

**Practical Lessons to Ensure The Post-COVID-19 Survival of Professional  
Symphony Orchestras**

by

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## Table of Contents

Introduction	2
History of Symphony Orchestra in the United States	3
State of Symphony Orchestras Prior to COVID-19	5
How Are Symphony Orchestras Funded?	6
Brief History on COVID-19	8
Impact of COVID-19 on U.S. Orchestras	9
Practical Lessons From COVID-19: Bringing back Orchestra Audiences and Patrons	13
Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra Case Study	13
Conclusion	19
Works Cited	21

## Introduction

This paper focuses on the immediate impact that the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) had on the professional orchestra industry in the United States. Before the pandemic, this industry faced many challenges including but not limited to lack of funding, being able to fill the seats in the concert hall, and serving a diverse audience.

COVID-19 is the first pandemic to hit the United States since the 1918 Influenza pandemic. The non-profit arts industry, including symphony orchestras, adds a value of 887.8 billion dollars to the United States economy, which is five times larger than both the agriculture and transportation industries combined (Arts.gov). Several studies have been done by organizations like the RAND Corporation and American's for the Arts have found that this pandemic has hit the performing arts worse than it hit the restaurant industry. This has made it extremely difficult for many symphonies to bounce back to pre-pandemic levels in terms of fiscal health. Now that we are more than two years into the COVID-19 pandemic, we are starting to see orchestras facing even more hardships than ever before. According to Corey Cowart, the Executive Director of the San Antonio Symphony, the pandemic put the SAS in serious financial trouble. In fact, the orchestra's 2021 audit cited a deficit working capital of negative \$649,474. This has resulted in severe budget cuts, the musicians going on strike, and poetically a permanent closure of the San Antonio Symphony (San Antonio Symphony).

This paper is meant for those who are looking into going into the symphony orchestra field as a manager as well as others who are committed to the future health of live classical performance. By having access to this information, a prospective manager will be able to understand how symphonies were running before the SARS-CoV-2 pandemic (COVID-19); as well as the lingering effects and

changes of fundraising and programming that were put into place after the pandemic began. The intention is to understand ways we can prevent the United States from losing its beloved symphony orchestras by highlighting the problems that we are facing due to the Coronavirus Pandemic as well as reporting adaptations and potential strategies that offer potential for securing the future of this significant cultural field. Orchestral music is the backbone of the current music that we know and love; without it music wouldn't be the same. "The true beauty of music is that it connects people. it carries a message, and we, the musicians, are the messengers" (Roy Ayers).

### **History of Symphony Orchestra Industry in the United States**

Orchestras have been around for over 400 years, but it wasn't till the 1700s that composers like Mozart began to write for broader instrumentation that included not only string instruments, but percussion, woodwinds, and brass as well (Jackson Symphony). This concept was brought to the colonies by European immigrants who loved classical music from their home countries. Local musicians of New York City led by Ureli Corelli Hill took this idea even further by creating *The New York Philharmonic*. It became the first organization to bring the orchestral phenomenon to the New World. The Philharmonic is the longest running symphony orchestra in the United States and continues to bring live music to audiences for more than 179 years (NY Philharmonic). Since their opening in 1842, live orchestral music has spread across all fifty states. At the writing of this report, there are approximately 1,200 professional and community symphony orchestras in the United States, with the five biggest being *The New York Philharmonic*, *The Boston Symphony Orchestra*, *The Chicago*

*Symphony Orchestra, The Cleveland Symphony Orchestra and The Philadelphia Orchestra.* Presently, each professional symphony orchestra in the United States is made up of somewhere between fifty and eighty full-time players, in addition to the two to four conductors. Additionally, the orchestra will employ anywhere from ten to fifty full-time staff members to run the behind the scenes of the orchestra (Lumen).

