

Kronkosky Charitable Foundation
Roundtable Discussions

Topic: Music Discussions
Date: Friday, January 15, 1999
Prepared by: Florence Macdaniel

Participants

Invited Representatives

Mark Richter	General Director/Founder	San Antonio Pocket Opera
Genevieve Kerr	Director	Cactus Pear Music Festival
John Carroll	Executive Director	San Antonio Brass, Inc.
Wilford Stapp	President	San Antonio Opera Company
Jeff Swope	Musician	Winters Chamber Orchestra
Rhonda Boyles	President	Texas Bach Choir

Foundation Staff

Palmer Moe	Executive Director
Florence Macdaniel	Communications Manager

Overview

Cactus Pear Music Festival

- *Mission:* The mission is to bring more people into classical music programs and to try and break stereotypes by making classical music **fun**.
- *History:* Founded in 1996 by San Antonio Symphony Concertmaster Stephanie Sant Ambrogio, the Summer Chamber Music Festival consists of 12 concerts over a two-week period. In addition, there were three free student concerts in the past year.
- *Performance/Rehearsal Venues:* All performances and rehearsals take place at Laurel Heights United Methodist Church. Target audience population is 30 — 50 years and concert attendance ranges between 70-95% of the church's capacity (total seating capacity approximately 500).
- *Budget:* Annual budget is \$86,000 of which \$14,400 consists of in-kind donations. Major source of revenue is through individual contributions (\$20,000), ticket sales (\$12,000) and grants (\$25,000).
- Have a mailing list of approximately 3000, the majority of which reside in San Antonio. This list is shared by other arts organizations and is used primarily for the Fall and Spring brochure and the Festival promotion.
- Have a strong emphasis on the graphics of their publications — feel this has put them on the map. All graphic design services are donated.
- Would like to do a cultural exchange program in the future with Mexico entitled Bridge the Border.

San Antonio Brass, Inc.

- *Mission:* The mission of the organization is one of dedication to cultural enrichment to the community through musical performance. Artistic excellence in performance and the sharing of inspiration, music knowledge, and technical training to students of music, as well as musical and cultural diversity are primary goals. The three stated purposes of the organization are educational, cultural and charitable.
- *History:* The organization was formed in 1981 by three faculty members at San Antonio Community College who wanted to get together and play great brass music. In the early 80s there was no formal structure or budget. The group performed at various locations including the Scottish Rite Temple and churches. George Winters conducted their first concert. Obtained their 501(c)(3) status in the late 1980s so that they could perform contractual services for the Department of Arts and Cultural Affairs of the City of San Antonio.
- *Performance/Rehearsal Venues:* Currently, the group performs for weddings, recitals and church functions with all revenue going directly to the players. Have never charged admission for their concerts.
- *Budget:* Annual budgets have ranged from \$0 - \$70,000 (their most recent was \$8,000). The majority of their expenses are in-kind.
- Had an outreach program to the schools until recently when they were cut by the City of San Antonio. There is a feeling that losing that stamp of approval has cost them some potential grant support.

San Antonio Opera Company

- *Mission:* The organization has as its purposes the production of fully staged operas, performed by professional singers and musicians, and the preparation and presentation of educational and cultural activities to promote opera and all its enjoyment by all with neither status, gender, age, race, nor understanding as a limit.
- *History:* Began 11 years ago as Orchestra San Antonio which was formed to take over the San Antonio Symphony during a crisis period. Changed their charter in 1992 to San Antonio Opera Company. Started out performing small operas. Their first large-scale production was *Carmen* in 1997 at the Scottish Rite Temple and was very successful.
- *Performance/Rehearsal Venues:* Rehearses at UTSA and then on-site of upcoming productions. Have performed at the Scottish Rite Temple and McAllister Auditorium.
- *Budget:* Annual budget is \$135,000 - \$180,000 for two productions. Actual budget per production is approximately \$100,000 with the majority of the costs going towards the orchestra and singers.
- Have a Collegiate Opera Company. The goal is to build a younger audience, many of which have never seen an opera. They perform an hour-long program at various locations. The costs for this program are approximately \$20,000 annually.
- The audience for opera nation-wide is growing, making it the main performing arts field that is thriving. However, production costs are high with ticket sales only accounting for about 30% of expenses.
- Would like to build a \$20 million Opera House in San Antonio.

