

**Vision Statement about the Organizational Culture**  
**Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra in 2010**  
**“2010 Vision”**

This document describes a vision of how the SPCO would operate in 2010. It is intended as a stimulus for thinking and discussion. It represents agreement amongst the musicians, staff, and board representatives in the Contract Renewal Group about the conceptual framework and mutual covenants that should undergird the SPCO’s daily life in 2010. It defines core topic areas and spells out the beliefs and operating principles that should inspire and govern how the SPCO would operate as an organization.

**Core topics areas describing the 2010 Vision**

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The 2010 Vision and the SPCO Organization**

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## **I. Definitions and Terminology**

- SPCO Musician: a contract member of the SPCO
- SPCO or The SPCO: all SPCO Musicians, taken as a unit
- Full orchestra: ensemble using roughly all SPCO Musicians
- Small Ensembles: subsets of the SPCO, usually more than 10 Musicians, sometimes conducted, others not
- Chamber Music: groups of 2 to 10 players, almost invariably uncondacted
- The SPCO Organization or the Organization: the board, staff and musicians, taken as a whole
- SPCO Leadership: the group vested with authority for high-level decision-making, usually comprising some combination of board, musicians and staff and of variable makeup, depending on the nature of the decision
- Artistic Leadership: the individual or individuals vested with responsibility, accountability and authority for a wide range of musical decisions, ranging from programming decisions to the gamut of personnel decisions, including hiring, granting of tenure and dismissal of musicians
- Collaborate: listen, input, to work with one another cooperatively
- Engage: to occupy the attention or efforts of
- Accountable: obligated to accept responsibility
- Responsible: expected or obligated to account for something
- Responsive: answering
- Covenant: a binding and solemn agreement a specified thing or things
- Purpose: the reason for which something exists or is done
- Belief: an acceptance of something as true
- Principle: the method of a thing's operation. Used here to define how a belief could be made operational.

## **II. The Foundation and Superstructure: The 2010 Vision and the SPCO Organization**

### **II.A The Purpose of the 2010 Vision**

To stimulate outstanding artistic achievement, elicit the best from everyone in the SPCO Organization and serve to attract extraordinary individuals to it.

### **II.B Core Beliefs That Would Form the Foundation of the Covenants Among Musicians, Staff and Board**

- Every individual in the Organization must conduct him/herself in ways that enhance the achievement of the other members of the Organization and the Organization as a whole.
- We will have the greatest chance of achieving our goals if everyone participates creatively in the Organization.
- The 2010 Vision should serve as an inspiration and establish our aspirations.

- We will enhance our ability to work together effectively by developing the language, thinking, and actions of professional partnership.
- We will work more effectively together if the 2010 Vision provides clarity about our respective responsibilities and mutual expectations.
- The 2010 Vision serves as a set of covenants among Musicians, Board and Staff, promises rooted in our shared vision of a successful future for the SPCO Organization, and promises which define our roles, responsibilities and accountabilities to each other.

## **II.C Principles Embedded in the 2010 Vision**

- Reciprocity: a mutual exchange
- Mutuality – three-party engagement: exchanged in equal measure
- Aspiration and inspiration
- Professional focus: to view the role of a musician within a professional context, as opposed to a labor context
- Clarity of roles, responsibilities and accountabilities

## **II.D The Purpose of the SPCO Organization (Adapted from the Strategic Plan):**

**To** provide innovative discovery and a distinctive experience  
**In a way that** exceeds all expectations for performance brilliance and vigorously advocates the chamber orchestra and chamber music repertoire  
**So that** people's spirits are touched.