However, each symphony orchestra has a different business model depending on their size, if they are professional or community based and their location. Only seventeen of the 1,200 American symphonies run continuously throughout the year, including the *The Chicago Symphony, The Boston Symphony Orchestra, The Philadelphia Symphony, The New York Philharmonic, The Cleveland Symphony,* and *The Dallas Symphony Orchestra* (Dobrin). The majority of U.S. symphony orchestras have a limited season. For example, *Symphoria*, formally the *Syracuse Symphony Orchestra*, began their 2021/2022 season on Saturday, September 18, 2021 and will close the season on Saturday, May 14th of 2022. Additionally, *Symphoria* only performs on two to three Saturdays and Sundays of each month, with multiple weeks off for Christmas and Thanksgiving (Symphoria). The *Dallas Symphony Orchestra*, a full-time orchestra, performs two to four full concerts per week and only gets a week off for Christmas and Thanksgiving (Dallas Symphony Orchestra). In comparison, volunteer and community-based orchestras on average only perform twelve performances a year, and because many can't afford rental or ownership of a concert hall, they might play at a variety of venues that serve the community. For example, *The Boston Longwood Symphony Orchestra*, which is composed of medical professionals, performs for local churches, homeless shelters, hospitals, and care facilities (Longwood Symphony Orchestra). These types of orchestras allow everyday people to come together and make

music without having to be a professional musician. Additionally, community-based symphonies help to cultivate local pride in each community.

The big five United States Orchestras: *The New York Philharmonic*, *The Boston Symphony Orchestra*, *The Philadelphia Orchestra*, *The Cleveland Orchestra*, and *The Chicago Symphony Orchestra* operate on an annual budget that exceeds fifty million dollars. However, each professional orchestra's personnel expenses are usually fifty percent of their budget (Altervista). Whereas, smaller professional symphony orchestras operate on a budget that on average equals to less than eight million dollars. Additionally, these orchestras' expenses are usually less than two-hundred thousand dollars, which is only four percent of what the top five American Symphony Orchestras need to operate. According to a report published by the National Endowment for the Arts, in 2014, together the more than one thousand American Symphony Orchestras contributed 1.8 billion dollars to the U.S. economy. Collectively, these orchestras perform about twenty eight thousand performances a year, and reach well over twenty-five million people each year. Regardless of the orchestra's size, each symphony orchestra reflects the individual characteristics and capacities of the community that it serves.

### **State of Symphony Orchestra Industry Pre-COVID-19**

Though symphony orchestras are a massive industry in the United States, they have seen their fair share of struggles. Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, this industry comprised more than sixteen hundred paid and unpaid musicians (League of American Orchestras). However, increasingly America's orchestras were losing audiences while also struggling to meet rising personnel and other fixed expenses.

According to *The Survey of Public Participation in the Arts* and academic David Onditi, from 1997 to 2017 only about fifteen percent of the United States population had attended an orchestra performance (League of American Orchestras). This number has decreased by six after 2017, resulting in only eight percent of the American population attending a classical symphonic performance (Survey of Public Participation in the Arts). This has caused three percent of symphony orchestras to reduce the number of concerts that they put on per season (League of American Orchestras). Most of those audience members are over the age of sixty five, mostly white and with incomes above one-hundred fifty thousand per year. According to the 2021 report published by the RAND Corporation, one of the biggest reasons for a decline in participation in live cultural events is that many Americans prefer to stay at home to partake in “home-based leisure activities” like cooking, watching television, and playing video games (RAND Corporation). Furthermore, many Americans do not see the point in attending an in person performance when they can just stream the performance (Commentary.org). Based on how our society is obsessed with technology, this doesn’t come as a surprise. According to scholar Greg Sandow, younger people don’t come to performances because “they don’t know classical music and don’t care” (Arts Journal). Due to this, younger people do not attend many traditional classical orchestral concerts. In fact, music schools often force students to attend symphony concerts as a part of their grade (Musicians Way).

### **How Are Orchestras Funded**

Symphony orchestras are non-profit organizations with a tax-exempt status to promote and preserve the art form of orchestral music while enhancing the quality of life for the communities they

serve. Fundamentally, these symphony orchestras carry out their mission with the help of donors and institutional funders, as well as contributions from foundations, trustees, and corporations (American Orchestras). While many do receive donations from the *National Endowment for the Arts* (NEA), a federal government agency dedicated to supporting the non-profit arts, the bulk of contributed funding from other sources. According to the League of American Orchestras, corporations and foundations combined give about twenty five percent of each orchestra's donated income. Nevertheless, the biggest way an orchestra gains funding is from donations by individuals (Arts.org). In a 2018 study, it was found that thirty five percent of their income was from donations by individuals. Nearly seventy-five percent of these contributions made by individuals consisted of donations that were less than two-hundred fifty dollars (Eastman School of Music).

