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CHARLOTTE SYMPHONY AND MUSICIANS REACH NEW CONTRACT AGREEMENT FOR 2022–23 SEASON

August 18, 2022 | Charlotte, NC – The Charlotte Symphony Orchestra and the American Federation of Musicians, Local 342 negotiating committee, representing the musicians of the Charlotte Symphony Orchestra, announced today that the musicians and the CSO’s Board of Directors have ratified a new two-year contract. The new agreement, which goes into effect September 1, 2022, and extends through August 31, 2024, creates stability for the Symphony as it continues to recover from the impacts of the pandemic and demonstrates a continuation of the Symphony’s commitment to serving its community through exceptional musical experiences.

“The negotiations and resultant contract represent a very thoughtful and thorough look at our collective bargaining agreement,” said CSO horn and chair of the orchestra negotiations committee Bob Rydel. “The musicians are grateful for the collaborative process and the partnership we have with the staff and the Board of Directors. We believe this contract will provide the continued forward momentum that is identified in the Charlotte Symphony’s Strategic Plan. With the excitement of a Music Director search, and acknowledgment that the artistic growth of the organization is a priority, the momentum this agreement creates is a key component to fulfilling the potential of the Charlotte Symphony.”

Key points in the new agreement include:

- 5% increase in salary for all full-time musicians over the two-year term.
- Expansion of the season by one week (increasing the number of working weeks from 37 to 38), bringing more music to the community and providing a more stable work environment for musicians.
- Increased remuneration for performances related to education and community engagement.
- Allowance for a broader applicant base for auditions – no pre-screening of resumes and automatic advancement of applicants coming through The Sphinx Orchestral Partners Auditions (SOPA).
- Guaranteed payments for electronic media uses that will be used for more wide-scale distribution of virtual performances, including to schools.

“This new agreement enables the CSO to keep adapting and evolving, to embrace the demands on orchestras today to be responsive and forward-looking,” said CSO President and CEO David Fisk. “There is much in the new deal to support our musicians and to allow them to focus on performing to the highest level, yet with a greater focus than before on audience engagement,

content distribution and learning partnerships. I'm particularly pleased that the new contract aligns with our goal to be an innovative, united, and diverse organization that reflects the community in which we live and work. I'm grateful to my Union colleagues that we were able to conclude negotiations well ahead of the expiry of the current agreement, and move forward as one to focus on the exciting years ahead."

"On behalf of the Board of Directors I want to thank the musicians of the Charlotte Symphony," said CSO Board Chair Linda Farthing, "not only for their exceptional artistry, but for their commitment to this organization, and to the community — especially through the uncertainties of the past two years. I'm so thankful for their partnership in creating a bright future for Charlotte's Orchestra"

About the Charlotte Symphony

Founded in 1932, the Charlotte Symphony Orchestra (CSO) is committed to uplifting, entertaining, and educating the diverse communities of Charlotte-Mecklenburg and beyond through exceptional musical experiences. A cornerstone of Charlotte's arts and cultural landscape, the CSO is the oldest continually operating symphony orchestra in the Carolinas and connects with more than 100,000 music lovers annually through live concerts, broadcasts, community events, and education programs. The CSO employs 62 professional full-time orchestra musicians, serves three youth orchestras, and offers significant educational programming aimed at improving areas of our community with the greatest need. The Charlotte Symphony plays a leading cultural role in the Charlotte area and aims to serve the community as a civic leader, reflecting and uniting our region through the transformative power of live music.

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