One hundred sixty years ago, Abraham Lincoln began his famous “House Divided” speech by saying:

_If we could first know where we are, and whither we are tending, we could then better judge what to do, and how to do it._

Here, in the middle of the Delaware Symphony’s 2018-2019 season, we might do well to apply Lincoln’s test.

_If we could first know where we are._

The Delaware Symphony exists, and has for more than a century. In recent years, it has increasingly thrived. Our concerts are musically splendid and well attended. So where is our symphony today? Some may answer by saying, “You mean your Symphony.” But that response wouldn’t be correct. The DSO is _our_ symphony. It is one of the great Delaware cultural gems, some of which are more famous nationally than others, but all of which enrich life here, for us.

Like all cultural institutions in America, the DSO needs support. We receive no ticket orders from Montana, no donations from New York, and no fan mail from Missouri. The DSO exists to serve our portion of the mid-Atlantic, and to serve it well.

Financially, we are glad to report that we broke even for the 2017-2018 season after a significant loss during the previous one. Musically, we continue to offer great symphonic repertoire with an exciting orchestra of thoroughly professional, dedicated musicians, under the leadership of an outstanding conductor, David Amado.

Is it then time for us to relax and emulate the immortal Alfred E. Neuman in _Mad Magazine_: “What, me worry?” No one on your DSO Board of Directors shares that view, I can assure you.

The Board celebrates the good news, and it comes often. What do we worry about? Occasionally, the Board must address particular, immediate problems, but the Board continually worries about the need for continuous, successful support if the Symphony is to exist and thrive.

We are not alone in these concerns: virtually every arts organization in the United States shares them. In other parts of the world, notably in Europe, there may be very substantial governmental support, but that is not part of American tradition. We are grateful for the governmental support that we do receive, of course, but it is not nearly enough for us to be able to retreat to an Alfred E. Neuman position. We must basically “go it alone” if we are to continue to succeed.

_...and whither we are tending..._

What is the future of the DSO? We would like to continue to present concerts throughout the state of Delaware, and, in recent years, we have been able to do this for enthusiastic audiences, in places like Dover and Lewes. We would like to continue to present outdoor concerts in the summer, such as our 2017 and 2018 concerts at Longwood Gardens and our Fourth of July 2018 concert at Wilmington’s Tubman-Garrett Park.

We were once named the Wilmington Symphony Orchestra. In 1971, we adopted the name Delaware Symphony Orchestra. As Delaware’s only fully professional orchestra, we would like to live up to that name even more in the years ahead.

_...we could then better judge what to do, and how to do it._

This one is easy. We think “what to do” means to serve our area with splendid and incomparable symphonic music. With the expertise of DSO’s conductor and musicians, we think we know “how to do it.”

In the final pages of every concert program, we gratefully list the names of the donors who not only buy tickets and attend our concerts, but whose contributions permit the orchestra to continue. We salute them.

—Charles W. Babcock
There is no denying that charities of all stripes in America have seen a philanthropic devolution over the last 30 years. Back in "the good old days," businesses vied for placement, exclusivity, and visibility in their support of not-for-profits. Indeed, there was healthy competition among companies. The Ford Foundation was building orchestras across the U. S. to unsustainable budget sizes (at least, in some communities; hindsight is always 20/20!). Several Wilmington-area foundations relay stories of encouraging charities to apply for funds as they had more to distribute than was being requested. While federal funding for the arts was already being targeted for "mis-use" (foreshadowing bigger battles to come), state and local arts support was relatively reliable, and government support of human service-centered organizations was substantial.

So, what happened? Well, the list of reasons is very long, but here are a few examples:

1. Corporate mergers and acquisitions pulled headquarters from many communities, to be centralized in the largest of cities.
2. Public funds at all levels were stressed due to economic downturns, tax cuts, and growing mistrust of government, resulting in decreased funding for all charitable endeavors.
3. Businesses, foundations, governments at more local levels, religious institutions, and individuals recognized the negative impact of no. 2 above on local charities and "filled the holes" with increased support; most often directed toward organizations supplying basic human services.
4. A few scandals by national not-for-profits translated into reduced trust in all charities.
5. New federal regulations forced some industries into dedicating their charitable giving to specific areas of need, leaving less for those not identified (example: the Community Reinvestment Act, directed at the financial services industry).
6. Many companies and foundations imposed restrictions and limitations on requests, due to reduced charitable giving, higher prioritization of profit and stockholder benefits, as well as a desire for contributions to serve marketing interests. (I don’t mean to pick on one industry, but one national bank has identified “financial literacy” as its philanthropic goal. Provide support to teach people how to better manage their money...so they can put it in your bank!)

