking on stage, which is incredibly exciting for our audiences," said Artistic Director and Principal Violin Kyu-Young Kim. "I can't think of another orchestra in the country that has undertaken such bold artistic steps over the past few years, and it is paying off with even better concerts for our community."

SERVING AN EXPANDING AUDIENCE

The SPCO continued to build upon its long history of audience growth in the 2015-16 season, serving more than 111,000 people through its 139 concerts in 22 venues throughout the metro area, along with its additional community engagement and education programs. Nearly 1,200 people were able to experience SPCO performances through the *Music Moves* program, which brings free chamber music performances to those who are unable to attend regular concerts, such as those living in assisted living facilities, as well as patients and their families at children's hospitals and cancer treatment and recovery centers. The SPCO also served over 6,000 students through its CONNECT music education program in 12 Minneapolis and Saint Paul public schools, along with homeschool students and students participating in a distance learning program in Albert Lea. In addition, the SPCO provided 13 free concerts for families and children through its Target® Free Family Music Series, generously supported by Target. The SPCO also presented 13 performances of its celebrated Liquid Music Series, which develops innovative new projects with iconoclastic artists in unique presentation formats and expands the flourishing landscape of contemporary chamber music.

2015-16 was the orchestra's first full season in the new Concert Hall at the Ordway, and audiences continued to respond enthusiastically to the intimate and acoustically excellent space. Overall, concerts at the Concert Hall were 95 percent sold and waiting lists were set up for patrons hoping to get tickets for a number of sold-out concerts throughout the year. Three additional concerts were added to the schedule to accommodate demand. Similarly, concerts in the SPCO's Neighborhood Series, Chamber Music Series, and Liquid Music Series venues

were extremely full, with 89 percent of all available tickets selling out overall. The strong attendance in the 2015-16 season represents another year of continued audience expansion for the SPCO. The chamber orchestra's audience has grown by nearly 50 percent in the last 12 years, during which time the SPCO has maintained its commitment to broad community accessibility, offering the most affordable ticket prices of any major American orchestra.

In addition to those who experienced the SPCO in person by attending performances, the SPCO also shared its music via its free online Listening Library, which received nearly 17,000 visits from Minnesotans and over 367,000 visits from listeners worldwide in 2015-16. The SPCO was able to serve the community at this level thanks to the generosity of 5,395 individual donors and institutions who supported the orchestra philanthropically.

NEW LEADERSHIP AND NEW STRATEGIC PLAN

The 2015-16 season marked a significant change in leadership of the SPCO. In January, Jon Limbacher began his tenure as Managing Director and President and SPCO Principal Violinist Kyu-Young Kim became Artistic Director. Kim's appointment represents the culmination of the SPCO's efforts to have its musicians lead the organization artistically and marks the first time a major American orchestra has appointed a current member of the orchestra as Artistic Director. Upon assuming leadership of the SPCO, Limbacher and Kim led the staff, board and musicians through an inclusive and collaborative strategic planning process. With the goal of continuously adding value to the Twin Cities community and enriching lives by sharing transformational performances with the broadest possible audience, the following strategic imperatives will guide the SPCO's work over the next five years:

- Present distinctive and transformational performances of chamber orchestra repertoire and chamber music and continuously elevate the artistic quality of the orchestra for the benefit of our community
- Increase the number of people who experience our music in Minnesota, with a primary focus on the Twin Cities metro area, both through live concert attendance and digital audio and video
- Increase the number of audience members who are young, with a particular focus on children, young parents and college students
- Develop an audience and SPCO family that are reflective of our Twin Cities community, with a particular emphasis on racial and ethnic diversity
- Develop financial resources and practices that provide stability through expanded fundraising and responsible stewardship of resources
- Create an extraordinary internal culture where all members of the organization are engaged and feel valued

“The 2015-16 season was transformational for the SPCO as we worked to chart out a new direction that will expand our capacity to serve our community at an even higher level over the next five years,” said SPCO Managing Director and President Jon Limbacher. “The generosity of this community makes everything we do possible, and we are committed to serving and enriching the community by sharing our music with the broadest possible audience. We’ve made great progress in our work to serve more young people through the New Generation Initiative, and the response has already surpassed our expectations for the current season. We are actively working toward becoming a more inclusive organization that serves an increasingly diverse audience while engaging more diverse voices on our staff, on our board, and on stage.”

