



# COLORADO SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

JEFFREY KAHANE, MUSIC DIRECTOR



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## **COLORADO PUBLIC RADIO CONDUCTS ONE-TIME, ON-AIR FUNDRAISING CAMPAIGN IN SUPPORT OF THE COLORADO SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA**

DENVER, CO (November 18, 2009) – Colorado Public Radio (CPR) will conduct a one-time only on-air fundraising campaign, *Bringing the Music to Life*, on behalf of the Colorado Symphony Orchestra (CSO). The drive will begin November 30 and culminates on December 2 with a live broadcast of the Orchestra's sold out performance with musical icon Yo-Yo Ma.

“Colorado Public Radio recognizes the CSO’s unique role as one of Colorado’s key cultural assets and petitioned the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) for permission to conduct a one-time only, on-air fundraising drive to support its major classical music provider, the Colorado Symphony,” stated CPR President Max Wycisk, who also emphasized that the FCC has not granted permission to conduct this type of drive since 1993.

Across the country, arts organizations are struggling with the effects of a difficult economy. Most recently, the Honolulu Symphony was forced to declare bankruptcy and suspend its season. The CSO is not immune to the challenges presented by a lagging economy, and has felt the impact of the recession through decreased contributed support.

Despite the economy, there is a renewed sense of excitement and momentum surrounding the CSO – the Orchestra is attracting the best talent from around the world, both on and off-stage. And the search is on for a top-notch successor to beloved music director Jeffrey Kahane.

When the current worldwide economic crisis hit, the CSO was in a period of transition – with vacancies in several key leadership positions, which presented special challenges for the organization. The Colorado Symphony is committed to operating in a fiscally responsible manner and took several key steps to balance its budget for the 2009-2010 season.

In total, the CSO reduced its operating budget by nearly \$2.5 million. First, the CSO made careful and responsible reductions in operational expenses and negotiated reduced fees with its guest artists for the 2009-2010 season. Colorado Symphony musicians played a proactive and collaborative role in balancing the CSO’s budget by creating a package of salary and benefit concessions, which included a 12.5 percent pay cut, up to four weeks of unpaid furloughs and suspension of employer contributions to the musicians’ retirement fund. The musicians agreed to these concessions to ensure that the CSO could continue

performing a full season of concerts – both in Boettcher Concert hall and in local parks for its free summer concert series. The musicians' extraordinary and generous sacrifice also allows the CSO to maintain its commitment to bringing music education to schools throughout Colorado.

CSO President and CEO James W. Palermo said, "The musicians of the Colorado Symphony Orchestra have stepped up to the plate in a major way to keep the institution sound. We are so grateful for their collaborative spirit in helping us chart a successful course for the institution's future. This drive on CPR will help kick start all the wonderful work the musicians, board and staff are doing to take the Orchestra to the next level."

Finally, there was 100 percent participation by members of the Colorado Symphony Board of Directors in financial commitments to the orchestra. This, plus active fundraising in the community, raised a significant amount of money to balance the 2008-09 budget and ensure that the CSO would end the year in the black. The CSO continues to pursue significant commitments to its capital campaign to upgrade concert hall facilities and will focus more on this project as the national economy continues to gain stability.

Through the collaborative spirit and generous sacrifices from orchestra musicians and staff, combined with prudent reductions to operating costs, the CSO continues to deliver the world-class concerts and music education programs that Colorado residents have come to expect from the state's largest performing arts organization.

Having already reduced its budget by \$2.5 million, additional cutbacks would jeopardize the CSO's ability to present a full season of concerts and inhibit the orchestra's ability to attract internationally-renowned guest artists such as Yo-Yo Ma, Olga Kern and Lang Lang to Colorado. The CSO would also be forced to reduce the number of music education opportunities available to Colorado's young people in a time when arts education budgets are being reduced or eliminated.

The CSO has a new senior leadership team in place, which was drawn from the best talent in the orchestra world through a series of national searches. The CSO senior leadership team is committed to building the CSO's audiences and fundraising capacity for the future.

