

**CONFIDENTIAL**  
**True Concord Board Meeting – Wed., March 15, 2023, 330pm DOP**  
**MINUTES**

Attendance: Shapiro, Holtan, Bjorhovde, Dinham, Kearns, March, Markovich, Molina, Pernet, Robson, Segel, Um, West. Absent: Moulton, Villa, Watson  
Staff: Keeling, Kauffman

1. Welcome (Shapiro). Chair Shapiro congratulated Molina on her new appointment as Chorus Director for the Tucson Symphony, how we should all attend the Verdi Requiem in March 2024 to cheer her on. Shapiro also reminded all that the Donor Season Reveal is Sunday, March 19 4-6pm in the Ventana Room at Loews. Eric will present the 23-24 season, Ned and Mark will perform, Susan has chosen the menu, all other details are in the capable hands of Owen and Keeling. Packets with brochures, ticket order forms (Kearns, Keeling and Owen will be ready to take orders), venue maps and sponsorship opportunities will be provided to each guest. We are looking at about 70 attendees, up from 50 last year.
2. Minutes from January meeting and Consent Agenda unanimously approved.
3. Audience Development/Marketing Report (Kearns, Keeling, Kauffman). Ticket sales were weak for the Friday and Saturday, Green Valley and CatFoot performances of the Haydn *Creation*, Sunday at CatFoot packed. Excellent convo around matinees and their attractiveness, that Haydn isn't Mozart nor Beethoven at the Box Office, and that the website being down for 24 hours the week of the shows probably cost us significant sales, especially as it was down when newspaper inserts and radio spots arrived in homes. The Close-Up Vocal Recital series is basically sold out, Welz has added 30 seats for March 27 at Hacienda del Sol due to demand and as the initial 100 seat capacity was based on the Corinne Winter socially-distanced spacing. CUVR sold out because the Susanna Phillips was sold over two seasons and the cool venues for the other two have proven good box office (we'll do 2 at The Century Room in 23/24). As is typical for our audience, late buying is standard so the major eBlast schedule, radio spots and newspaper inserts will start no earlier than mid this week – these are our sole assets and all push folks to the website, our lifeline, making the website crashing around Haydn and yesterday/today a serious problem, as well as the start to 23-24 ticket selling/seat-reserving Monday the 20<sup>th</sup>. Keeling investigating alternatives – per Welz/Van Ness Community Foundation uses Nextrio.

Visibility for True Concord continues to improve with the HoCo Portrait Exhibit having been seen by approximately 4000 people, virtually none of whom had heard of True Concord. The HoCo folks have never seen such an attractive show, nor one that attracted such attendance, nor one that required multiple replenishing of brochures and takeaways. This coupled with 2 McLemore

tapings, Tucson Lifestyle photo shoot for Jocelyn, John de Lancie at *Helios* and the popularity of shows with projections all increased buzz and visibility in 22-23. An uptick in ticket sales definitely happened but we know that such visibility is a “slow burn” with payoffs coming later. Welz working on a new HoCo exhibit for 23/24, discussions with AZ Spotlight for appearances/interviews, and strong collaborations with MOCA (new) and UA Humanities Seminars as well. Finally, we are garnering nice response to young people attending shows – Unidas, Reach for the Stars, Manzo School - our regulars enjoy seeing younger folks as it gives them hope there will be audiences in the future. Hugely staff intensive to build all these relationships, payoff will happen over several seasons, not quickly.

Kearns walked through the reserved seating rollout process. All season ticket holders will be called; season ticket holders will have 3 weeks to purchase/select seats using an access code; Joan Biggar is proving invaluable as the person who best knows our buyers and their seating issues (notably obstructed views due to cameras for the video concert tapings and wanting better views for shows with the projection screen). New season ticket buyers will be able to purchase beginning April 7. Single tickets go on sale to season ticket holders mid-August with their own priority period, to the general public September 5. Challenges include buyers who want to sit with someone, and the seating of comp tickets that season ticket holders receive as a perk. Molina asked whether we have a FAQ sheet – a “how to” to work through the reserved seat process – Kearns/Keeling confirmed it is on the website. Thanks to Joan we’ll be able to block seats for current season ticket buyers through at least the period through April 7 on the website as she knows where folks sit. Season tickets will be sold at the season finale performances in addition to the 3-19 Donor Event.