### **II.D.1 The Purpose of All Constituents:**

**To** bring outstanding personal capability and performance to the SPCO and be stewards of the Organization  
**In a way that** increases the SPCO Organization's potential, produces outstanding results and reflects the Organization's stated values (see strategic plan) and beliefs.  
**So that** the SPCO Organization achieves its established purpose and goals

### **II.D.2 The Purpose of the Board:**

**To** exercise and maintain legal and fiduciary responsibility for the SPCO Organization  
**In a way that** balances expectations and standards with the freedom to innovate and explore  
**So that** the community benefits from the SPCO Organization's success in delivering its mission

### **II.D.3 The Purpose of the Staff:**

**To** create the conditions for exceptional organizational performance  
**In a way that** coalesces internal forces (board, staff, musicians) and external forces (community, audience, donors, media, governments) and reinforces them

**So that** the entire organization can perform at an optimum level.

### **II.D.4 The Purpose of an SPCO Musician:**

**To** create art through the medium of music

**In a way that is** memorable, challenging, inspiring, and invigorating for all engaged

**So that** people's spirits are touched.

## **III. Job Description/Role of an SPCO Musician in 2010**

### **III.A Beliefs**

Each SPCO musician's primary responsibility is to perform to the highest standard in concert and media performances in repertoire for chamber orchestra, small ensembles and chamber ensembles.

- Each SPCO musician also has affiliated responsibilities to the SPCO organization, the precise nature of which will vary from musician to musician, but which form part of the Organization's overall expectations of each Musician.
- All elements of the SPCO Musician's job description should contribute to the achievement of the Organization's mission and the enhancement of each musician's professional development and work satisfaction.
- The overall quality of the SPCO as a performing ensemble and as an organization will be improved by encouraging the professional development of each SPCO musician.
- Insuring that all SPCO musicians can perform as soloists, in chamber music and in small ensembles regularly and frequently will be beneficial both to individual SPCO Musicians and the entire SPCO Organization.
- The more that SPCO Musicians are responsible for and accountable for maintaining and improving the quality their own individual playing and that of the SPCO as an ensemble, the more exciting, challenging, and stimulating a career as a member of the SPCO will be.

### **III.B To Whom and to What an SPCO Musician Should Be Responsive**

- The highest standards of artistic excellence
- His/her own strengths and weaknesses
- The demands of the Organization's values and goals
- The established direction and policies of the organization

- The needs and requirements of other members of the SPCO, staff and board
- The changing dynamics of the marketplace, audience, and community

### **III.C Overall Responsibilities of an SPCO Musician**

- To strive to deliver outstanding professional and musical performance in the full orchestra, small ensembles and chamber music, (hereinafter referred to as “core activities”)
- To serve the SPCO Organization’s short and long-term goals in all activities
- To participate positively in diverse non- performance activities, (hereinafter referred to as affiliated activities) , the exact nature of which will vary from musician to musician
- Seeking ongoing personal professional development

### **III.D Specific Responsibilities of an SPCO Musician**

#### **III.D.1 Core Responsibilities:**

Each SPCO musician must bring superior musical skill, creativity, professionalism and excellence to his/her core responsibilities. The core is comprised of both artistic and organizational responsibilities. These are:

#### **Core Artistic Responsibilities**

To play/perform in:

- Orchestra rehearsals and concerts
- Small ensemble rehearsals and concerts
- Chamber music rehearsals and concerts
- Solo and recital rehearsals and concerts
- Electronic media activities

#### **Core Organizational Responsibilities**

- To create his/her annual professional and artistic growth and development plan
- To receive and provide feedback at least annually about his/her performance and contribution to the SPCO organization
- To participate regularly in discussions regarding the overall musical performance of the SPCO as an orchestra
- To participate regularly in the Organization’s information and planning sessions

### **III.D.2 Affiliated Responsibilities:**

Each SPCO musician would be expected to participate in some affiliated activities, with the explicit understanding that no SPCO musician would be required to participate in any particular activity. Examples of affiliated activities could include but would not be limited to:

- Artistic leadership activities and/or committee(s)
- Concert programming discussions and planning
- Tour discussions and planning
- Rehearsal and concert scheduling
- Chamber music, small ensemble and orchestra casting assignments
- Development and/or implementation of community engagement programs and projects
- Development and/or implementation of education programs and projects
- SPCO committees and task forces
- Development, marketing and public relations programs and/or activities
- Independent and/or special artistic projects
- Contract renewal processes
- Recruitment, audition, and retention committees
- Critical review, tenure review and dismissal committee(s)
- Other activities as mutually agreed and which serve the established mission and vision of the SPCO.