2016-17 SEASON

The momentum has continued into the 2016-17 season with successful uncondacted tours to the East Coast in October, opening 92nd Street Y’s 2016-17 season in New York City with “an inspired performance, which offered thrilling renditions of music by Mozart, Schubert and George Tsontakis” (*The New York Times*) and to Europe in November, with performances in Rome, Bologna, Siena, Berlin and Vienna, where the orchestra was praised for performing “with virtuoso playfulness and thoughtful emotion” (*Die Presse*, Vienna). The European tour program featured an arrangement of Schubert’s *Death and the Maiden* Quartet for string orchestra, which was released as a new recording with Artistic Partner Patricia Kopatchinskaja through Alpha Classics in October 2016. The current season also marked the launch of the New Generation Initiative, which offers free tickets for children and students, along with special concert experiences designed for young people, such as the SPCO at Icehouse Series and a special Happy Hour Concert at the Ordway.

ABOUT THE SAINT PAUL CHAMBER ORCHESTRA

Renowned for its artistic excellence, remarkable versatility of musical styles and adventurous programming, The Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra is widely regarded as one of the finest chamber orchestras in the world. Now in its 58th season, the SPCO has recently undergone transformational change with the opening of its new home, the Ordway Concert Hall, the addition of a new generation of players, and significant changes in its artistic vision. The SPCO is primarily an uncondacted ensemble that performs a broad range of repertoire from Baroque to new music and works in close collaboration with a diverse series of artistic partners, including British Baroque specialist Jonathan Cohen, American pianist Jeremy Denk, Swedish clarinetist Martin Fröst, Moldovan violinist Patricia Kopatchinskaja, Finnish violinist Pekka Kuusisto and Austrian conductor/violinist Thomas Zehetmair. Past Artistic Partners include Roberto Abbado, Pierre-Laurent Aimard, Joshua Bell, Douglas Boyd, Nicholas McGegan, Stephen Prutsman, Dawn Upshaw and Christian Zacharias.

The virtuoso musicians of the SPCO present more than 130 concerts and educational programs each year, and are regularly heard on public radio programs that reach more than 2 million listeners each week on over 300 stations. Additionally, the SPCO reaches more than 250,000 listeners annually through its free online Listening Library. The SPCO has released 67 recordings, commissioned 148 new works, and tours nationally and internationally, including performances in premier venues in Europe, Asia and South America.

The SPCO is nationally recognized for its commitment to broad community accessibility, its innovative audience outreach efforts, and its educational and family programming. Regular subscription series are performed in a variety of different venues across the Twin Cities metropolitan area each season, a unique commitment to geographic accessibility for a major orchestra. The SPCO offers the most affordable tickets of any major orchestra in the United States, with over 50 percent of tickets available for \$12 or less, and has expanded accessibility even further by offering free tickets for children and students starting in the 2016.17 season as a part of the New Generation Initiative. The orchestra also offers an innovative ticket membership model in which members pay \$5 per month to attend unlimited concerts. The SPCO's award-winning CONNECT education program reaches over 5,000 students and teachers annually in 12 Minneapolis and Saint Paul public schools, and its Target® Free Family Music program provides engaging and educational experiences for thousands of Twin Cities children and families each year. The SPCO's Liquid Music Series (named "Best of Classical" by *The New York Times*) develops innovative new projects in collaboration with iconoclastic artists and invites adventurous audiences to discover the new and the fascinating within the flourishing landscape of contemporary chamber music.

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