At their February meeting, the AudDev/Mar Committee did a deep dive on the Strategic Initiatives, those comments are in the minutes from the February 16, 2023 meeting. Work on these will continue.

4. Finance Report (Robson). Ticket sales are down; production costs up; grants are not in yet or not happening at all. Robson/Holtan concurred that, in light of the recent bank failures, sticking with a big bank is wise for the time being. Investment policy recommended by Finance Committee to Board for adoption, unanimously approved. Finally, strategic goals/objectives work is moving along nicely, the Committee is done reviewing the objectives and Nancy read them at the meeting. Andy and her Committee are working on accounting policy and procedures manual – deadline of December 2023 is likely too early. All goals and objectives, per Nancy, will be voted on once the entire Strategic Plan is completed. Question was raised, do we need to have “establishing an endowment” as an objective?
5. Fund Development Report (Bjorhovde, Holtan, Um).
  - a. Anniversary Campaign for Endowment and Strategic Initiatives – going well, 3 Board member meetings thus far, good questions about how to

make contributions (how much and over what period of time, for instance) to the endowment.

- b. Spring Annual Fund Campaign – There was consensus that the continued effects of Covid pandemic were primarily to blame for delay in full return to 2018-19 audience levels, causing missed ticket sales goals, particularly in January and February. Additionally, the potential loss of a major donor due to rapidly declining health and a rejection from a major granting agency create possibility of larger deficit than budgeted. In addition to expected gifts from individuals, Board members and foundations and in order to make budget, another \$100,000 needs to be raised before June 30:
  - i. Board approved creating a challenge using \$25,000 from the Vanek bequest to raise \$25,000. There were concerns around using this Vanek money as it may not be the “special and unusual” use it was meant for, but ultimately it was agreed that Vanek herself would have liked her money raising new money and/or energizing increases in donations and lapsed donors. The Board moved that \$25,000 from the Vanek Bequest be combined with an already-committed \$25,000 to create a total of \$50,000 toward the 22-23 Annual Fund.
  - ii. Concert sponsorship dollars. There was a brief discussion around sponsoring individual True Concord artists a la sponsorship of actors at Rogue – this was tabled pending further investigation and discussion.
  - iii. Spring 2023 final push – Um working on a unique appeal combined with intricate segmenting she’ll complete with Keeling.

Um will present ii. and iii. at the Donor Season Reveal party March 19.

6. Founding Music Director Report (Holtan)
  - a. True Concord’s first live radio broadcast is scheduled for the Sunday March 26 Rachmaninoff Vespers performance, to be broadcast over three different stations throughout all of Arizona.
  - b. Core Artist 23-24 contracts are in process, and response is good.
  - c. We’d hoped to have Corinne Winters return to True Concord (with her partner Adam) but Winters understandably took a lucrative and prestigious opera engagement in Europe. Cardiff Singer of the World Nicole Cabell, coming off her well-received debut with the TSO (Barber Knoxville and Mahler 4) in fall 2021, will perform with True Concord (Poulenc *Gloria*) and a recital at Holsclaw on the Close-Up Vocal Recital series with the Nation and Erika Burkhart shows taking place at The Century Room following the sold-out success of the Marvosh/Dauphinais February concert.
  - d. Brian Giebler will return to True Concord for the Evangelist in the *St. John Passion*.
  - e. Kauffman described the newly-minted collaboration with Tucson MOCA related to Raven Chacon.

- f. In addition to Lessons & Carols, Eric and Phil are creating a new holiday special to take place at Skyline Country Club (thanks to Susan Markovich) on December 13 at 4pm. Susan suggested this 4pm show might be marketing to families, and Eric noted that if the 4pm sells well, we could add a 7pm performance.
  - g. The recording sessions for Jake Runestad's *Dreams of the Fallen* and *Earth Symphony* are set for late May. Eric with Tyler from the UA Poetry Center will emcee a conversation with Jake and his *Earth Symphony* librettist Todd Boss at The Century Room May 21. Keeling will have the *Earth Symphony* video concert on a loop for attendees to enjoy before the program begins.
7. Strategic Goals and Objectives (March). March thanked the Board and Board Committees for their continued work on this noting that, amongst other uses, grant proposals will benefit greatly from this effort. The Audience Development/Marketing Committee will report on their work at the next Board meeting.
8. Adjournment (Shapiro). There being no other business, Shapiro adjourned the meeting at 5pm.