### **III.E Accountabilities of an SPCO Musician**

SPCO musicians are accountable to:

- the other Musicians of the SPCO
- the Artistic Leadership of the SPCO

### **III.F Organizing the Work**

#### **III.F.1 Beliefs Regarding Organizing the Work**

- Maximizing efficiency within a specific confined and/or defined period of time is desirable
- Working within structured, regular blocks of time that thoughtfully serve the organization's needs and the artistic and personal needs of SPCO Musicians will benefit the whole organization
- In order to balance their personal and outside professional demands with those of the SPCO, SPCO musicians must be guaranteed certain absolute protections in the organization of their workdays.
- Workdays should be organized in a manner that takes into account the complexity of all of the job responsibilities of an SPCO Musician, and

which maximizes the entire orchestra's ability to work together in groups, large and small, both on and offstage.

### **III.F.2 Absolute Protections**

- A guaranteed number of days off each week
- Time for practice and preparation
- Reliable/predictable work hours
- Consistent work hours or consistent hours of not working
- Pre-concert rest time
- Maximum amount of playing time in a day, limited to two organized, compulsory ensemble playing sessions a day.
- Maximum number of hours of playing a day, with some exceptions
- Clear limitations on the ability to schedule excess or additional rehearsals
- Activities would be scheduled according to agreements outlined in the CBA.

## **IV. Artistic Quality and Standards of Performance**

### **IV.A Artistic Leadership**

#### **IV.A.1 Description**

The artistic leadership of the SPCO organization has traditionally been viewed as the sole purview of the music director. The 2010 Vision is built on the premise that for the SPCO and its specialized mission and dynamics, musicians and staff must play the predominant role in artistic leadership and decision-making. This would require fundamental and significant shifts in SPCO thinking about roles, responsibilities and accountabilities regarding artistic leadership. We believe that this shift must take place regardless of whether the SPCO organization decides that its artistic leadership should take the form of a traditional music director or some other formulation yet to be determined. Regardless of the form SPCO artistic leadership ultimately takes, there is recognition that some entity – one person or a group of people, and referred to throughout this document as Artistic Leadership – must ultimately assume responsibility for all artistic leadership decisions, and be accountable to the SPCO Leadership for them

#### **IV.A.2 Beliefs**

- The organization has many trained musical professionals who can contribute to and enhance the artistic leadership of the organization
- If musicians, staff and the Artistic Leadership are each meaningfully involved in the hiring, development, and possible termination of

musicians, there is greater potential to improve the overall quality of the ensemble.

- The Artistic Leadership is accountable to the SPCO Leadership for the continual artistic growth and development of the SPCO.
- By regularly listening to the SPCO in rehearsals and concerts, and by regularly listening to and/or watching audio and/or video recordings of the SPCO, SPCO Musicians can make valuable contributions to the quality of the SPCO.
- We can enhance the quality of the SPCO if we have meaningful discussions about the quality of our performances
- Musical and artistic leadership from within the orchestra itself is critical to the SPCO's relationship with conductors and to our overall level of artistic excellence.

#### **IV.A.3 Principles**

- We would create audition, hiring and professional development practices that hold the musicians primarily accountable for the long-term artistic excellence of the SPCO
- We would create practices that make musicians, staff, and artistic leadership accountable to the SPCO Leadership for the smooth implementation of all systems for insuring artistic quality and standards of performance.
- We would have an established system for providing and receiving feedback to/from conductors regarding SPCO rehearsals and performances.
- We would have an established system for ongoing internal and external assessment of the SPCO's artistic quality.

