THE MISSION OF THE ALLENTOWN SYMPHONY ASSOCIATION IS TO PROVIDE A FIRST-CLASS SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA AND HALL, QUALITY PERFORMING ARTS, AND CULTURAL EDUCATION IN PARTNERSHIP WITH THE COMMUNITY.
2017-2018

A MESSAGE OF THANKS TO ALL OUR SUPPORTERS FROM THE ALLENTOWN SYMPHONY

On behalf of the Allentown Symphony Association, we proudly share this Annual Report with supporters. Your gifts and grants made it possible for the Symphony to fulfill its mission during the 2017-2018 fiscal year in a dynamic fashion!

The innovative collaborations, stellar guest artists, and the stunning professionalism of the Allentown Symphony Orchestra under the baton of award-winning Maestro Diane Wittry made the 2017-2018 Classical Series truly magical. Our thrilling Pops Series, conducted by Ronald Demkee, continued to delight audiences of all ages.

The monthly Jazz Upstairs series confirmed the Rodale Room as “the Valley’s best listening room,” while an array of Family and OnStage programs reached a wide range of audiences. The ASA’s education programs flourished, including El Sistema Lehigh Valley, a life-changing initiative in the Allentown School District.

The operations of the ASA were bolstered by a substantial grant from the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, and we are grateful to Senator Pat Browne for his impressive support of the arts. The ASA also received significant gifts and grants from foundations, businesses, local government, and hundreds of individual donors and Symphony Ball patrons.

Your gifts sustained our wonderful orchestra and Miller Symphony Hall, helped children and families learn and appreciate music, and enabled the long-awaited Lyric Room project to be initiated.

We gratefully recognize Philip Jackson for his sound financial leadership and responsibility as President of the Board of Directors from 2015-2017 and thank you for your loyalty and generosity. We ask for your continued support in 2018-2019.

Sincerely,

Mike Torbert
President

Diane Scott
Interim Executive Director

Al Jacobsen
Executive Director

SPECIAL NOTE FROM MIKE
The Board of Directors and staff join me in thanking Diane Scott for guiding the ASA during a transition in executive leadership with vision, wisdom, and a steady hand! We welcome our new Executive Director, Al Jacobsen, who joined us in October 2018, following a national search.
The 2017-2018 season of the Allentown Symphony Orchestra was packed full of top-quality guest artists and exciting creative projects. It was also our first full season to be filmed and broadcast locally by Service Electric TV.

Highlights included the opening of the season with world-renowned soprano soloist Angela Meade and her husband, tenor John Matthew Meyers; the commissioning of a world premiere by Muhlenberg faculty composer Doug Ovens for Harry Bertoia’s sound sculptures and orchestra; the East Coast premiere of a new film for Mussorgsky’s “Pictures at an Exhibition,” and an exciting regional composers competition. A weekend of sold-out performances of Leonard Bernstein’s music in honor of his 100th Anniversary, as well as selections from *Porgy and Bess*, featured our Allentown Symphony Chorus and internationally-recognized soloists.

Other ASO Pops concerts featured James Bond film scores, Disney favorites, and the music and dance of Fred Astaire and Ginger Rogers, for a season that offered something for every listener.

Our community engagement concerts began in the summer with a free “Broadway Favorites” concert at the Levitt Pavilion in Bethlehem, featuring members of the Parkland High School Chorale. “Symphony on Ice” in December at the PPL Center included a combined high school chorus of over 200 voices and 75 members of the Penguin Ice Skating Club, and the Arts at St. John’s Series featured soloists, ensembles, and a chamber orchestra from the Allentown Symphony.

The Youth and Family Concert Series, “The Life and Times of Beethoven,” reached over 3,000 students, and our Young Musician String Festival featured students from throughout the Lehigh Valley.

Awards and honors for the ASO during the 2017-2018 season included a regional Emmy Award for Service Electric for our February 2017 Family Concert performance of “Peter and the Wolf” with Michael Boudewyns. The ASO also received the 2017 “American Prize” for exceptional artistic quality for their November 2016 performance of Elgar’s *Enigma Variations*.

It was a very exciting season, and each year, as I work with the professional musicians of the Allentown Symphony, I am so proud of all that we have accomplished and of the outstanding artistic quality of this fine orchestra.

