

**The San Diego Symphony Orchestra Association
Annual Members Meeting
October 26, 2023**

I. Call to Order

Chair Hal Fuson called the meeting to order via livestream pursuant to notice duly given.

II. Approval of Minutes

Upon motion duly made and seconded, the minutes of the October 27, 2022 meeting were approved as presented.

III. Board Elections

Mr. Fuson reported that Elizabeth Larsen had been appointed by the Board of Directors to serve as Inspector of Elections for the meeting. Ms. Larsen reported that sufficient proxies had been received to elect the slate of nominees as directors of the Association.

Upon motion duly made and seconded, the election of the following slate of nominees for election as directors for terms expiring at the Annual Meeting of 2026 or until their successors are duly elected was approved as follows: David Bialis, Una Davis, Phyllis Epstein, Harold W. Fuson Jr., Nancy Hong, Warren O. Kessler, M.D., Linda Platt, and Mitchell R. Woodbury.

Mr. Fuson reported that at the Board of Directors meeting held earlier the same day had voted on the Slate of Officers for the upcoming board term year, effective upon conclusion of the Annual Meeting of Members. Mr. Fuson announced that over the course of the last year, the Board had elected five new Board members, Mr. Tim Barelli, Ms. Arlene Inch, Ms. Mary Casillas Salas, Ms. Karen Foster Silberman, and Ms. Michele Arthur for terms as directors ending at the Annual Meeting of 2026.

IV. State of the Symphony Presentation

Mr. Fuson shared the sad news of the recent unexpected losses of Bill Weber and Ellen Whelan; both of whom had been long-serving and deeply instrumental members of the San Diego Symphony family. Mr. Fuson noted Mr. Weber's many contributions to the Association. Mr. Fuson then introduced Dr. Warren Kessler who remembered Ms. Whelan's importance and contributions to many arts institutions throughout San Diego.

Mr. Fuson gave a brief overview of his tenure as Board Chair, assuring that his service and engagement with the Symphony would continue. Mr. Fuson praised the Association's current leadership, musicians, and staff noting the various strengths and challenges involved in building and maintaining an organization such as this.

Mr. Fuson then introduced Kathleen Davis, Chair of the Finance Committee, who noted that while Jacobs Music Center remained closed while under renovation, performances continued at The Rady Shell as well as many venues throughout the county. Ms. Davis gave a preliminary

report of the Association's fiscal year 2023 financial results, noting that the Financial results were still subject to completion of the audit. Ms. Davis concluded by assuring the Association's commitment to continued programming at The Rady Shell at Jacobs Park, our hopes for the successful reopening of Jacobs Music Center, and the financial stability of the organization.

Mr. Fuson then introduced a pre-recorded message from Rafael Payare, Musical Director. Mr. Payare reviewed highlights of the Symphony performances including Verdi's *Requiem*, performing in many venues around the San Diego Region throughout the year, the thrilling performance of Antonio Estévez's *Cantata Criolla*, and the Symphony's recent triumph return to Carnegie Hall. Mr. Payare shared his hopes for the upcoming reopening of Jacobs Music Center and thanked the members for their support.

Mr. Fuson then introduced Martha Gilmer, CEO of the San Diego Symphony Orchestra. Ms. Gilmer noted Rafael Payare's many important milestones with the Symphony and reported on the various ways COVID had changed how the Association programmed its presentations. Ms. Gilmer gave a brief report on the Jacobs Music Center renovation progress. Ms. Gilmer recognized that although little has proceeded as planned over the last four years due to the global pandemic and construction timeline changes, the Symphony has continued to perform, grow, and has remained committed to excellence. Ms. Gilmer announced that three new musicians had joined the Symphony in the last year: John Degnan, Second Horn, Melody Ye Yuan, Section Violin, and Jason Karlyn, Section Viola.