### **IV.B Hiring New SPCO Musicians**

#### **IV.B.1 Beliefs**

- The selection of a new SPCO Musician is an artistic, organizational, and economic decision of utmost importance
- The importance of this decision requires a robust process, carefully conceived and well executed.
- Hiring decisions will be most effective and accepted when all key constituencies – Artistic Leadership, SPCO Musicians and key staff have meaningful and well-defined roles in the selection process.
- Hiring the most outstanding musicians can only take place when the process is not time-constrained.
- The process should have multiple elements that provide candidates with the opportunity to demonstrate the breadth of skills required for outstanding performance of the SPCO job: core artistic responsibilities as well as organizational and affiliated responsibilities. In exploring a

candidate's skills beyond core musical responsibilities, the hiring process must always reinforce the primacy and centrality of artistic and instrumental excellence.

- We must always hire the best possible people; the hiring process should facilitate the selection of the best.

#### **IV.B.2 Principles**

- The process would insure that no individuals are hired who should not be
- The process would minimize the early elimination of highly qualified candidates.
- The audition process would use repertoire that best allows an individual candidate to demonstrate his/her capabilities, and which would allow candidates to demonstrate the skills most required as members of the SPCO.
- Demonstrated artistic and instrumental skill would be the sole factor for a candidate to become a finalist for an SPCO position. Final selection would be based on gaining a more complete picture of artistic capability, based on information gained from interviews and references, observation of social and musical interactive skills, and assessment of the candidate's ability to play effectively in the orchestra.

### **IV.C Professional and Artistic Development Program for SPCO Musicians**

#### **IV.C.1 Description and Rationale**

Musicians are highly trained professionals who must continue to refine and develop their musical skills over the course of their careers. Heretofore, SPCO musicians and the SPCO organization have assumed that this further professional development should occur through the sole efforts of the musician and without support and guidance from the organization. From now on, the SPCO Organization will be dedicated to helping each musician grow and develop all areas of responsibility. SPCO musicians bring varying levels of skill, interest and experience to all sets of responsibilities, but particularly varying levels to organizational and affiliated responsibilities. For this reason, the SPCO organization will be particularly committed to supporting growth and development in these areas, taking into account a variety of factors, such as organizational needs and individual interest and capability. Artistic development should and would remain at the core of the Professional and Artistic Growth and Development Program

#### **IV.C.2 Beliefs**

Beliefs that guide our philosophy about Professional and Artistic Development:

- Professional and Artistic Growth and Development are essential components of creation of a vibrant environment in which SPCO musicians can thrive.
- A formal process devoted to improving the professional and artistic skills of all SPCO musicians will benefit the entire SPCO organization
- Developing such a program demands the positive energy of SPCO Musicians, Staff and Board
- The SPCO Organization will need to commit significant financial resources to this program for it to be successful.
- Receiving structured and constructive feedback in a non-threatening manner is an essential part of growth.
- The Professional and Artistic Development Program should be a completely separate process from the Intervention Process (see IV.D).
- If the SPCO is known in the musical world for providing exceptional growth opportunities for musicians, we will attract more exceptional musicians and have a greater chance of retaining them over time.

#### **IV.C.3 Principles**

Principles that would guide the Professional and Artistic Development Program:

- Every SPCO musician would participate in a process to determine how they best can enhance their skills.
- Every SPCO musician would create his/her annual Professional and Artistic Development Plan
- Musicians would be accountable to each other and the SPCO Artistic Leadership for their own continuous professional and artistic growth and development and for that of their fellow musicians.
- Staff would be accountable to the SPCO musicians and the SPCO organization for providing the environment, structure, input, guidance and administrative support for the Professional and Artistic Development Program.
- The Board would be accountable to SPCO musicians and staff for providing ongoing advice about and support for the professional and artistic growth and development program.
- Musicians would be accountable to work actively on their Professional and Artistic Development Plans on their own and with the resources (financial and other) provided by the organization.