In addition to the four main sources of contributed revenue (foundations, government, corporations, and individuals) nearly sixty percent of an orchestra's earned income comes from their performances. For example, *The Chicago Symphony Orchestra* and *The Dallas Symphony Orchestra*, ticket sales earn them well over twenty-one million dollars. In 2013, the League of American Orchestras conducted a study of the finances from all of the symphony orchestras in the United States. This study took information from the National Center for Arts Research (NCAR), that is based off of the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) *Form 990* and *Southern Methodist University (SMU) Data Arts* statistics and the league's annual *Orchestra Statistical Report (OSR)*. Throughout this study of American Orchestras, it was discovered that seventy-five percent of all earned income came from their performances and performance related activities, such as small ensembles and educational programming (Arts.org). Furthermore, that same 2014 study found that single ticket revenues and group sales



exceeded subscription sales by six percent (League of American Orchestras). To boost ticket sales for future performances, several symphonies offered free concerts and reduced ticket prices to groom the new generation of donors. In fact, this allowed for ticket prices to be at cheapest and more affordable than they have ever been (Cultural Data).

### **Brief History on COVID-19**

Just as 2020 began, the first case of Coronavirus was diagnosed in Wuhan, China (CDC). Although the *World Health Organization* (WHO) brushed off this new virus as just another form of pneumonia, the *United States Center for Disease Control and Prevention* (CDC) viewed it differently. They began to require three of the United States' major airports to start health screening of all passengers arriving from China. It was not until the number of confirmed cases grew to almost ten thousand and the worldwide death toll reached over two hundred when the World Health Organization (WHO) finally announced COVID-19 as a public health emergency, and one month later a worldwide pandemic. The United States would follow suit by proclaiming a National Emergency (AJMC). Three days later, President Donald Trump declared a public health crisis in the United States, which led to the restriction of foreign nationals to travel from China into the U.S. Additionally, other US citizens were required to quarantine for fourteen days upon arrival from China's Hubei Province. Just days after, the State of California would lead the country on stay-at-home orders requiring its citizens to remain at home unless they were essential workers. The world as we knew it would cease to exist.

## Impact of COVID-19 on U.S. Orchestras

March 13, 2020 will forever be known as the day that the music stopped, the day that live concerts and tours would cease to exist for more than a year. However, rumors of the cancellations of these events had been spiraling around the music industry for a few weeks prior. In an interview with *The New York Philharmonic's* Chief Executive, Deborah Borda, stated that when she took over *The New York Philharmonic* in 2017, they were already financially shaky, when she was informed the orchestra would need to stop performing in the early Spring of 2020. As the former director of *The Los Angeles Philharmonic*, she already had extensive experience stabilizing big budget orchestras, but this time she could not rely on income from live performances. One of the main questions on Borda's mind was "how do I turn around a failing symphony when we cannot do the thing we do, which is live concerts and reaching people?" (New York Times). Along with other arts leaders, Borda hoped that she would be dealing with a temporary shutdown. However, the impacts of the pandemic resulted in a severe unplanned financial crisis for The Philharmonic s. *The New York Philharmonic* experienced the loss of ticket sales in addition to the ten million dollars that was already lost from the financial struggles they faced during the 2018-2019 season. As a result the orchestra was forced to cut musicians' pay by twenty five percent, which in total equals nearly twenty million dollars in wage cuts (New York Times). Similarly, over the course of the fifteen month shutdown, orchestras across the nation experienced a significant financial decline.

In a 2020 report broadcast by Marketplace and the American Public Media, it was stated that during the COVID-19 pandemic, a high percentage of individuals who choose to donate to symphonies

or operas have disposable incomes. However, with the United States current financial status, most major donors, people who bestow funds upwards to ten thousand dollars annually, were less likely to donate to live performance organizations (Marketplace). Among the primary reasons contributing to the loss of arts donations was due to the fact that many donors initially chose to offer funds to other organizations focused on serving basic needs like feeding local families. In a survey conducted by the non-profit sector publication, *Inside Philanthropy*, it was found that forty-five percent of people reporting “reduced funder interest and resources as a result of the current shifting of funds for COVID-19 and racial justice” (New York Times). A study of giving trends resulting from the impact of *COVID-19* released in late 2020 by international arts management consultants TRG Arts and Arts specialists Purple Seven, showed a decline in major donor contributions to cultural organizations. However, the study also revealed that almost half of North American non-for-profit organizations increased their small gift revenue, sums under three hundred dollars, in 2020 by forty-nine percent, an increase of almost three-quarters (seventy-four percent) more than the previous year. To aid non-for-profit institutions, the federal government created tax incentives for those who donated to non-profit organizations by allowing single filers to deduct up to three hundred dollars and joint filers to deduct up to six hundred dollars. As a result, symphonies and other cultural organizations began to slowly benefit from increased patronage. Even with this incentive, the funding gap resulting from competing priorities forced symphony orchestras to find new and creative ways to engage potential donors.

