

Rainier Symphony
Applicant Information – Music Director
Revised 11/14/14

What we would like you to know about Rainier Symphony

- The Symphony was founded in 1981 and has always been based on south King County communities. For many years it was based in Kent, and since the fall of 1995 has been based in Tukwila.
- In the first five seasons the Symphony had three Music Directors, and we have only had three more in the last 28. This longevity has been a key factor in the Symphony's continued growth to the point where we can play some of the most difficult orchestral literature at professional quality.
- What does being a "community" orchestra mean to us?
 - It's not simply about pay. Most people divide orchestras into professional, semi-professional, and community simply by how much the musicians are paid. That is a true from one perspective, however it isn't a fair gauge of the level of musicianship or commitment from unpaid "community" members.
 - For the first five seasons the Symphony charged member dues. What they found was a lack of commitment from some players, and it was difficult to attract the best players. It became a downward spiral with quality and morale decreasing. Starting with season 6, the decision was made to eliminate dues and focus on musical excellence.
 - What we've found over time is that if there is challenging and varied repertoire, rehearsals are musically enriching and well run, concerts are successful, the conductor knows his 'stuff' and works well with the orchestra, and overall the musicians are enjoying themselves, we don't have to pay to achieve excellence.
 - A very important part of being a "community" orchestra is that we rehearse weekly. Our musicians enjoy the fellowship of weekly rehearsals, and enjoyable rehearsals are just as important as successful concerts. Compressing the rehearsal schedule to shortly before the concerts is not something we will consider because it will change the character of the ensemble.
- Once made a member, musicians have tenure and can keep playing as long as their performance level remains the same. In the past we have had a few members voluntarily move to a less demanding role, and nearly always this has been amicable. If there are issues of attendance, behavior, or performance which are detrimental to the ensemble, we have a written policy in place to deal with it; this has only occasionally been necessary.
- By having members that don't have to pay dues, and don't have to worry about being kicked out on a whim, we have good loyalty and low turnover. The most common reason for leaving the orchestra is moving away.
- Many of our members have a 'day job' of some sort. Due to work and family commitments sometimes musicians miss rehearsals, although except for last minute issues or illnesses we are aware in advance. While we desire 100% attendance, our expectations are more realistic.
- We rehearse on stage at the Performing Arts Center located at Foster High School in Tukwila, which seats approximately 550.
- When we have collaborated with choirs, we have had concerts at Benaroya Hall in Seattle in the 2,479 seat Taper Auditorium. Alone we do not have the subscriber base to support such a large and expensive venue.
- Please see the "About RS" page on our website for a listing of every concert and the repertoire we've performed since 1981.
- Typically we have six rehearsals on consecutive Tuesdays, followed by a Friday night dress rehearsal, Saturday evening concert, and Sunday matinee concert. There usually isn't time on the calendar to add more rehearsals, and with some repertoire 6+dress is too many (boredom sets in).
- Our audience appreciates it when the conductor addresses the audience from the stage to talk about the music, the composers, or anything which provides interesting anecdotes or insight. Heavy academic information is not as appreciated as more human interest content.
- Our audience usually enjoys concertos due to the added human element. Unfortunately due to the old piano at Foster, we are unable to have piano concertos without the time and funds to rent a suitable instrument.
- The majority of our revenue is from tickets, donations, and grants. Primary sponsors are the City of Tukwila and 4Culture, with significant in-kind contributions from the Tukwila School District. The majority of expenses are for

salaries/personnel and taxes, facilities, music, and bare-bones administrative necessities (insurance, copies, website, email, etc). Most of our staff are volunteers.

- We do not have a full-time or professional staff, and sometimes tasks are split amongst several people. Most of the time things come together just fine, but there are occasional bumps in the road as all community groups experience. Ideally the Board and volunteers handle most of the administrative duties, and the Music Director focuses on artistic matters. Collaboration and idea sharing between the administrative and artistic sides of the organization are beneficial, however the Music Director shouldn't have to design tickets or stuff envelopes.
- Our Music Director doesn't just select the repertoire and conduct. We need him/her to be an artistic leader coming up with new ideas and creating collaborations with other arts groups. The occasional collaboration, which can be time consuming to establish, can be musically energizing to both groups as well as to the audience. We also need the MD to be a supporter in the community. As with many similar groups, we struggle to 'get the word out' and have audiences that reflect the truly professional-level quality of our music. In the past, the MD's ability to make contacts in the community, bring in Board members with specific skills, and overall help 'get the word out' has made a huge difference in audience size as well as our ability to have a smooth running business side, so we can focus our attention on the music.
- We are not looking for someone to drop in, conduct, and leave. We are looking for a long-term relationship with a Music Director who will enjoy working with adults who range from young to old, great amateur to seasoned professional, limited musical academic knowledge to people with Master's and doctoral studies. Someone who enjoys working with musicians every week in rehearsal as well as concerts. Someone who can be a good collaborator with other groups and build relationships. Someone who can dream big, and then recognize Mahler 8 is not feasible.

Application Information

1. Minimum qualifications to apply:
 - a. Master or Doctorate in conducting, preferably orchestral emphasis; or significant equivalent experience
2. The application process and timeline:
 - a. 11/15/14: Rainier Symphony begins accepting applications
 - b. 2/1/15: Application deadline**
 - c. November 2014 – April 2015: RS reviews application materials and selects semi-finalists for interviews, additional questions, reference conversations, etc
 - d. May 2015: RS selects the five finalists
 - e. June 2015: Finalists aligned to a 2015-16 concert; repertoire selected
3. From the pool of applicants RS will select five finalists. Each finalist will conduct all of the rehearsals and concerts for one of the five concert series in the 2015-16 season. We anticipate the concerts will be as follows; specific dates will be available by June 2015:
 - a. October series: Rehearse Sept-Oct; concerts in mid-Oct
 - b. December series: Rehearse Oct-Dec; concerts in early Dec
 - c. February series: Rehearse Jan-Feb; concerts in mid-Feb
 - d. April series: Rehearse Feb-Apr; concerts in early Apr
 - e. May series: Rehearse Apr-May; concerts typically the weekend after Mothers' Day
4. To apply, please create an application packet with the following items:
 - a. Resume / C.V. Include conducting training and conducting experience, specifying the type of ensemble if not self-evident from the title. Please differentiate between degrees awarded and those pursued.
 - b. A one to two paragraph statement as to why you are interested in this position with Rainier Symphony.
 - c. A list of repertoire conducted in performance. Also include a statement about your repertoire experience, your interests (and how that may be different from your experience to this point), and what you would like to do in the future.
 - d. If you don't live in the greater Seattle/Tacoma area, are you planning to relocate, or how would you be available week-in-week-out for rehearsals, concerts, and occasional community outreach? Regardless

of where you live, how would you be able to balance being the Music Director of Rainier Symphony with other demands on your time?

- e. In reading through the “What we would like you to know about Rainier Symphony” above, what would potentially concern you, or you’d want to consider changing, or you’d definitely want to change or address somehow, and why?
 - f. In reading through the “What we would like you to know,” what were you most pleased or intrigued to read, and why?
 - g. Links to conducting. Please provide 3 to 5 links with contrasting pieces. If possible, include one link to work with a soloist. For each link please provide the date, the ensemble, and the repertoire.
 - h. References, including contact information.
5. Email application packet to mdsearch@rainiersymphony.org

We will be reviewing applications as they arrive; early application is encouraged to help yours stand out from the crowd.

Questions? Please email mdsearch@rainiersymphony.org