Diane Wittry
MUSIC DIRECTOR/CONDUCTOR
The award-winning Allentown Symphony Orchestra

Composer and percussionist Doug Ovens presented Bertoia Sound Sculptures for Orchestra.

Opening Night, 2017-18, Opera Arias, with soprano Angela Meade and tenor John Matthew Myers.

The Grammy-nominated Eroica Trio performed Beethoven’s Triple Concerto.
ASO CLASSICAL SEASON HIGHLIGHTS

Van Cliburn award-winning Joyce Yang performed Rhapsody on a Theme of Paganini.

ASO Concertmaster Eliezer Gutman in the Arts at St. John’s series.

Composer Zhou Tian introduced his “The Palace of Nine Perfections.”
Timothy Chooi (center), winner of the 2018 Schadt Competition, Ania Filochowska (left), second place, and Hannah Cho (right), third place.

Jermaine Smith sings as “Sportin’ Life” in Porgy and Bess.

Rick Basehore, oboist, and pianist Yu Xi Wang in the Arts at St. John’s series.

Stefano Greco, classical concert pianist from Italy performed in the Arts at St. John’s series.

“Symphony on Ice” at the PPL Center featured the ASO, the Penguin Ice Skating Club, and combined high school chorus.
Rachel York delivered songs from James Bond films in the Pops series.

Tango Buenos Aires was featured in the OnStage series.


The King’s Singers, Grammy award-winners, in the OnStage series.
Selena Robinson of WLEV hosted the Ladies of Laughter comedy series.

Performers in the Ladies of Laughter series.

Met: Live in HD broadcasts from New York’s Metropolitan Opera.

Viktorija Gečytė and the Go Trio, led by Gene Perla, in the Jazz Upstairs series.
EDUCATION

The ASA is committed to delivering an extraordinary artistic experience for audiences of all ages by producing concerts and events that strive to inspire and develop creativity and musical curiosity. Its educational initiatives reach all areas of the Lehigh Valley and beyond, with programs like the Schadt String Competition, a biennial national contest that hosts extraordinary up-and-coming young string artists; the Young Musician String Festival, which is comprised of over 50 local students in what is often their first orchestral experience at Miller Symphony Hall; and the ASO’s Musical Instrument Petting Zoo and Youth and Family Concert Series, both of which make music come alive for children and parents alike.
The ASA is the umbrella organization for El Sistema Lehigh Valley, which, in its 7th year of operations, has served hundreds of local students by providing all participants with intensive string instrument lessons, choir instruction, and academic tutoring. The rich music curriculum creates a cooperative, fun, and nurturing environment for the children to explore their creativity as individuals and as an ensemble.
DONOR SPOTLIGHT

JILL AND AL DOUGLASS

Lifelong residents of the Lehigh Valley, Al and Jill Douglass learned at an early age the importance of giving back to the community. As Al explained,

“It’s a way of life that was taught to us by our parents; in turn we have taught it to our children, and they are teaching it to their children. Generation to generation. Recognizing that we are part of this community, we have a moral and civic obligation to contribute anyway we can to the greater social good.”

Together Jill and Al became benefactors to many organizations, including the Society of the Arts, the Allentown Art Museum, and the Leader Lehigh Valley program, now in 38 schools. They have helped Good Shepherd Hospital, Lafayette College, Wildlands Conservancy, the Hawk Mountain Sanctuary, the United Way of the Greater Lehigh Valley, and of course, the Allentown Symphony Association.

“The Allentown Symphony Orchestra has always been a part of my life,” noted Jill. “My parents, Bill and Roberta Hudders, loved the Orchestra. My mother was always active in the women’s group. I especially remember her making elaborate decorations for the Symphony Ball!”

Jill explained that because her mother and father were so proud of the Allentown Symphony, it was natural for her to get involved. “Doug and I both think Allentown is very lucky to have such a wonderful orchestra. When we were asked to sponsor the newly formed Allentown Symphony Chorus, we were happy to do it.”