In February of 2021, conducted by Purple Seven and TRG Arts, published survey results

comparing and contrasting the impacts of COVID-19 on twenty-seven of the largest budget orchestras in the United States. In this survey, TRG Arts and Purple Seven looked at ticket sales and donations from individual patrons during two different time periods. The first time period was the twelve month period of November 2018 to October 2019, which was prior to the start of the COVID-19 pandemic. This time was compared to November 2020 to October 2021, which was during the height of the COVID-19 pandemic. A significant finding was that during the post-pandemic period studied, orchestra ticket revenue was down by sixty-seven percent. Across the board, this number was constant for all sectors of non-profit arts organizations, including dance, theater, and opera (Purple Seven & TRG Arts). However, during the same period, orchestras experienced an increase in contributions which, for many, was the only significant source of revenue available due to the loss of ability to produce and present live events.

While the larger symphonies had it a bit easier, smaller symphonies had to be more strategic and creative to find alternatives for generating sources of revenue during the worst of the pandemic. The primary reason for this is that larger symphonies usually have a higher income of earned revenue, which makes it easier for them to set aside money for a “rainy day fund”. Additionally, the surrounding communities of smaller and regional orchestras have less access to high arts education and less resources. Therefore, they often cannot sell enough tickets to cover more than fifteen percent of their expenses (Nebraska Public Media)(New York Philharmonic). As an example, the Mobile Symphony Orchestra (Alabama), decided to have the professional musicians give COVID-19 safe lessons online taught by their musicians as a new source of income during this challenging period (American Public

Media). The Vermont Symphony Orchestra got creative with an online COVID-19 safe fundraiser entitled, “*Swing into Spring*”. This fundraiser included a live online musical performance by the jazz ensemble, “*Maple Leaf Seven*”, and a gourmet take home dinner from local restaurant “*The Dancing Sail*”, that included complimentary beverages along with special discounts on several types of flowers from local florists (Vermont Symphony Orchestra). Other examples of virtual fundraisers held by orchestras during this challenging period featured online silent auction, raffle and virtual performances. to make it so potential donors could keep social distancing protocols in place. An online fundraiser produced by The Brazosport Symphony Orchestra of Texas reached donors worldwide and raised over fifteen thousand dollars (Brazosport Symphony Orchestra). The Beloit Janesville Symphony Orchestra (BJSO) in Wisconsin also found a way to overcome the COVID-19 restrictions to host a fundraiser. The BJSO partnered with their local television networks to host a telethon to raise the remaining fifty thousand dollars needed to operate during the 2021-2022 season (Beloit Daily News).

Overall it was a challenge to ask loyal subscribers to donate to the arts when they often were faced with other priorities that required their money. Many orchestras realized that their best strategy in uncertain times was to stay visible and of value to the public even if offering resulted in little or no income.. he Arkansas Symphony Orchestra’s “*Bedtime with Bach*”. In this series, each orchestra member has submitted a short video performance to be posted on the orchestra’s Facebook and Instagram accounts each Sunday at 9pm. The intent for this program was to help sooth audiences during the stressful COVID-19 pandemic (ASO). *Bedtime with Bach* was so popular that it was featured in the *Washington Post*, *CNN*, among many other news outlets. It was also featured on Kelly

Clarkson's daytime talk show "The Kelly Clarkson Show", to showcase the importance of music during this time. In a matter of a year, this program reached over nine-hundred eighty-seven thousand viewers in over thirty countries (Arkansas Symphony Orchestra). In addition to the Arkansas Symphony Orchestra's online presence, this program increased the amount of gifts under one thousand dollars (Business Insights). These are just a few of the creative responses from American orchestras to ensure survival during the immediate aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic.

