BOSTON SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA RATIFIES NEW LABOR AGREEMENT THROUGH AUGUST 2023

ORCHESTRA MUSICIANS CONTINUE TO TAKE PART IN THE BSO’S OVERALL COST-SAVING MEASURES BY AGREEING TO CUTS IN THEIR SALARIES, REFLECTING THE MAJOR FINANCIAL CHALLENGES DUE TO COVID-19 CONCERT CANCELLATIONS MARCH–NOVEMBER

The musicians of the Boston Symphony Orchestra ratified a new three-year labor agreement that went into effect on August 24, 2020, and runs through August 27, 2023.

Highlights of the new Boston Symphony Orchestra labor agreement include:

- In response to COVID-19–related revenue loss of $35 million, a compensation reduction averaging 37% in the first year of the contract; increases in compensation over the course of the agreement will occur as the BSO redevelops sustainable revenue, as clearly defined in the terms of the new contract.
- Starting in fall 2021, the establishment of the BSO Resident Fellowship Program—an excellence-based training program for early career orchestra musicians from historically underrepresented populations; the 1-2 year program will provide opportunities for young musicians of color to study with BSO musicians and perform with the BSO and Boston Pops in their Symphony Hall seasons in Boston, as well as participate as a Fellow in the Tanglewood Music Center, the BSO’s acclaimed summer music academy.
- Starting in September 2020 and reflecting the current COVID-19 period, an agreement on an expanded definition of official BSO-work “quota” services, including both concerts and rehearsals and adding digital online performances and involvement in community engagement activities, educational collaborations, Tanglewood Learning Institute programs, and development and BSO Board events.
- The incorporation of four BSO Sunday-afternoon concerts into the 2021–22 and 2022–23 BSO seasons.
A JOINT STATEMENT BY MARK VOLPE, BSO PRESIDENT AND CEO; JAMES MARKEY, CHAIR OF THE BSO PLAYERS COMMITTEE; AND PATRICK HOLLENBECK, PRESIDENT OF THE BOSTON MUSICIANS ASSOCIATION:

"The Boston Symphony Orchestra’s new labor agreement reflects our collective understanding of the major challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic and the devastating financial losses due to the cancellation of the BSO’s performance and event schedule, March-November. By addressing these challenges on the compensation level, as well as in several other areas, the BSO’s new labor agreement acknowledges the part the musicians are playing in the overall cost-saving measures to ensure the Boston Symphony Orchestra emerges from the pandemic as a vibrant and essential institution for its loyal music community. It was especially gratifying to come to an agreement on the importance of redefining official services beyond rehearsals and concerts during this time of hiatus from live performances and beyond. In a departure from the standard labor agreement subjects, management and musicians worked enthusiastically together on the creation of the BSO Resident Fellowship Program for young musicians of color—a program that we hope will inspire much needed optimism as we continue to look toward better times and toward expanding the BSO’s vision of its future offerings.”

During its ongoing response to the COVID-19 public health crisis, the BSO has made a series of announcements that detailed the full slate of cancellations. These previous announcements can be found here. The BSO will continue to monitor recommendations of the Centers for Disease Control and the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, as well as confer with its own team of medical experts on matters related to an eventual reopening. All updates on this subject will be announced through press releases and postings on www.bso.org. For a BSO press kit, click here.

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