San Antonio Pocket Opera

- *Mission:* The mission of the organization is to re-educate the population about opera with the goal of using the highest quality of talent available in the community. Productions have utilized local young talents but the organization will be bringing in some guest artists for the larger productions.
- *History:* Founded in 1997 by local tenors Mark Richter and George Cortes.
- *Performance/Rehearsal Venues:* Have produced four full-staged operas at the San Pedro Playhouse, but will be performing at McAllister Auditorium for the 1999 Season due to larger scale productions, enhanced performance space, orchestra pit and greater seating capacity.
- *Budget:* Budgets have ranged from \$6,000 - \$19,000 per production, but are expected to increase significantly with the move to McAllister Auditorium. Most of the revenue is generated through ticket sales and memberships. In addition, the organization received its first grant this year.
- The operas are being performed in English.

Texas Bach Choir

- *Mission:* The emphasis of the organization is on early music (instrumental and choral) and their mission is to provide quality early music to South Texas through performances in schools and community locations.
- *History:* Currently in its 27th Season, the organization performs four to five classical concerts per year. All-volunteer organization with 30 — 35 performers from all over the area and from diverse occupational backgrounds. They have some performers from the military.
- *Performance/Rehearsal Venues:* Rehearses at Coker United Methodist Church and performs throughout San Antonio at local churches and other free performance spaces.
- *Budget:* Annual budget is approximately \$35,000 with the majority of the money going to performers and the educational program. The revenue comes primarily from ticket sales, members and other donations.
- Looking at performing early Mexican music in the future.

Winters Chamber Orchestra

- *Mission:* The primary goal of the organization is to establish a tradition of performing free concerts to area audiences of a repertoire spanning more than 300 years, from Bach to present day composers. They believe that this broad repertoire, often enhanced by works not usually performed, is very important to a city with high cultural aspirations.
- *History:* Founded in 1976 by George Archer Winters, the principal conductor of the 36-member orchestra. Ninety-five percent (95%) of the orchestra are members of the San Antonio Symphony. Performed 11 world premiers as well as two International Artist Exchange programs, and was sanctioned the Official Sesquicentennial Orchestra by the Texas Sesquicentennial Commission.
- *Performance/Rehearsal Venues:* All of the concerts (3 per year) are free to the public with rehearsals and performances at Trinity University's Ruth Taylor Theatre. Seating capacity of Ruth Taylor Theatre is 400 and all performances have been sold-out. Must come early to get a seat.

Winters Chamber Orchestra (continued)

- *Budget:* Annual budget is \$30,000 - \$50,000 with the majority of revenue coming from the City of San Antonio, friends of the organization and Mr. Winters.
- Would like to make recordings of their concerts in the future.

Topics of Concern

- Concern was expressed by several organizations on the lack of performing facilities that have suitable availability times. In many cases, these organizations need several weeks of rehearsal time as well as performance dates and the facilities are either not available for such blocks of time or are cost prohibitive. In addition, several organizations expressed difficulty finding performance venues in the summer season.
- Many of these organizations are run on a volunteer basis and it is very time consuming. Many organizations are run by the founding director and audiences have supported them because of the talent and energy of this individual.
- Major performing arts organizations need to be regional. They need to have a larger outreach program. It was mentioned that people will travel from outlying areas to see performances if they are not available in their communities.
- Organizations need to put more resources into marketing but it is difficult to find experienced marketing people who know the arts. In addition, the majority of revenues go to pay performers with little left over for marketing and publicity. Marketing appears to be the last thing an organization considers because you have to spend the dollars **first** before you see the revenue.
- Most organizations indicated that 5-10% of their audience are Hispanic and that location is a major factor in attracting Hispanic support. Opera tends to be more popular among Hispanics.
- Too much publicity recently has focused on the poor me syndrome (lack of funds) and when the arts have been in the news it has been for negative reasons.
- City support of the arts organizations is translated into state support and other local support. When the City stops supporting an organization then there seems to be a ripple effect whereby other funders either reduce the amount granted or eliminate their support. In many cases the City support is seen as a stamp of approval for some programs, especially in the schools.
- When a large arts organization is in trouble, some smaller organizations feel that financial support is more difficult to obtain because significant funds are being given to help the larger organization and less dollars are available for the smaller ones (not everyone agreed on this point).

Ideas for Positive Change

- Create a Centralized Calendar of Events for all performing arts organizations.
- Explore the possibility of shared marketing for all organizations. Each group would share in the costs and create a consortium of all disciplines.

- Publicize upcoming events in each other s programs.
- Share mailing lists.
- Explore recording possibilities for the organizations that are not cost prohibitive and could generate sufficient revenue to offset expenses.