

Media Release

For immediate release

Calgary Philharmonic's Ad Astra capital campaign builds momentum with new donations

Calgary Alta. (Mar 31, 2021) – The Calgary Philharmonic Orchestra's capital campaign continues to build momentum with almost \$1 million in contributions since October 2020. This includes the endowment of the Resident Conductor position and a substantial grant from the Department of Canadian Heritage. Focused on pursuing artistic excellence, *Ad Astra: Building to New Heights* will ensure a sustainable future for the Orchestra to the benefit of the community. The money raised through the campaign goes directly to the Calgary Philharmonic Orchestra Foundation's independent endowment fund, which supports the orchestra's long-term operations.

Following in the footsteps of her parents, longtime arts advocate and Calgary Phil supporter Mary Rozsa de Coquet and the Rozsa Foundation recently endowed the Orchestra's Resident Conductor position through a major gift to the Foundation. This position, currently filled by Associate Conductor Karl Hirzer, plays a key role in community engagement through the Calgary Phil's education and outreach performances, as well as conducting select concerts throughout the Season. Rozsa de Coquet's parents recognized the importance of artistic leadership with their endowment of the Music Director position in 1993.

"This is really a gift to the entire community," says Simon Mallett, Executive Director of the Rozsa Foundation. "The Resident Conductor works with the Orchestra to create more opportunities for people in our city to experience the joy of music and develop leadership skills that will ultimately benefit us all in the future. This endowment also honours our founders, Drs. Lola and Ted Rozsa, their daughter Mary Rozsa de Coquet, the family's life-long love of the Orchestra, and the longstanding relationship between the Rozsa Foundation and the Calgary Philharmonic."

Karl Hirzer says the endowment means a lot to him personally and to the organization because it supports the longevity of the role. "A Resident Conductor is a very busy position and it's an incredible opportunity for someone developing their career," he adds. "I feel truly honoured to work in such a capacity with so many great colleagues."

The capital campaign also received a significant boost from Canadian Heritage's Endowment Incentives – Canada Cultural Investment Fund. The matching grant, based on a percentage of donations to the foundation, contributed \$660,000 last year. This federal program helps encourage private donations to arts organization endowment funds, which are crucial to their long-term sustainability and provide support during difficult periods, such as the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Calgary Philharmonic Orchestra Foundation established an independent endowment fund in 1984 and has since become the orchestra's largest annual funder – a portion of the return earned on the fund is contributed annually to the organization. The Ad Astra capital campaign was

announced to the public in October 2020 with a \$1 million donation from arts supporter and philanthropist Dr. John Lacey, who is also the campaign's Honorary Chair. The goal is to grow the endowment by \$25 million over the next five years, which will provide a stable source of revenue that allows the orchestra to plan ahead with a focus on providing quality performance, education, and outreach programs.

"The modern Foundation exists because of the exceptional generosity and leadership of a number of people, including such legendary Calgary philanthropists as the Matthews and Gareau families," says Jeremy Clark, President of the Foundation. "Many other sources of funding can be uncertain, but the Foundation stands the test of time. As the endowment grows, so too does the annual contribution to the Philharmonic. This campaign is essential to the long-term health of the Orchestra, and my colleagues and I are excited to be working in close partnership with many great people to achieve this ambitious goal."

The Calgary Philharmonic is the largest not-for-profit performing arts organization in Alberta, with 30 administrative staff and 66 musicians. The Orchestra is also integral to the cultural fabric of the city and has fostered partnerships with numerous organizations — Calgary Opera, Alberta Ballet, Calgary Folk Festival, Kids Up Front, Calgary International Film Festival, Run Calgary, One Yellow Rabbit, and Calgary Pride, among others.

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Media Opportunities

Maureen McNamee
Communications Manager
403.923.7357
mmcnamee@calgaryphil.com

About the Calgary Philharmonic Orchestra

The Calgary Philharmonic celebrated 65 years as a pillar of Calgary's vibrant arts community in 2020 and has grown to be one of Canada's most celebrated live music ensembles. Led by Music Director Rune Bergmann, the Calgary Phil presents classical masterworks, pop favourites, bold collaborations, and cutting-edge new works, and attracts world-renowned guest artists and dynamic conductors. While the concert hall has been closed throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, the Calgary Phil hasn't missed a beat — engaging with the community through free and accessible concert recordings, launching an All Access online hub giving visitors an in-depth musical experience, and continuing to produce high-quality videos. In a typical Season, the Orchestra welcomes over 100,000 visitors and, in 2017, launched its live-stream initiative — an immersive, digital concert experience for audiences around the world. Follow the Calgary Philharmonic @calgaryphil on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter, and register for email updates at calgaryphil.com/newsletter.

About the Calgary Philharmonic Orchestra Foundation

The Calgary Philharmonic Foundation is an endowment fund created to support the long-term operations of the Calgary Philharmonic Orchestra. Funds received by the Foundation are held in perpetuity. Donations made to the Foundation are eligible for a matching grant from the Canada

Cultural Investment Fund, a program of the Federal Government's Department of Canadian Heritage. A portion of the return earned on the endowment fund is contributed annually to the Calgary Philharmonic. The Foundation has become the Calgary Philharmonic's largest annual funder, exceeding all levels of government support. The Foundation operates independently and at arms-length from the Calgary Philharmonic. The fund's administration is overseen by the Trustees of the Calgary Philharmonic Foundation.