



W I L L A M E T T E V A L L E Y
S Y M P H O N Y
S E A N P A U L M I L L S , A R T I S T I C D I R E C T O R

PLAYERS HANDBOOK

Revised – January 2013

Willamette Valley Symphony
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WELCOME TO THE WILLAMETTE VALLEY SYMPHONY!

Founded in December 2007 as the **Willamette Valley Community Orchestra** and renamed in July 2010, the **Willamette Valley Symphony (WVS)** is a community-based, volunteer symphony orchestra. Our musicians share the joy of making music together and are dedicated to providing quality, affordable symphonic performances for all residents of the Willamette Valley.

The Willamette Valley Symphony's objectives are:

1. To encourage attendance by a diverse population from the Willamette Valley. It is our goal that these concerts will contribute to the cultural enrichment of our region and enhance the lives of our listeners.
2. To provide access to classical music to all residents, regardless of their economic situation. We demonstrate this commitment through our stated policy that "no one shall be denied access to our concerts due to an inability to pay."
3. To provide a joy-filled, rewarding orchestral experience for local musicians.
4. To provide and encourage youth and families in our community to experience the cultural arts. We demonstrate this commitment by offering free tickets to all youth, ages 18 and under.
5. To always remain a fully functioning, volunteer-based symphony orchestra made up of local musicians.
6. To encourage and support the activities of other performing arts ensembles and organizations in our region.

Season

The regular concert season of the Willamette Valley Symphony runs from September to June. The season currently includes a series of four concerts. Each concert is presented in both Albany and Corvallis.

Additional chamber orchestra, chamber music, or fundraising concerts may be added as dictated by the time and interest of the musicians.

Concert dates are set prior to the beginning of the season. A rehearsal calendar is sent to each member prior to the first rehearsal and is also available on the **WVS** website.

Membership

The Willamette Valley Symphony provides opportunities for musicians in our community to share in the joy of making music together. Musicians interested in joining the orchestra should contact the Artistic Director. If there are openings available for your instrument, a short informal audition will be required.

Anyone interested in joining us needs to meet the following three (3) criteria in addition to scheduling a brief (5-10 minute) audition:

- ability to play a 2+ octave scale (woodwinds/brass) or 3+ octave scale (strings),
- have studied your instrument privately and/or performed in a chamber orchestra or full symphony orchestra, *and*
- ability to perform a short solo composition with rhythmic accuracy, technical fluency, and musicality.

Auditions

Audition requirements vary by section but traditionally include: 1) three octave scale (strings) or two octave scale (winds & brass); 2) orchestral excerpts demonstrating tone, musicianship, and technical skill; 3) short solo of instrumentalist's choice; and 4) sight reading of a short passage with the section leader.

Principals and Section Seating

The principle players of each section will be appointed at the discretion of the Artistic Director. Seating placement within a section will be assigned by the Artistic Director in consultation with the section principle and/or concert master.

Principal chair positions will be responsible for general section management including, but not limited to, musical markings and direction, assigning of parts, and maintaining a positive environment.

Music

Music is made available to musicians well in advance of the start of rehearsals for each concert set. These copies may be marked in pencil as you find necessary. Music is to be returned immediately following each concert set. If music is lost, you will be responsible for covering the cost of replacing the lost part.

Rehearsal Location and Time

Rehearsals are on Sunday evenings from 6:00 - 8:30 p.m. on stage at Ashbrook Independent School unless a conflict requires relocation to another site. Any such relocation will be announced as early as possible.

Dress Rehearsals

All dress rehearsals are held on stage at Ashbrook Independent School the Friday evening prior to our weekend performances. Concert dress is **NOT** worn for dress rehearsals.

Rehearsal Expectations

It is expected that musicians will come to rehearsals having adequately prepared their parts at home. To maximize the effectiveness of rehearsal time, musicians are expected to keep talking to an absolute minimum during rehearsal. Practicing difficult passages while other sections are being rehearsed is both disrespectful and distracting.

Rehearsals begin promptly at 6:00 p.m. This means you should be in your seat, warmed up, and

ready to tune prior to that time. Typically, important announcements and orchestra business occur during the first five (5) minutes of rehearsal.

Attendance

Given the short amount of rehearsal time that we have together before each concert set, it is important that everyone attend all rehearsals. We do understand that life happens and illness and family emergencies may cause an occasional absence. This type of absence is understood and is considered an excused absence. Please phone the Artistic Director or the Orchestra Manager to let them know you will be absent.

In order to adequately prepare challenging repertoire, the commitment of all musicians to practice diligently outside of orchestra rehearsals and to attend rehearsals is expected.

Musicians who know in advance that they will have a scheduling conflict on a rehearsal day should let the Artistic Director know well before the start of each concert set. Depending upon the situation and the number of rehearsals to be missed, the Artistic Director may deem it necessary to find a substitute for the concert set.

Concerts

Concerts are scheduled on Saturdays at 7:00 p.m. and Sundays at 4:00 p.m. with a warm-up rehearsal beginning 90 minutes prior to each performance. The audience is admitted after our warm-up rehearsal for the pre-concert talk (beginning 30 minutes prior to each performance). The Box Office opens 1 hour prior to each performance and is staffed by volunteers.

Cases and non-essential items should be left in the Green Room. Come to performances emotionally & physically prepared. Make sure your instrument is in good working order. Bring extra reeds, strings, necessary oils, and other equipment . . . and all of your music.

Performance absences should be avoided **EXCEPT** in an emergency. If you know you will not be able to attend a performance, please communicate this to the Artistic Director AND Orchestra Manager as early as possible. If it is less than one (1) hour prior to a performance, call the **WVS** at 541.829.3932 **AND** the Orchestra Manager at 541.926.0882 or 541.974.0027.

Dress Code

The audience comes to *hear* the Symphony play and to *listen* to our music. With that goal in mind we should try to dress so that we *blend* together! Standard dress for all WVS performances is "*Concert Black*".

MEN:

- Black Tuxedo or Suit, Black bow tie, black socks, black shoes.

WOMEN:

- Full-length Black Dress, skirt, or slacks. Black hose or socks - the look should be black from waist to toes, no white toes or strip of glaring Oregon tan above the shoes! Black shoes, preferably closed toe. Black top that falls below waist and provides modest coverage in front, sleeves elbow-length or longer, preferably full length. Absolutely no sleeveless tops, knee-length or shorter skirts, or flip-flops. Jewelry should be minimal and not distracting to the

player or audience.

PLEASE, do not wear perfumes or scented deodorants!

Governance

A volunteer Player's Board of Directors oversees the administration of the orchestra. Functions of the board include setting policy, approving the operating budget, keeping watch over the finances of the organization, strategic planning for the future, and any other business that requires board involvement. Orchestra members are welcome to suggest agenda topics and to attend meetings of the board.

The staff and board of the Willamette Valley Symphony value ideas and suggestions coming from musicians. Please feel free to share your thoughts at any time.

Problem Resolution

Principal players are always available to help resolve problems within their section. If a situation arises where a player does not feel comfortable approaching their section leader, please feel free to contact one of the individuals listed below. All problems will be handled in a professional and confidential manner.

Contact Information

Artistic Director

Sean Paul Mills 541-829-3932 artisticdirector@willamettevalleysymphony.org

Executive Director

Jaclyn LaRue 541-688-9236 executivedirector@willamettevalleysymphony.org

Orchestra Manager & Librarian

Lisa Taylor 541.926.0882 or 541.974.0027 orchestramanager@willamettevalleysymphony.org

Board of Directors

Kerry Mammone, President

Sandy Byers, Secretary

Kim Collar, Treasurer

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