The CSO has a plan to successfully navigate this difficult economy, and early results are very encouraging. Performances with Olga Kern and the Rachmaninoff Festival, Lang Lang, and Yo-Yo Ma have significantly exceeded ticket budgets and produced sold out halls. But like every business endeavor, results take time. This historic, CPR on-air campaign will provide the CSO with bridge funding that ensures ongoing financial stability for the orchestra while the CSO's new audience development and fundraising initiatives take root.

"The Colorado Symphony Orchestra is a great asset to the City of Denver and a cornerstone of our cultural community," said Denver Mayor John Hickenlooper. "This exciting partnership between the CSO and Colorado Public Radio is an innovative model for fundraising in this challenging economy. We applaud the sustainable changes the CSO is making to ensure the organization's viability well into the future."

Permission to grant this special one-time-only fundraising campaign for the CSO on CPR was based on the CSO's financial need and history of CPR's reliance upon the CSO for a major portion of its on-air program content. This unique collaboration presents an unprecedented opportunity for CPR to help the CSO successfully navigate this challenging economy by avoiding future budget deficits and offsetting potential shortfalls in earned and contributed support.

“I am thrilled and excited that CPR is dedicating three entire days of on-air time to help raise money for the Colorado Symphony,” said Board Chair Kevin V. Duncan. “What a remarkable gift this is to the Symphony and proof positive that CPR is dedicated to making the arts thrive in Denver and the Front Range.”

Particularly in a tough economy, music provides a much-needed escape and release. Coloradans need music now more than ever – and with multiple sold-out performances, the community is reaching out to feel the transcendent power of music through the CSO as never before. However, ticket sales account for just half of the Colorado Symphony’s annual budget. Each year, the CSO must raise more than \$5 million in donations to continue *Bringing the Music to Life* in Colorado – in the concert hall, at education programs for young people, and at free summertime performances in the parks. The City of Denver recognizes the importance of the CSO to the community and shares its commitment to building a rich cultural life for Denver and the state of Colorado.

“We are dedicated to the long term success of our partners at the Colorado Symphony Orchestra, the primary tenant of Boettcher Concert Hall and host of an annual free summer concert at Red Rocks Amphitheatre,” said Jack Finlaw, Director of Denver’s Division of Theatres & Arenas. “We share a common goal of providing enriching cultural experiences for residents and visitors to our region. Theatres & Arenas will continue to support the CSO in its efforts to grow and adapt to the changing economy in any way possible.”

CPR and the CSO ask all who care about music and music education for Colorado’s young people to help in *Bringing the Music to Life* through this special on-air fundraising campaign conducted on CPR stations KCFR and KVOD November 30 through December 2. Gifts will help sustain the CSO’s tradition of providing outstanding symphonic music and music education programs to our community.

### **About the Colorado Symphony Orchestra**

Established in 1989 as the successor of the Denver Symphony, the Colorado Symphony Orchestra is the state’s only full-time professional Orchestra. Each season, the CSO performs a 21-week Masterworks series of classical programs, as well as Pops, Family, Holiday and summer parks concerts, to approximately 220,000 patrons, as well as educational outreach programs reaching over 40,000 students each year. Centrally located in downtown Denver, most performances are held at the Denver Performing Arts Complex in Boettcher Concert Hall. In 2005, the CSO appointed Jeffrey Kahane as the ninth music director in the 82-year history of the Denver and Colorado Symphony Orchestras.

### **About Colorado Public Radio**

Colorado Public Radio is Colorado’s only statewide, two-channel news and classical music network. A non-profit 501(c)(3) organization, CPR exists to enrich the Colorado community, providing news, information and classical music for people who want to be informed, enlightened and entertained. Nearly 400,000 listeners tune in to CPR each week (Source: Arbitron 2008/2009). CPR Classical Music is heard on: 88.1 FM in Denver, 91.9 FM in Pueblo, 94.7 FM in Colorado Springs, 89.9 FM in Vail, 90.5 FM in Glenwood Springs, 103.3 FM along the Western Slope, and online at [cpr.org](http://cpr.org).

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