Ms. Gilmer reviewed some of the many artists who have recently performed at The Rady Shell at Jacobs Park, including Boyz II Men, Common, Jennifer Hudson, The Beach Boys, Bernadette Peters, Pink Martini, Flying Lotus, Trombone Shorty, Gipsy Kings, Sheryl Crow, Elvis Costello, Bonnie Raitt, and Aida Cuevas. Ms. Gilmer noted the Association's continued excellent relationship with the Port of San Diego, as well as with AEG, Live Nation and Golden Voice, and our Corporate Events partners, the Padres. Ms. Gilmer reviewed several recent favorable media reports on the Symphony in publications such as *Forbes Magazine*, who called The Rady Shell "the country's coolest new concert venue", the *LA Times*, the *NY Times*, and the *Wall Street Journal*. Ms. Gilmer reported on ticket sales and other potential revenue growth opportunities including Food & Beverage and venue rentals.

Ms. Gilmer gave an overview of the past Jacobs Masterworks Season, noting the number of venues at which the Symphony had performed throughout the San Diego region and beyond, including: The Rady Shell at Jacobs Park, California Center for the Arts in Escondido, Southwestern College, The Conrad, Civic Theatre, The Village Church in Rancho Santa Fe, and Patrick Henry High School, in addition to McCallum Theater in Palm Desert. Ms. Gilmer especially highlighted the season opening which featured Verdi's *Requiem* and the closing performance of the Estevez's *Cantata Criolla*, both performed with the San Diego Master Chorale.

Ms. Gilmer then introduced a panel of four Symphony musicians: Jeff Thayer, Richard Levine, Rose Lombardo, and Sarah Skuster, who discussed the anticipated benefits of the renovated Jacobs Music Center's improved acoustic, sightlines, and audience configuration. The panel shared how hall design impacts sound, how the musicians play and hear each other, and shared

their excitement to perform certain works in the new hall, the skills they have gained performing outdoors at The Rady Shell and in many different venues.

Ms. Gilmer then introduced VP of Impact and Innovation Laura Reynolds, who reported on recent and upcoming Learning and Community Engagement events. Ms. Reynolds reiterated the Symphony's commitment and investment in the local community through our venues The Rady Shell at Jacobs Park and Jacobs Music Center, travelling to parts of the county with the least access to the arts, the Music Connects program, and collaborations with organizations such as the Kumeyaay Bird Singers, Front Arte Cultura, and CECUT in Tijuana at which the Symphony recently performed. Ms. Reynolds reported on the far reaching impact of the Symphony's music education programs and the Symphony's commitment to the inclusive ethos of "you belong here" by hosting events as wide ranging as Dia de los Muertos, naturalization ceremonies, sports and Pride events, as well as our dedication to energy conservation and wildlife preservation.

Ms. Gilmer thanked Ms. Reynolds and stressed that the musicians are the core of the Symphony. Ms. Gilmer stated that the Symphony is a beacon of inclusivity and a source of inspiration in our community. Ms. Gilmer gave an overview of the upcoming California Festival and the organization's contributions to the festival which feature four works by living composers.

Ms. Gilmer stated her hope that one year from now we will be looking back at a year which will have begun with a triumphant performance at Carnegie Hall and end with the Symphony's return to the newly renovated Jacobs Music Center. Ms. Gilmer lauded Mr. Fuson's engagement during his tenure as Board Chair and thanked him for his service.

Ms. Gilmer then introduced incoming Board Chair Dave Snyder and invited him to complete the closing remarks. Mr. Snyder thanked Mr. Fuson for his service as Board Chair and commended and thanked him for his many contributions.

There was a brief question and answer period, with topics including the possibility of reinstating Sunday matinee performances, the emergence of music directors who maintain relationships with multiple orchestras, administrative costs and salaries, and fundraising for the Jacobs Music Center renovation.

Mr. Fuson reiterated his confidence in the Association's future success and expressed his thanks.

V. Adjournment

There being no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Linda Platt, Secretary

(Recorded by Elizabeth Larsen, Executive Assistant to the CEO and Board)