In Delaware—and particularly, New Castle County—there is a unique history and philanthropic culture. For literally centuries, one company, and the prominent family that created and built it, has supported almost all charitable organizations in the area. Spin-offs, top executives, family foundations, and other businesses that came to Delaware (sometimes, in support of the original company) added their philanthropy to build a community that could boast great medical facilities; strong organizations dedicated to helping the aging, ill, poor, hungry, homeless, and otherwise deprived; and, of course, significant cultural organizations and facilities. Wilmington was, for many years, a city that was the envy of many other like-sized municipalities in America. And many of the envious qualities were made possible by just a few key players; the average “Joe” didn’t need to provide much personal or small-business support. Someone else was covering the bill.

Then, many of the same conditions enumerated above happened here. It isn’t necessary to list the events; they are well-documented. In the end, five of the major arts organizations, including the DSO, sustained near-death financial crises in the wake of the Great Recession. Companies—still with major presences, but not local decision-makers—that were sponsoring the DSO with 5-figure annual gifts are now giving nothing. The DSO and other arts organizations in the area have relatively small rosters of donors. (In the DSO’s case, we have about 400 annual donors, as compared to the historical average of 800-1,000 for American orchestras of similar budget size.) The philanthropic climate has changed dramatically and irreversibly. Stated differently, metaphorically, there has been an arts "market correction" to better align our cultural identity with the new reality of our community.

Doom and gloom? On the contrary, says the glass-half-full executive! Our new reality requires a re-thinking of our organization, followed by new considerations by our patrons and fans. The Symphony, and all not-for-profits, must make a concerted effort to become relevant to a greater percentage of the people that make up our community. We must be impactful, and contribute to the vibrancy and healthiness to which our community aspires. If we can show progress toward these goals, more people and businesses will see value in supporting our efforts.

The DSO can promote itself only so much, with a small staff and board. We need to mobilize our greatest asset—the thousands of attendees and hundreds of contributors—to spread the word of what we’re doing, and what we hope to do in the future, so that more Delawareans learn about us. (Has anyone noticed that the heart of “Delawareans” is “aware?”) We understand that many patrons and donors currently give as much as they can afford. Of you, we ask that you be our ambassadors, sharing your passion about the Orchestra with friends, family, co-workers, and others. And for those who can increase their patronage and support, we ask you to consider just that. To be truly relevant to our community, the Delaware Symphony Orchestra should double its audience and donor base in the next five years. Ambitious? Absolutely. Necessary for long-term survival? Almost definitely. Possible? Only you can answer that question.

—Alan Jordan
FROM THE PODIUM

Harry Potter and I have two things in common: We both wave wands, and we both rely on our *patronus*. While Harry conjures his own mighty powers with his wand, I invite the powers of my colleagues with mine. And while Harry’s *patronus*—a stag—is his protection against evil, our *patronus* is you. *Patronus*, Latin for ‘protector’ comes from *pater*—father. The original notion of protection still hides within the modern meaning of patron as someone that supports (and therefore protects) a person or a cause—or the Delaware Symphony—from perils like financial uncertainties and changing tastes.

Support and protection for the DSO comes in two main categories: financial and physical. The financial piece—the contribution of money in order to preserve and advance a cause, is, in the case of a symphony, vital in its literal sense. We would not survive without contributions. Even if we sold out every ticket to every event, we would still need to raise more than sixty percent of our revenue from contributions. And that’s an industry standard. Our network of generous individuals, businesses, corporations, and government entities fills the gap between our earned revenue and our financial needs. Raising money is an enormous part of what we do at the DSO—and we do it in order to make sure we can provide you the opportunity for your physical support—coming to concerts.

Though your financial support makes what we do possible, it’s your willingness to be a physical part of our art which allows us to flourish. Your being in our audience is as necessary for a great performance as is any musician sitting on stage. A full house creates an electricity that fuels us and ignites the music—which then feeds you. A great performance is a symbiotic environment where we find that special balance of art-makers and art-takers. We love playing great music, but we love it more when we share it with you. The Delaware Symphony—in spite of the proscenium arch, the white tie and tails, the stage lighting—is interactive. An audience needs art made on stage. And we need you to hear it. When the stage lights dim, and a thousand hearts and minds become focused on Beethoven or Brahms, something magical happens, and we experience a sense of community and togetherness without words—bound by the art. That fragile bond, broken only by applause (or the rustling of Hall’s wrappers), celebrates the relationship between the composer, the performers and the listeners—all equal partners.

By supporting the Delaware Symphony, listening to us, and contributing to us, you are indeed protecting our great art and institution.

Thank you for being our *patronus*.

—David Amado

THE DSO WELCOMES JOSHUA KOVACH AS THE NEW MUSIC LIBRARIAN AND PERSONNEL MANAGER!

3. What attracted you to taking on your new position and role with the DSO?
I’ve always really enjoyed playing or doing outreach projects with the DSO (instrument demos, side-by-side). It’s a great organization that does a lot for the community. I couldn’t pass up a chance to be more involved.

