

UP front

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An advantage of writing a column for an accommodating editor (one-self): The author can – without objection – promote things about which he cares. I care about several things. The work that the Savannah Philharmonic (SavPhil) is doing to entertain, inspire, and connect our regional community is one such thing.

Less than two weeks ago, the SavPhil announced its 2022/23 season. With certainty, it is the organization's most ambitious annum in its 14-year history. From September through May, SavPhil musicians will perform 25 times in 18 distinct locations, including neighborhoods that will host their first-ever orchestral events. At the core of the SavPhil schedule: A seven-show subscription series at the historic Lucas Theatre, with a holiday "Messiah" concert at the majestic Cathedral Basilica of St. John the Baptist. From Brahms to modern cinema (movie included), dinosaurs (look it up) to Debussy, to a pair of Rachmaninoff concertos in a single night by one of the world's greatest pianists (Stephen Hough), and much more.

The ethos of today's SavPhil is "Something for Everyone," and pricing reflects it. The subscription series spans five tiers of seating options, ranging from \$140 to \$420 (for the entire package), or between \$20 and \$60 per performance (when you break down the math). To sustain a vibrant environment for the arts, the SavPhil is actively cultivating the next generation of artists and patrons. The orchestra provides ongoing, high-impact educational programs to approximately 600 young people, and fields and trains an all-star junior ensemble. The SavPhil sources and distributes hundreds of instruments to aspiring players for whom their purchase would be an unrealistic luxury. Further evidence of the orchestra's commitment to audience development: The SavPhil offers subscription-series tickets to children/students for \$56, covering the entire season (the equivalent of \$8 per seat for each Lucas Theatre show).

The SavPhil is a mission-driven community asset serving as a beacon of pride, joy and inspiration for us all. Leadership's pursuit of artistic excellence has never been more fervent. The team relentlessly strives to connect with as many of the 350,000 folks in our region as possible, a strategy that is a hallmark of the organiza-

tion's evolution.

The SavPhil, in growth mode during a period of shrinkage for many peers, has rightfully earned respect, recognition and admiration throughout the orchestra world. Employing rigorous fiscal discipline, the organization is – today – in its strongest-ever financial position. Funders are individuals, companies, foundations...people who recognize and appreciate the quality and importance of the work.

These are the truths of the SavPhil story. Contrary noise is just that...noise. Great enterprises carefully assess market wants and needs and engineer their offerings to delight their markets effectively and efficiently. They measure their success, and correct course as necessary. The SavPhil follows this model of prudent stewardship.

Occasionally, nostalgists lament change. But, oftentimes, change begets advancement. For those among you who doubt this law of nature, I'll line my electric car up next to a tourist horse carriage and you decide which of us you want to follow around all day.

I am happy to convey the SavPhil story to you. Just as I will be happy to see you in the theater or at a neighborhood concert or in Forsyth for Phil the Park. Subscriptions are selling at a record pace. Select your seats now at savannahphilharmonic.org. Or phone the office at 912.232.6002 during business hours. Music is a source of personal and communal joy. Secure your share.

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