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Orchestra to raise money for FOP

By Peter Dobrin

Inquirer Music Critic

In place of its third free neighborhood concert of the outdoor season, the Philadelphia Orchestra will perform a fund-raiser to help replenish the Fraternal Order of Police Survivors' Fund.

The concert, on Sept. 20 at the Mann Center, is officially free, but through fund-raising and a suggested \$20-per-person donation, the orchestra hopes to raise \$500,000 for the fund.

"I think this is a significant way to show that it's not just about receiving - it's about giving, and doing so in a way that supports people who have made the ultimate sacrifice," said Joseph H. Jacovini, the Dilworth Paxson lawyer acting as the orchestra's board chairman during a period of transition.

Jacovini, who has spearheaded planning for the concert, said the orchestra is about a third of the way to its goal.

"Every dollar we raise goes into that fund, but not one expense will be paid with dollars we receive," he said.

Everyone involved with the concert is donating his or her time, Jacovini said, including musicians and staff from the orchestra and the Mann Center.

The money raised will be used to assist families of officers who have been killed on duty, said John McNesby, president of the Philadelphia Fraternal Order of Police lodge.

"It gets them through the time they're grieving," he said. "We never say no to a family member who has lost a loved one in the line of duty. We help them at holiday time, at Thanksgiving and Christmas, to planning a whole funeral."

McNesby said that a year and a half ago, the fund was operating with a deficit, but that with the help of the business community, "we're back in the black and slowly gaining ground on it. This will be a great, great help."

The concert echoes, but is not intended as a follow-up to, a performance last year at City Hall. The orchestra had long planned one of its free neighborhood concerts on the north side of City Hall, but about six hours before the concert, a police officer was killed, prompting the orchestra to consider canceling. The concert went ahead, after discussions, as a kind of civic solace, with Mayor Nutter giving a powerful speech before the music began.

"I think people realized, in a way that had not been realized, that in times of tragedy, the sounds of the orchestra can be a soothing influence," said Jacovini. "So I think that was in the background when we decided to [plan the September] concert."

Audiences' reactions to music are anything but universal, but the program, to be led by Rossen Milanov, aims to be at turns patriotic ("America, the Beautiful"); mournful (the "Nimrod" movement from Elgar's *Variations on an Original Theme, Op. 36, "Enigma"*); stirring (music from John Williams' score to *Superman*); and empowering (Copland's *Lincoln Portrait*, whose narrator has not been determined).

Chief sponsors of the concert are Dilworth Paxson L.L.P., The Inquirer and the Philadelphia Daily News, SEPTA, 6ABC, and the Raynier Foundation.

Jacovini said the program was crafted to signify "the solemnity and recognize the fallen officers, and also be upbeat in terms of the American spirit."


If You Go

The Philadelphia Orchestra's Fallen Heroes Tribute Concert, at 6 p.m. Sept. 20, at the Mann Center for the Performing Arts, has a suggested donation of \$20. A general-admission ticket voucher good for up to four people is required for entry. For vouchers and further information, visit www.philorch.org/fallenheroestribute or call 215-893-1988.

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