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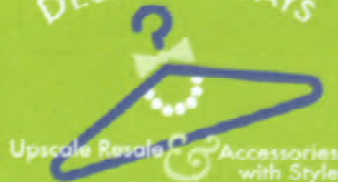
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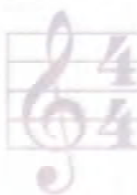


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PERSONALITY PROFILE



Music Man

LARRY TAMBURRI

BY DANIEL CASCIATO

During his 4½-year tenure as president and CEO of the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra (PSO), Larry Tamburri can recall several memorable moments. While he has seen many spectacular concerts, traveling to Rome in 2004 and hearing the sounds of his orchestra at the Vatican holds a special place among his memories. Not only did he meet Pope John Paul II, but this concert marked the first time that an American orchestra performed at the Vatican for the pope.

Being present at the 2006 announcement of the R.P. Simmons' \$29.5 million family gift to the PSO, the fifth largest in history presented to an American orchestra, was another highlight. Finally, sitting earlier this year in the Concertgebouw in Amsterdam, where the PSO performed as part of a six-country European tour, and hearing the chief critic in Amsterdam praise the performance, was another moment he cherishes.

"These have all been really exciting events for the PSO," says Tamburri, who then adds, "It's been a very fast four and a half years."

The Pittsburgh native has served in the PSO's top executive position since January 2004. Previously, he served in the same capacity for the New Jersey, Savannah, and New Hampshire symphony orchestras. Tamburri earned his Bachelor of Science degree in Music Education at Duquesne University and studied double bass under Robert Leininger, former Pittsburgh Symphony Assistant Principal Bass.

A native of Shaler, he currently lives in Squirrel Hill with his wife, Elizabeth Burnett, an accomplished pianist. They have two adult children, Jack and Emilia.

Tamburri recently took time to share some thoughts about the PSO, its upcoming season, new music director Manfred Honeck, and living in the East End.



**When and how did you become interested in music?** Music has always been a part of my life. My father, Dave Tamburri, was a jazz pianist. So my first real interest was in jazz. As I developed as a musician, I maintained my deep interest in jazz but I also expanded into classical music. Now music is part of my own family. My wife teaches piano in Squirrel Hill and our children have been very involved in music. My daughter played the violin and saxophone and is in graduate school studying music now. My son played the cello and he works in a theater company in Chicago.

**At what point in your life did you know you wanted a career associated with music?** I was actually interested in the sciences, literature, and music. It took me a few years to decide what I wanted to do. I started to focus on music during my last couple years of school and then went to graduate school. After finishing my Master's in Music History at Arizona State University, I decided that I wanted to get involved in orchestra management and earned my MBA at Arizona State University as well.

**You grew up in Shaler and graduated from Duquesne University. What was it like coming back to Pittsburgh in 2004 to become president and CEO of the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra?** Pittsburgh had changed a lot since the mid-seventies. I was coming back to a place that was in many ways different than when I left. The Pittsburgh Symphony is one of the gems of the city, and to be able to return and be president of the PSO was a great honor for me.

**The PSO has seen a four-year increase in subscription ticket sales—leading to a 14-year high. To what do you attribute this increase? And what are you doing to try to keep the momentum going?** Something that we believe in strongly is the development of deep relationships with the people who attend concerts. The strongest relationships usually tend to be with

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subscribers because they are your core audience who will come to your concert on a regular basis. We worked hard at developing our core audience and expanding it. We feel that's important for the future stability of the organization.

**Here in the U.S., we hear a lot about the challenge of attracting young adults to classical concerts. Is this an issue in Pittsburgh?** There's some misinformation about who actually goes to concerts. Many young people go to concerts. Generally, in people's lifetimes, they tend to go more regularly when they are empty nesters. When people have more leisure time, that's when they tend to go to events on a regular basis. However, that doesn't mean that we don't have to continue to build audiences. We want to continue to develop the interest of younger audiences so they stay with arts organizations throughout their lifetime.

**What are some of the challenges that lie ahead for orchestral organizations like the PSO and what can the community do to help?** One of the big challenges, and it's an ever present challenge, is funding arts organizations. Continuing to raise money and sell tickets are really crucial so we can maintain this orchestra as a healthy financially stable institution. Consistently building new audiences is also important. One of our goals is to be the orchestra for everybody in our area. That means that not only do we want people to come to Heinz Hall, but it's also important for the orchestra to go out to communities. We have many programs that do just that.

**What can we expect from Manfred Honeck when he takes over as music director of the PSO in the fall?** The orchestra was immediately attracted to Manfred when he guest conducted the orchestra about two years ago. One reason is that this orchestra's tradition is very much the tradition of a central European orchestra because of the conductors who have built this orchestra over the years, starting with Otto Klemperer, Fritz Reiner and William Steinberg. There was an immediate affinity between the orchestra and Manfred, because as a conductor from Austria, the PSO is steeped in that tradition. We're going to see a great emotional and artistic connection between Manfred and the orchestra. The quality of the orchestra playing will be at an extremely high level. If you look at our past music directors, it's been one of the strongest lineages of conductors in American orchestra history. We

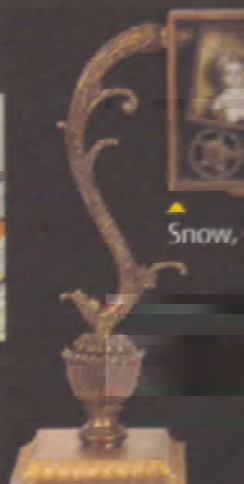
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