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Desert Sun Valley Voice:

Coachella Valley Symphony aspires to expand its musical mission

Written by David E. Wolfe Special to The Desert Sun

The Coachella Valley Symphony will celebrate its 20th anniversary during the 2012-13 concert season by reflecting on its past and future.

This nonprofit, community organization is composed of an adult orchestra and two educational programs, the Buddy Rogers Youth Symphony and the Beginning Strings Conservatory. Its past and present mission has been to perpetuate live symphonic music and give accomplished and young emerging musicians opportunities to share their talents through public performances.

We are committed to this mission, but it is time to address issues concerning performance venues for the symphony and its musicians. Through outreach efforts, our programs can expand opportunities for entertainment, education and active participation for greater numbers of people and thus enhance the quality of their lives.

Our current venue is in a traditional concert performance setting. This facility provides a patron base that guarantees a reliable audience. However, by creating a “home” for the orchestra, we may have restricted essential opportunities to develop membership in our educational programs and may have overlooked the growth of potential audiences.

We are delighted to have such a home and will continue to provide performances there. But current trends in the arts emphasize the importance of extending arts activities to nontraditional settings within communities. Plans are under way for the Coachella Valley Symphony to offer existing programs in different types of venues in order to reach more people in our valley.

As a recipient of a 2012 Coachella Valley Spotlight Award, grant funding from the H.N. and Frances C. Berger Foundation allows us to inform local communities of our organization. Promotional materials about our 20th anniversary celebration will be distributed from Desert Hot Springs to Indio, and an outreach concert is scheduled at the Annenberg Theater in Palm Springs on Jan. 20. The symphony plans to conduct a similar concert in Indio during 2013-14 and to make these outreach concerts an annual event at both locations.

The Coachella Valley Symphony strives to make the public aware of the importance of being engaged in music, whether as listeners or as active performers. Our programs involve people in activities that promote well-being and contribute to the development of our youth. Research in psychology of music, education, medicine and neuroscience demonstrates that music is beneficial for us, physically and mentally, from birth throughout our senior years.

The Coachella Valley Symphony feels that even the most sophisticated and discriminating music participants can enjoy and benefit from our performances. Music listening seems analogous to enjoying good food. We can eat a great meal at a fine French restaurant or at a quaint café. Prices will vary as well as items on the menu, but it is very possible to enjoy equally our dining experiences in both kinds of establishments.

The same comparisons may apply to music. It is possible to appreciate the fine sounds of the Los Angeles Philharmonic, as well as the quality performances provided by your local Coachella Valley Symphony. Check our website at www.cvsymphony.com for a listing of our outstanding season's performances and our trio of programs.

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