### **Practical Lessons From COVID-19: Bringing back Orchestra Audiences and Patrons**

Since COVID-19 has only been around for slightly more than two years, research on its aggregate impacts are still being conducted and distributed. In order to develop insights into how the pandemic has changed organizational strategy in the short term and generate hypotheses regarding longer term results, It is instructive to talk to those active in orchestra financing and development. Following is the summary of interviews conducted with Luke Borkowski, Development Association with the Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra, a mid-sized symphony orchestra in upstate New York. The case study which follows aims to shed more light on the short and long-term impacts of COVID-19 on orchestra finances and fundraising along with related topics.

### **Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra Case Study**

Nearly ninety years ago, in 1934, musicians Cameron Baird, Frederick Slee, and Samuel Capen believed that the Greater Buffalo Area shouldn't continue to go without live music. The trio then

decided to recruit world renowned conductor and cellist, Lajos Shuk to be the future music director and conductor of the brand new Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra (BPO). With the leadership of the Orchestra President Edgar F. Wendt, the Philharmonic were able to raise the money to support the orchestra for several seasons to come. From that season on, The Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra has been dedicated to providing live classical music to the Greater Buffalo Area. Like the Musical Associates of Central New York, the Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra insisted on bettering the wellbeing of the Greater Buffalo community. For instance, the BPO has multiple educational programs for students of all ages, where they can teach the students about music. For the younger elementary age students, the BPO offers basic interactive experiences to introduce each instrument. Whereas with the older students, they offer side by side concerts with the professional musicians of the Buffalo Philharmonic. Another thing that the Philharmonic does to enhance their community presence is by offering free outdoor concerts for disadvantaged communities in the area. In addition to the live music, the Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra partners with the *Food Bank of Western New York* and *United Way of Buffalo and Erie County* to distribute meals at the free performances for those in need (Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra). These programs alone show the Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra's dedication to constantly give back to the community.

The Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra has a fiscal year that runs from January to December. Based on the 2020 season, the total amount of earned revenue was over eleven million and the expenses. Whereas in 2019, the earned revenue total was \$2,645,385 and the contributed revenue totaled at \$1,101,946. This means that as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic \$1,872,573 was lost in

earned revenue. Additionally in the year 2020, it cost \$11.2 million for the symphony to function; which resulted in a surplus of two million (BPO 990).

Luke Borkowski is the Capital Campaign Coordinator of The Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra (BPO) at Kleinhans Music Hall. In order to understand the full picture of how COVID-19 has affected orchestras and their funding, a personal interview with Mr. Borkowski covered several topics as itemized below.

### **Pre-Covid Fundraising at the BPO**

According to Mr. Borkowski, prior to the onset of the pandemic, the Buffalo Philharmonic was placing much of its fundraising strategy focus on diversifying and increasing benefits for individual donors. This means that people liked to get something in return for their donation such as complementary or reduced cost tickets or getting invited to private events for those donors. Thus, tying rewards of giving to live attendance benefits and discounts. However, this is a quite costly strategy which unraveled during COVID-19 due to social distancing and the lack of in-person events.

### **Impact of Covid-19 on Current BPO Finances**

How has COVID-19 affected the BPO's current funding? Like every other orchestra in the United States, the BPO wasn't able to serve audiences through live performances. However, as reported above, a significant number of donors continued to support their beloved orchestra; about sixty to seventy percent of the BPO's donors continued to donate. COVID-19 has made it easier for the development team to tell who is donating only because they can go to a concert. Once that privilege



was taken away then some ceased their donations. However, other donors will continue to donate no matter if they go to every concert or haven't been to one in five years (Borkowski). Additionally, knowing that the BPO was struggling with the loss of in-person events, many donors decided to increase their donation (Borkowski). While there was a huge change in how much an individual decided to give to the BPO, there was also a change in the methods an individual could give. According to Borkowski, the most prominent new way people began to give was through digital means. Online donations has been a trend that started prior to COVID-19, but has become increasingly more important and favored. While it is still important for nonprofits to continue sending letters in the mail, because for some people it feels more personal, making them more likely to send a check in the mail. However, this is becoming less common due to the fact that our society increasingly favors digital communications.

Although donations from individuals seemed to be going well, the BPO still had to continue to focus on the other three sectors of funding: corporations, foundations, and government.