On National Philanthropy Day, November 15, 2018, Al and Jill Douglas were honored as “Outstanding Philanthropists” by the Eastern Pennsylvania Chapter of the Association of Fundraising Professionals.
GLENN KRESSLEY
Long-time Allentown Symphony Orchestra percussionist Glenn Kressley joined the Allentown Symphony Orchestra in 1992, shortly before Diane Wittry became Music Director. For the next 26 years, he played in both the Allentown Symphony Orchestra and the Allentown Band. His instrument of choice was the bass drum and to see him playing and smiling in the percussion section was part of the orchestra experience for many years. He also served admirably and effectively as the Education Coordinator on the Allentown Symphony Association staff. Glenn passed away after a long illness on July 29, 2018. His positivity, reliability, and warm, caring personality will be greatly missed. We express our sincerest condolences to his wife, Peggy, and daughter, Andrea.

MARILYN KISTLER
Marilyn Kistler joined the Allentown Symphony Orchestra in 1953, when she was still in high school and famous conductor Donald Voorhees had recently made his start as the Allentown Symphony’s Music Director. Early photos show her sitting on the first stand with David Madison, the former Associate Concertmaster for the Philadelphia Orchestra who also served as the Concertmaster of the Allentown Symphony in the 1970’s and 80’s. Marilyn taught music in Allentown, primarily at Trexler Middle School, for 34 years until her retirement in 1985. She retired from the first violin section of the Allentown Symphony Orchestra at the end of the 2018 concert season, having completed 64 years of service.
“One Enchanted Evening: Arabian Nights,” the 68th Annual Symphony Ball on February 3, 2018, was an elegant black-tie affair at the Lehigh Country Club. From cocktails and hors d’oeuvres to live music, a Middle Eastern-inspired dinner, and silent auctions, the night was one to remember. Senator Pat Browne and Heather Browne were Honorary Symphony Ball Chairs, partnering with the Allentown Symphony Association to support the Association’s programs that benefit the community.

“When individual pursuits are put aside, when the rapid pace of time seems to stand still, we collectively gather for mutual benefit, enjoyment, and enrichment through the sounds and rhythms of Symphony Hall. It is through the timeless wonders of the arts, the wonders of music at the ‘Grand Lady of Allentown,’ that we find our soul.”

Senator Pat Browne
Honorary Chairman Allentown Symphony Ball
FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS FOR FY 2017-18
(JUNE 1, 2017 TO MAY 31, 2018)

2017-2018 YEAR BY THE NUMBERS

Like other cultural non-profit organizations, the ASA relies significantly on philanthropy to support its concerts, performances, and historic hall. The charts below explain the economic realities that we face. Your generosity sets the standards of excellence for our productions, presentations, education programs, and our hall. On behalf of the ASA Board, staff, musicians, school children, concert-goers, and our city, we thank you for keeping the arts alive at Miller Symphony Hall.

CONTRIBUTED SUPPORT $2,546,188
PROGRAM SERVICES $1,264,051
SPECIAL EVENTS $96,848

CONCERT & EVENT PRODUCTION $2,576,897
ADMINISTRATION $468,087
EDUCATION SERVICES $348,590
FUNDRAISING $226,296

*Expenses include depreciation of $305,609

From the Allentown Symphony Association’s audited financial statements provided by the accounting firm of Buckno Lisicky Company.
The following donors made gifts to the Allentown Symphony Association between June 1, 2017 and May 31, 2018.

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THE VOORHEES SOCIETY

The Voorhees Society recognizes and honors individuals and families who have made the Allentown Symphony Association a beneficiary of their estate plans. To learn more, contact Geoff Harrington, Director of Development, Allentown Symphony Association, 23 North Sixth Street, Allentown, PA 18101, by phone at 610 432-7961, ext. 207 or by email: gharrington@allentownsymphony.org.

The following had made legacy or endowment gifts on or before May 31, 2018:

VOORHEES SOCIETY MEMBERS

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Joan Miller Moran
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The following were members of the Allentown Symphony Orchestra as of April 2018.

**MUSIC DIRECTOR & CONDUCTOR**
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Sponsored by Lois B. Miller

**ASSOCIATE CONDUCTOR/POPS CONDUCTOR**
Ronald Demkee

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**TROMBONE**
Gilles Bernard, Principal  
Nicholas Martin  
Robert Fournier

**TUBA**
Ronald Demkee, Principal  
Sponsored by Dr. Lona Farr & Rev. David Voellinger

**TIMPANI**
Glen Wilkofsky, Principal

**PERCUSSION**
Randy Edelman, Principal  
Sponsored by Deborah & Philip C. Jackson  
Richard Groller  
Sponsored by Philip A. Metzger  
Glenn Kressley

**PIANO**
Michael Toth, Principal  
Sponsored by Robert Pearce in honor of Joanne Pearce Martin

**HARP**
Frances Duffy, Principal  
Sponsored by David Ackerman  
Chris Johnson
YEAR IN REVIEW

THE ALLENTOWN SYMPHONY ASSOCIATION PRODUCED...