4. Tell us a little bit about your family, especially the most recent addition.
I’m married to Naomi Gray, Associate Principal Cello in the DSO. We met in 2005 and married in 2012. We have a 13-month-old (Eve) and, as of October 15th, a second daughter Rayna!

5. Are you able to enjoy some down time? If so, what kinds of things do you enjoy?
We both have busy schedules, but yes, we do have down time. Naomi and I enjoy cooking together and traveling when possible. We’ll take short road trips and try to include U.S. historical sites.

1. So Josh, how long have you been a member of the DSO?
Although I’m not a member of the DSO, I’ve been playing as a substitute since 2000. I have played both clarinet and bass clarinet with the Orchestra.

2. As a professional musician, with what other groups or organizations do you perform?
I’m a regular member of the Pennsylvania Ballet Orchestra and the Reading Symphony. I am called to play as a substitute with many area ensembles, including the Harrisburg Symphony and Opera Philadelphia.

4. Tell us a little bit about your family, especially the most recent addition.
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WELCOME BACK, DAN!

Thank you to everyone for your many kindnesses during my recovery from hip surgery this summer. Your cards and emails were much appreciated, to say nothing of all the work that others took on for me! I’m back in the office, albeit moving slowly!

—Daniel Colburn, Marketing and Administrative Coordinator

DSO BEHIND THE SCENES

Do you have questions about the DSO and what goes on “behind the scenes?” Please let us know. We would like to share your questions along with the answers in future editions of *Clef Notes*. Please email your questions to dso@delawaresymphony.org. We look forward to hearing from you!

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The Delaware Symphony’s 2017-2018 fiscal year showcased an increased effort by new and loyal contributors who fiscally supported programming and educational outreach across the state. Contributions increased 21% over the prior year and provided for 70% of the total income needed to help the DSO obtain its first operating surplus in four years.

The DSO continued to manage administrative fixed costs, find efficiencies in programming and production fees, and still expand its performances to more audiences. Overall expenses decreased 5% from the prior year but still demonstrated a 20% growth over a three-year period.

Contributions and public support are an integral part of the success of the Delaware Symphony. During the most recent fiscal year, only 30% of the Symphony’s annual costs were covered by managed revenue sources. Grants and contributions from loyal supporters will continue to be the driver for a sustainable professional orchestra.

### UPCOMING CONCERTS:

#### CLASSICS SERIES
David Amado, conductor
Fridays at 7:30 p.m.
Copeland Hall, The Grand Opera House, Wilmington
Pre-concert talks from the stage by David Amado at 6:30 p.m.

**JANUARY 25, 2019**
Alpha and Omega
SIBELIUS: Night Ride and Sunrise, op. 55
STRAUSS: Four Last Songs
Mary Wilson, soprano
TCHAIKOVSKY: Symphony No. 1, “Winter Dreams”

**MARCH 22, 2019**
Dancing About Architecture
Celebrating Leon Fleisher at 90
MOZART: Piano Concerto 12 (K.414), A Major
Leon Fleisher, piano
BRUCKNER: Symphony No. 7 in E Major

PLUS! Sunday, March 24, 2019, 3:00 p.m.
Cape Henlopen High School Theatre, Lewes
David Amado talk at 2:00 p.m.

**MAY 17, 2019**
Roman Hollywood
RESPIGHI: Fountains of Rome
RÓZSA: Cello Concerto
Nick Canellakis, cello
RACHMANINOFF: Symphony No. 3, op.44, A minor

#### CHAMBER SERIES
Tuesday Evenings at 7:30 p.m.,
Gold Ballroom, Hotel du Pont, Wilmington

**TUESDAY, DECEMBER 11, 2018**
DSO Principals: Violin and Piano
BEETHOVEN: Sonata No. 8
BRITTEN: Suite Op. 6
FRANCK: Sonata

**TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 19, 2019**
Lift Off! An Evening with DSO
Percussion + Flute
Music by Peck, Dahl, Strang, Hollinden, Glentworth, Nelson, Benson, Shostakovich, Pawassar, and Harry Breuer

**TUESDAY, APRIL 16, 2019**
IN MEMORY OF DOROTHY CHAMBERS FLYNN
DSO Chamber Orchestra
David Amado, conductor
BARTOK: Divertimento
COPLAND: Quiet City
MOZART: Symphony No. 40 (K.550), G minor

Start a new holiday tradition!
Join us as we play some of the most beloved holiday music! With the Wilmington Children’s Chorus, and members of First State Ballet Theatre, you’ll surely be in the holiday spirit as we perform some of your favorites, including excerpts from Tchaikovsky’s Nutcracker, Ding! Dong! Merrily on High, Winter Wonderland, and more! Plus, come see instruments up close in the instrument petting zoo (led by faculty from the Music School of Delaware) after the concert!

Tickets are still available!
Adults: $14 Children: $9
Call the DSO Box Office: (302) 656-7442

The Family Concert Series is co-sponsored by PNC.