

# MADISON SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

2009-2010

## *Annual Highlights*



“Wherever you go these days, you hear all about what’s wrong with the American orchestra. In Madison, you see everything that’s right with the American orchestra.”

— Carl St. Clair, MSO Guest Conductor

The 2009-2010 Season was one of extraordinary artistic and financial achievement. As Music Director John DeMain points out, “the Symphony reached an unprecedented pinnacle of artistic excellence last season. It was heartwarming to hear from so many of you throughout the season that these were some of the best concerts you had ever heard, and that you have rediscovered the extraordinary power of hearing music in a concentrated environment where the ear can fully engage the mind and the heart and the soul.”

And in a time of great economic uncertainty, we were able to overcome a projected budget deficit of \$200,000 to end the season in the black again. “I would like to extend a special thank you to all of you who stepped forward in support of this magnificent organization,” said DeMain. That tradition of sound fiscal management and financial strength has been the hallmark of the Madison Symphony Orchestra. Seasons like this give us the solid footing we need in order to continue to grow, to serve and to care for this cherished Madison institution.



“DeMain strove to display the individual character of each of the four movements [of Mahler’s first symphony]: a steady buildup to monumentality...Magnificent!”

—*Isthmus*

# A Message from Music Director John DeMain

## GREAT MOMENTS

It is with great joy that I report the continued artistic growth of the Symphony. In particular, our string sections have distinguished themselves with really superb playing, due in part to the stewardship of our departing concertmaster Tyrone Greive.

The season was enriched by the return of such international artistic celebrities as violinists Nadja Salerno-Sonnenberg and Pinchas Zukerman and pianists Peter Serkin, Stephen Hough and Philippe Bianconi, whose near perfect rendition of Rachmaninoff's *Rhapsody on a Theme of Paganini* was, for me, the performance of the season.

We also had two important debuts from cellist Ralph Kirshbaum, whose performance of Bloch's *Schelomo* was one of the surprise hits of the season, and from the extraordinary pianist Jonathan Biss, whose scintillating performance of Mozart's *Piano Concerto No. 9* left us enraptured.

The orchestra was outstanding in blazing performances of Tchaikovsky's *Symphony No. 5*, Mahler's *Symphony No. 1* and the stirring *Symphony No. 3* of Saint-Saëns, which featured a marvelous performance by Samuel Hutchison on our Overture Concert Organ. And finally, the Madison Symphony Chorus with Director Beverly Taylor was tremendous in the Christmas Spectacular, and especially in Mussorgsky's *Boris Godunov*.



## NEW DISCOVERIES

The 2009-2010 Season was also a year of discovery as we delivered great works that are not often heard, including Strauss' *Death and Transfiguration*, Respighi's *Fountains of Rome*, and Brahms' *Serenade No. 1*.

Nadja Salerno-Sonnenberg's performance of the little-heard *Four Seasons of Buenos Aires* was a high point for many, and Saint-Saëns' *The Muse and the Poet* was marvelously played by Pinchas Zukerman and Amanda Forsyth. I think the artistic success of our season had a lot to do with the discovery of these works.

## AND A WORD OF THANKS

I am very pleased that, in spite of a projected budget deficit, we closed the season in the black again. This is really extraordinary given the economic times, and it is due in part to your attendance, your subscriptions and your support. My appreciation and thanks also go to the MSO musicians and to our staff, so capably led by Rick Mackie and Ann Bowen.

I think all of us who attend live performances of classical music realize the benefit of hearing music without any distraction, when we are totally focused on and immersed in the music. The experience of hearing live classical music in a truly great hall cannot be equaled. Only in this atmosphere can we get the full benefit of the music as it stirs, inspires and animates us. We're very fortunate to live in Madison where we have such a devoted audience with whom we can share this living art.

"Friday night in Overture Hall, the Madison Symphony Orchestra performed that rarity, the perfect concert, when everything comes together just right."

—Isthmus

# Education and Community Engagement

“...it is our educational mission that makes this regional orchestra so valuable to the community. It’s our Education and Community Engagement Programs that really put us on the map nationally.”

—John DeMain

Our nationally — and now internationally — recognized Education and Community Education Programs again reached nearly 30,000 people of all ages and abilities last season.

Up Close & Musical<sup>®</sup> got thousands of K-3 grade kids excited about classical music. “It’s easy to see the students’ responses to the music,” said a Hunt Quartet member. “They giggle when it’s funny, they listen intently when it’s quiet, they cover their ears and smile when it’s loud!”

The Fall Youth Concerts brought middle and high school students into Overture Hall to experience live classical music and helped students fulfill the Wisconsin Model Academic Standards for Music.

