

Minnesota Sinfonia's Farewell Performances

36 years of bringing music and Minnesotans together

BY MAE DESAIRE



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The Basilica of Saint Mary hosted the final public concert for the Minnesota Sinfonia on the afternoon of Sunday, October 20.

For more than thirty-five years the mission of the Minnesota Sinfonia has been to serve the musical and educational needs of Minnesotans with a special emphasis on serving families with young children, inner-city youth, seniors, and those with limited financial means. From its founding, the orchestra has performed more than 1,600 concerts for over 500,000 attendees, always in accessible venues and with no admission cost.

The Minnesota Sinfonia's Music in the Schools program has introduced thousands of elementary school students to the wonders of classical music. Every year, the orchestra

serves up to 9,500 K-12 students, introducing a new way for them to learn math, history, science, social studies, and reading in exciting new ways—through music.

The Sinfonia orchestra's professional freelance musicians come from all over the world. Most have graduate degrees from major universities or conservatories; many have prestigious private teaching studios; several have performed with major orchestras; and more than half have been with the Sinfonia for 10 to 20 years or more.

In addition, Minnesota Sinfonia concerts have featured award-winning national and international guest soloists.

Sinfonia Conductor and Artistic Director Jay Fishman says, "Playing at The Basilica has been one of my very greatest joys with Sinfonia. The staff has been so gracious and helpful throughout the years (43, when including our concerts with the old Minneapolis Chamber Symphony), that they have all become a very important part of my and the orchestra's extended family. In a very real sense, The Basilica has become our second home, and for that I am truly grateful!" ✝

Mae Desaire is the director of communications at The Basilica.