

the colorado symphony



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COLORADO SYMPHONY EXPERIENCES RENAISSANCE, ECONOMIC MOMENTUM

Colorado Symphony bucking national trend of arts organizations; credits reorganization, new programming for success

DENVER – April 14, 2011 – The Colorado Symphony today announced new box office figures revealing that the organization is experiencing a renaissance across all programs and is experiencing record-breaking earned revenues during the 2010/11 season. Symphony officials credit this hard-won economic momentum, documented through ticket sales and audience growth, to the organization’s overhaul of both administrative and concert programs during the past 18 months. From its online presence to ticket pricing and seating strategies, as well as the addition of the new *Inside the Score* series and a bold approach to Pops programming, the Symphony has left no stone unturned when it comes to enhancing product delivery and improving offerings for the community.

“We can credit changes made in administration, marketing and programming with a true renaissance for the Colorado Symphony in terms of record-breaking earned revenue and audience growth,” said James W. Palermo, CEO, Colorado Symphony. “These changes have been necessary for the institution, and we thank our patrons and the greater community for their steadfast support. Today, we are experiencing substantial results from these changes and are proud to report that the Colorado Symphony is on strong artistic ground and has gained significant momentum toward financial stability.”

“We are excited and proud to announce that the 2010/11 season exceeds the best year on record [2005/06] by far,” said Margaret Williams, VP of marketing and communication, Colorado Symphony. “We have now closed the 2010/11 subscription campaign at \$2,179,281 in subscription revenues and 8,487 subscription seats.” The 2005/06 season reported \$1,982,743 in revenues and 7,096 subscription seats.

Williams continued, “This season, sales campaigns have already exceeded total ticket revenues from the previous year by more than \$1 million. This is a 23.5 percent increase in total earned revenues compared to last fiscal year.”

The 2010/11 subscription campaign ended close to \$200,000 more in revenue and 1,400 more in subscription seats than ever recorded in Colorado Symphony history. The 2010/11 figures also represent \$688,435 more in subscription revenues (a 46 percent increase) and 3,591 more in subscription units (a 73 percent increase) than the previous season in 2009/10.

Symphony management credits an investment in marketing and technology – including a new website, employing online marketing strategies and creating a social media presence including [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#) – for attracting more first-time concertgoers to Boettcher Concert Hall in the 2010/11 season. So far this season, almost one third of all audience members are new ticket buyers to the Colorado Symphony.

The average number of patrons attending concerts has risen from 1,508 to 1,580 per concert. By the end of the 2010/11 season, the Colorado Symphony expects this to translate into as many as 10,000 more tickets sold compared to the previous season. This kind of attendance in most Symphony halls across the country would equate to an almost sold out season.

“The Colorado Symphony undertook a complete overhaul of sales and marketing programs at the same time that it examined what Denver communities want *and* need from a Symphony organization,” continued Palermo. “We asked tough questions, such as whether programming has sufficient appeal to younger generations and if people still want two-hour concerts. We also conducted research to learn more about what young families in Denver desire in terms of family programming, as well as what educators need from our music education programs. The results include not only the new *Inside the Score* series, but across-the-board changes to everything we offer and how the Colorado Symphony does business on a daily basis.”

Recent enhancements to Symphony offerings include:

- A fresh, bold approach to Pops programming, including collaborations with popular, independent and world music artists that have attracted more first-time concertgoers than ever before.
- The new, interactive *Inside the Score* series, designed for newcomers to classical music.
- Changes to the concert calendar, including reducing the number of Friday evening Masterworks, which had low attendance, and replacing them with *Inside the Score* presentations.
- The Symphony’s new youth concert initiative, *Musica Latina: A Symphonic Celebration of the Americas*, which was embraced throughout the community, reaching more than 20,000 Denver children and teens.
- Genesis, Inc. (www.genesisinc.com), a nationally recognized branding firm, partnered with the Colorado Symphony to develop and launch a new brand identity for the organization, signaling the renaissance and new vibrancy permeating every aspect of the organization.
- A new, energized online presence reflected in a new website, social media channels, and online ticket purchasing options, as well as program notes for all Masterworks available online. (The Symphony website, which had not been updated since 1998, received a complete overhaul.)
- An investment in both sales and marketing programs, including a new database system that frees the organization from dependence on third-party providers and allows a holistic and service oriented approach to all Colorado Symphony patrons.

Subscription sales for the newly-announced 2011/12 Colorado Symphony season are also off to a fantastic start with 50 percent of patrons renewed in the first month of the campaign. In the second month of the campaign, the campaign crossed the \$1 million mark in total subscription revenues which

represented almost 50 percent of the total campaign goal. That puts the Colorado Symphony a full two months ahead of the 2010/11 season's revenue pacing for subscription ticket sales, and more than three months ahead of the 2009/10 season.

Fundraising and development also made great strides in the 2010/11 season. The number of individuals donating to the Colorado Symphony's Annual Fund has doubled in the last 18 months.

The Colorado Symphony also posted the largest increase in dollars contributed by individuals in the history – moving from \$1 million raised to more than \$2.1 million.

“This not only demonstrates the extraordinary commitment the greater Denver community feels toward the organization, but also the deep-rooted enthusiasm for classical music felt by so many individuals,” said Tracy Tajbl, VP of Development, Colorado Symphony. “Building and maintaining a solid base of support of the Annual Fund from individual and corporate donors will be the primary source that allows the Colorado Symphony to sustain itself now and into the future, and we look forward to working with these donors as the Colorado Symphony continues to grow.”

About the Colorado Symphony

The state's only full-time professional orchestra, the Colorado Symphony embraces a tradition of musical excellence by presenting a diverse array of symphonic performances throughout the year. Originally established in 1989 as the successor to the Denver Symphony, the Colorado Symphony performs in Boettcher Concert Hall and throughout the Front Range, presenting outstanding education and outreach programs, as well as Masterworks, Pops, Holiday, Family, and the exciting new *Inside the Score* series that has attracted a historic level of first-time concertgoers. By presenting music that is both timeless and inspiring, while taking risks with new musical collaborations and interactive concerts, the Colorado Symphony is attracting more diverse and younger audiences than ever before. To date, 30 percent of the 2010/11 season concertgoers are new patrons. The increasing popularity of Colorado Symphony concerts as well as a strong fund-raising base not only re-affirms the artistic excellence of the orchestra, but also reflects the deep-rooted enthusiasm for symphonic music felt by so many individuals across the region. For more information about the Colorado Symphony, visit www.coloradosymphony.org.

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