The Spring Young People’s Concert inspired high school students to appreciate the art form and their peers: the winners of the Bolz Young Artist Competition/Final Forte were again the stars.



Michelle Kaebisch, our Director of Education and Community Engagement, continued to serve alongside her counterparts from the New York and Los Angeles Philharmonics, the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, the San Francisco and National Symphonies and the Kennedy Center on the League of American Orchestras’ Education and Community Engagement Leadership Committee.

And our HeartStrings Program, after many significant grants from the National Endowment for the Arts, is continuing a partnership with the international Society for the Arts in Healthcare, Johnson & Johnson and the UW Waisman Center. The outcome is a better understanding of the astonishingly positive results of the program and the inauguration, this season, of a HeartStrings Program specifically designed for children with disabilities.

For a little perspective...two of the other organizations chosen to participate in this grant partnership are the Mark Morris Dance Company, one of the nation’s preeminent dance companies, and the Iowa Writer’s Workshop, which has consistently turned out some of the world’s best authors since its inception in 1937.



Your donations to the Symphony’s Annual Fund helped make our education mission such a success. Thank You!

# A Message from the President of the Board and the Executive Director

We've just closed the books on Fiscal Year 2010, and what a year it was! Buoyed by a fabulous season of great music and inspiring community engagement, the entire MSO family pulled together to excel in marketing and development.

Outstanding individual and team performance averted an expected financial deficit of significant proportions, and the Madison Symphony Orchestra continues its tradition, operating in the black for 84 seasons and counting.

John DeMain and our artists turned in some of the orchestra's most passionate and authoritative performances to the delight of our loyal subscription audience, who are the bedrock of our success.

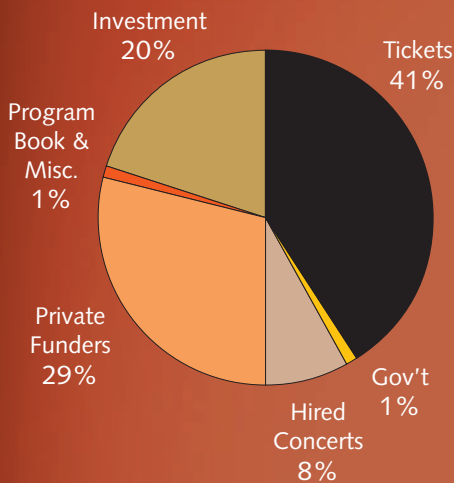
Although we have shortened the season by one concert as a precautionary measure in an uncertain economic environment, restoration of our nine-program season is our highest artistic priority.

Despite reduced support from government funding sources, our fundraising was extraordinarily successful, exceeding budget by \$100,000. This performance and rigorous cost containment—through which we held our expenses to those of several years ago—enabled us to defy a possible deficit of nearly \$200,000 and finish the season with a modest but gratifying surplus.

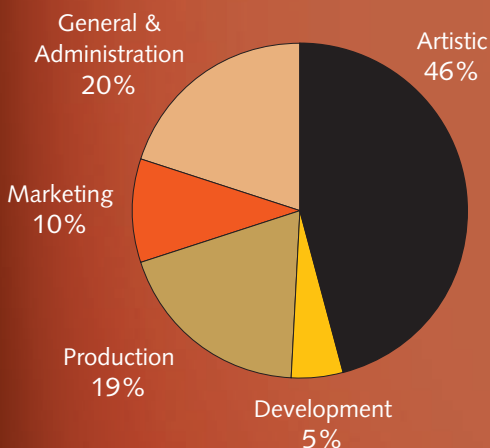
A national perspective shows that we have one of the more successful and stable orchestras in our peer group. At 50%, the earned revenue in our budget is well above average. This is one of our fundamental strengths, easing pressure on private support and helping us maintain a positive financial outcome. And it is attributable to the economy of scale we derive from giving three well-attended performances of each subscription program, a rarity among orchestras in our peer group.

The Madison Symphony Orchestra continues to thrive in Overture Hall, one of America's finest concert halls. And we continue to serve our greater community with energetic dedication to our mission and confidence in the transformational power of our art.

## 2009-2010 REVENUES



## 2009-2010 EXPENDITURES




Nicholas E. Mischler  
President of the  
Board of Directors



Richard H. Mackie  
Executive Director

For a complete listing of individual, business, foundation and government donors to the 2009-2010 Annual Fund, please visit [madisonsymphony.org/annualfundpartners](http://madisonsymphony.org/annualfundpartners).

**Thank you.**

Cover photos, DeMain & Greive photo and HeartStrings photo by Greg Anderson; Young People's Concert photo by James Gill.