41 ASO & UPSTAIRS JAZZ CONCERTS

15 HIGH DEFINITION BROADCASTS OF THE MET OPERA

13 ORGANIZATIONS OFFERED

30 PERFORMANCES

collaborating with the Symphony Association, technical staff, and box office

BY THE NUMBERS

82 TICKETED EVENTS AT MILLER SYMPHONY HALL

27,493 TICKETED ATTENDANCE

21,012 ALLENTOWN SYMPHONY ASSOCIATION PATRONS

66 ALLENTOWN SYMPHONY ASSOCIATION EVENTS

11,169 EDUCATION & OUTREACH RECIPIENTS
ABOUT THE ALLENTOWN SYMPHONY CHORUS

The Allentown Symphony Chorus is a professional-level chorus that performs with the Allentown Symphony Orchestra, rehearsing before each featured ASO concert. The chorus is comprised of approximately 50 voices, with auditions held in the fall and early winter of each year. Special auditions are held for Section Leaders and paid Section Leaders. Auditions for the Scholarship Quartet are held in the fall and are open to students from local colleges. For more information, contact Donna Fritchey by phone at 610-423-7961, ext. 205, or by email: dfritchey@allentownsymphony.org.

AUDITION REQUIREMENTS

Vocalization
Solo selection (oratorio aria or art song)
Sight reading

Mandatory excerpts from upcoming work

*Those auditioning for Section Leader, Assistant Section Leader or Scholarship Quartet will most likely have additional requirements

ABOUT THE ALLENTOWN SYMPHONY CHORUS

APRIL 2018
Eduardo Azzati
Alleentown Symphony Chorus Director
Graeme Burgan
Rehearsal Accompanist

SOPRANO
RuthAnn Bartlett
Kayleigh Bennett
College Scholar
Melissa Black
Mary Dawson
Cindy Ernst
Roberta George
Jeanne Harakal
Lynn German Long
Angela Mitchell
Assistant Section Leader
Angela Mosley
Rebecca Shimer
Section Leader
Kayla Smull
Lily Winzer
Donna M. Yasenchok

ALSO
Dinamichele Boyer
Carole Burkhardt
Section Leader
Maggie Callahan
Dorothy Cockrell
Stephanie Condelli
Assistant Section Leader
Kathryn Reichel Dyer
Natalie Foster
Elizabeth Marcon
Heidi New
Nicole S. Roeder
Veronika M. Roemer
Lisa Walton
Kristen Weaver
College Scholar

TENOR
Marc Bernal
College Scholar
Donald Buss
Ron Clever
Bruce Dawson

John J. DeAngelo
Joel Hurley
Michael Jacobson
Samuel Morneweck
Ryan J. Neel
Section Leader
Frank Romaker
Richard Oswald Woodham

BASS
Jack Armstrong
Mike Dutka
James Farrand
Fred Preuninger
Gregory M. Mensch
Milo Morris
Section Leader
R. Todd Rober
Robert Smith
# Allentown Symphony Association

Al Jacobsen, Executive Director  
Diane Wittry, Music Director/Conductor  
Ronald Demkee, Associate Conductor/Pops Conductor

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Eleanor P. Cummins, PhD, Secretary  
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Lois Brong Miller  
Robert Pearce  
Donald F. Williams

* as of May 31, 2018

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Lucy Bloise  
VP Marketing & Community Engagement  
Karen Creeden  
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Operations Manager  
Heather Hacker  
House Manager  
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Bonnie Hawk  
Finance/Development Assistant & Human Resource Manager  
Benjamin Hill  
Stage Supervisor  
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Development Associate  
Kevin Kiernan  
Director of Hall Operations  
Ariëal Wright-Pinkney  
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Director of Education  
Daniel O’Connor  
Box Office Assistant  
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Operations Manager, El Sistema Lehigh Valley  
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