### **Corporations**

Funding from corporations was basically non-existent, and a major reason for that is corporations are primarily interested in sponsorships to keep themselves public-facing. By sponsoring an orchestra, the corporation is able to put advertising in programs, receive free tickets, and be invited to exclusive events or performances. Once COVID-19 hit, there was a lack of exposure for these

businesses, and as result corporate giving vanished. Now that the world is starting to revert to normal, the BPO is starting to see corporate giving come back.

## **Foundations**

Foundation giving is heavily affected by the economy; if the economy is struggling, foundations are less likely to give to non-for-profits. In 2020, foundations ceased a majority of their giving, but a year later in 2021, foundations started to give more. However, foundations began to switch their giving priorities, and over the past couple of years they decided to focus more on humanitarian and medical giving rather than for the arts. According to Mr. Borkowski, it is really important for Foundations to give to those organizations that continue to heavily support diversity and the community. This has forced the BPO to work more with the Greater Buffalo Area community to bring everyone together. Additionally, this has forced the organization to make sure that it isn't just a "boys club"; that we have more women instrumentalists and conductors on stage, as well as more people of color. Since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, this has become one of the most important topics to ensure that the BPO don't lose their funding from Foundations.

## **Government**

Over the course of the COVID-19 pandemic, the United States government has been giving a considerable amount to non-for-profit organizations. A primary reason for this is due to the amount that was set aside for one-time stimulus money such as the *American Rescue Plan* and the *Paycheck Protection Program*. This is in addition to the amount of money that the Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra would request in a normal year from the New York State Council on the Arts (NYSCA). With all of the support from the government, it made it tremendously easier for the BPO and other arts

organizations to continue running. Along with public funding, individual donations were essential to ensuring that the BPO was able to run. With the help of these two sectors, the BPO was able to gain a revenue of three million dollars, and had ten million dollars worth of expenses. This means that they had a deficit of seven million dollars.

### **Lessons Learned**

Among important lessons absorbed due to this unprecedented experience, the BPO found that the more honest they were with their donors, the more likely people were to give money. Since COVID-19 hit everyone so hard, it was important to create awareness about the struggles the orchestra was facing. Even though they wanted to be as positive as possible, this time around required them to be more frank about difficulties. When it came to COVID-19, it was best for them to be upfront about the money that they needed.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, it was important for symphonies to keep close contact with their patrons; this included, emails, social media, some mailing and online streaming. On top of this, it was important for the Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra to be transparent about what their opening plans were, even if they didn't know much at that specific time. This made it easier for them to take it slow when it came to allowing in-person audiences. For example, *Kleinhans Music Hall*, the home of the BPO allows for a thousand three-hundred person capacity, but they only allowed two hundred individuals inside at first. These individuals were then required to be fully masked, be fully vaccinated, and have at least a two seat space between them and another person.

After nearly two years of closed doors, symphonies were not able to just pick up where their funding left off; they had to start over from scratch. One of the main strategies Borkowski noted as being a main focus of current efforts is addressing the “great wealth transfer”. This essentially means that as the older generation are passing away, they are transferring their assets over to their grand-children. Due to this, non-for-profit organizations must make it their mission to encourage the younger generation in donating, like their parents or grandparents did. Even though younger individuals may not currently have these funds in their possession, it is important to prepare for when this “great wealth transfer” happens. Since a majority of millennials are interested in impact giving, organizations like the BPO have to cater to their needs and wants. Impact giving is when donors give to non profit organizations because they are passionate about the work that is being done (Live Alumni). One way of doing this is by telling these young donors exactly which program their donation is going towards. Which ultimately makes it more difficult on the organization because they usually would just ask for a donation to their general fund. Now they must put the contributions towards a specific program like the BPO’s Youth Orchestra or the Neighbor to Neighbor Community Concerts.

## **Conclusion**

The COVID-19 pandemic has forced symphony orchestras to look beyond traditional means of financing the organization. Events that are geared toward upper class patrons like New York Phil’s Black Tie Galas limits not only limit those who can afford to attend, but reduces the orchestral experience to the elite. If we have learned anything from the COVID-19 pandemic, it is imperative

that we continue to bring exposure of our symphonies to the general public, including that of the younger generation. By using tools like social media to draw in new patrons we are growing the audience. Rather than getting one donor to donate a large amount we now understand that getting smaller donations from a wider donor base will match and often surpass the previous donation totals. From this model we now have more patrons that are not only financially invested in the survival of our beloved symphony orchestras, but their love of the orchestral experience will continue to broaden the symphony's reach.

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