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ARTISTIC POLICY, 2010-2011

The Artistic Policy of the Meridian Symphony Orchestra is founded in the belief that both the hearing and performance of orchestral music is enjoyable and uplifting, providing a benefit to the individual, the community and the art. For the audience, we provide a variety of musical styles in an educational and family-friendly environment. For the musicians, we provide a stimulating, yet relaxed atmosphere in which skills and artistic abilities can be enhanced, while enjoying the support of our peers.

To achieve these goals, we ask the following of each of our members:

REHEARSAL ETIQUETTE

To make the most of our rehearsal time, we will:

- Organize each rehearsal to maximize playing time.
- Structure rehearsals to balance the demands of each composition with the time available.
- Arrive at rehearsal prepared to begin at the appointed starting time. Advance notice of tardiness should be communicated to your section leader when possible.
- Limit conversation to the composition being rehearsed.
- Individually devote a minimum of sixty minutes of practice per week, in addition to rehearsal. It should be the goal of each member to learn the notes of each piece outside of rehearsal, so that our time can be used to rehearse the music.
- End the rehearsal promptly at the appointed time.

AUDITIONS

We will hold auditions as necessary to place individuals in their optimal positions within the orchestra. Consideration will be given to the needs of the individual, as well as the needs of the ensemble. To facilitate this process we will:

- Recruit and retain a balanced symphony orchestra consisting of a minimum of:
8 First Violins, 8 Second Violins, 6 Violas, 6 Celli, 4 Contrabass, 2 Flutes,
1 Piccolo, 2 Oboes, 1 English Horn, 2 Clarinets, 1 Bass Clarinet, 2 Bassoons,
4 Horns, 3 Trumpets, 3 Trombones, 1 Tuba, 1 Timpani, 3 Percussion,

1 Piano/Keyboard, 1 Harp, for a total of 60 players, plus an Artistic Director/Conductor.

Any openings will be advertised for audition with additional assistance of members who may know individuals that can fill.

- Require a placement audition for all new musicians entering the orchestra. In addition, members of the orchestra that remain on leave for more than one year will be required to audition for placement. The Artistic Director, and no less than one other individual, preferably the section leader of the affected section, will conduct the audition.
- On a 3-year rotating basis, allow each member of the orchestra the option to play for the Artistic Director to be considered for a section leader position, to include concertmaster. The audition material will be at the discretion of the Artistic Director. The first year rotation will be the 1st and 2nd violins, the 2nd year rotation will be the violas, cellos, and basses and the 3rd year rotation will be the winds and brass, and so on. In addition, if the Artistic Director feels that there is someone qualified that does not seek the position of section leader, a dialogue will be initiated to gauge possible interest.
- Allow the Artistic Director to appoint a section leader and assistant section leader in the string sections. The remainder of the section will be seated at the discretion of the section leader. The section leader will be responsible for the ongoing mentoring and management of the section. Consideration will be made to accommodate the preferences regarding stand partners.

The Artistic Director will also appoint section leaders for the winds, brass and percussion. The roles and responsibilities of these section leader positions will be communicated. In the event that a section leader leaves the orchestra, auditions to replace a vacancy will occur as needed.

- Allow the Artistic Director, with board approval, to appoint an Assistant Conductor.

MUSIC SELECTION & ATTENDANCE

To achieve our best in performance, it is important that we:

- Select music that will meet the needs of a variety of skill levels with the goal of continually increasing the difficulty of the music that is performed.
- Attend rehearsals regularly. No more than two unexcused absences per concert set will be allowed prior to dismissal for the remainder of that season. Advance notice of absences should be communicated to your section leader.
- Attend all dress rehearsals and performances. Absences may be excused in advance by the Artistic Director. Unexcused absences from a dress rehearsal or performance will result in dismissal for the remainder of that season.

ROLE OF SECTION LEADERS

Section leaders play an important role in the artistic development of the orchestra and share responsibility with the Artistic Director for the musical integrity of the ensemble. In

an effort to optimize our artistic product we will:

- Recognize the role of the section leader to manage their section. Section leaders will be responsible to call additional sectional rehearsals when necessary and will lead such sessions as required.
- Encourage regular meetings between the Artistic Director and section leaders to preview the music of each concert set, as necessary. Styles and difficult passages will be reviewed in advance to allow preparation and forethought. Section leaders in the string sections will provide bowings to their section prior to the second rehearsal of each concert set.
- Recognize the role of Concert Master in the calling of the orchestra to order, receiving the tuning pitch, and assisting the conductor in rehearsals and performances.

GUEST ARTISTS/MEMBER SOLOISTS

In presenting soloists with the orchestra, we will balance opportunities to share outstanding community and professional soloists with our audience, with that of spotlighting outstanding talent within our orchestra. In pursuit of this balance we will:

- Approve soloist appointments in the process of review of the annual proposed repertoire presented by the Artistic Director to the Board.
- Encourage the use of member soloists whenever feasible.
- Budget honoraria for non-member soloists.

Policy approved by Meridian Symphony Orchestra Board of Directors, April 5, 2005