- Musicians would have opportunities to extend and expand their professional and artistic growth through:
  - Individual coaching
  - Individual artistic projects
  - Playing frequently as a soloist, recitalist and chamber musician
  - Working with other musicians inside and outside the SPCO
  - Opportunities for growth and learning for those SPCO musicians who desire them in affiliated areas of responsibility
  - The SPCO Organization would provide opportunities for all SPCO Musicians (as well as staff and board) to develop skills in the areas of organizational responsibility.

#### **IV.D Intervention Process**

##### **IV.D.1 Description**

This process addresses those situations when an individual's artistic performance jeopardizes the integrity of the whole or when an individual engages in unethical or disruptive behavior. The intention of this process is to assist the individual in reestablishing the high standards of the SPCO. If unsuccessful, and after adherence to the process, initiation of the dismissal process may be recommended.

##### **IV.D.2 Beliefs**

Beliefs that guide our philosophy about the Intervention Process:

- The SPCO organization and SPCO Musicians have the best chance of maintaining good organizational spirit and artistic excellence when deficiencies in behavior and performance are quickly and fairly addressed.
- Any action (including non-renewal) involving an individual's deficiencies should be carried out with dignity and respect.
- There should be an established process **prior to dismissal** which provides an individual who is struggling with the opportunity to improve.
- SPCO Musicians, assisted by staff, should be primarily accountable to the Artistic Leadership for effectively carrying out the Intervention Process.

##### **IV.D.3 Principles**

Principles that would guide the Intervention Process:

- Musicians would be primarily accountable to the Artistic Leadership and/or SPCO Leadership to set the highest standards for personal, professional and artistic behavior and performance.

- Musicians would carry out the Intervention Process, with assistance from staff.
- Musicians would be accountable to the Artistic Leadership for providing the leadership to take action on artistic matters when necessary.
- An individual musician in the Intervention Process would work with the appropriate group (yet to be designed) to design a self-improvement plan with clear expectations and timelines. Success in completing the plan would remove the SPCO Musician in question from the Intervention Process; failure to complete the plan successfully would trigger the non-renewal process.
- The staff would be accountable to SPCO Musicians, Artistic Leadership and the SPCO Organization for helping to organize and manage the process and for providing input according to established protocols.
- The Board would be accountable for supporting a system that allows the Intervention Process to be initiated and carried out with respect and dignity; to provide a safety net for individuals who are not renewed; and to provide advice, oversight, and support as needed.

## **V. Small Ensembles and Chamber Music**

### **V.A Description**

There is agreement that small ensembles and chamber music should become a much more integrated part of the SPCO's artistic programming. This will both serve the goal of achieving a distinctive artistic profile and that of creating a vibrant atmosphere for musical stimulation and growth. Truly integrating small ensembles and chamber music into the regular program and performance schedule of the SPCO will require changes in how these activities are organized. While some community-oriented activities may occasionally require relaxation of SPCO standards for performance environments, this section focuses on developing a strong program of SPCO performances of small ensembles and chamber music in concert settings.

### **V.B Beliefs**

- Playing chamber music frequently and regularly will provide SPCO musicians with opportunities to deepen and broaden the quality of their playing both individually and as members of the SPCO.
- Creating meaningful collaborative performance opportunities and experiences with guest artists will engender professional and artistic growth.
- Chamber music should be an integral part of the life of an SPCO musician and should augment work with the full chamber orchestra.

- Preparing and performing chamber music on a regular basis will improve the overall artistic quality of the SPCO both individually and collectively, by honing skills and providing more intimate situations for feedback.
- A regular diet of small ensemble and chamber music will increase the attractiveness of the SPCO job to players that we hope to attract.
- Performing chamber music in appropriate concert settings will increase job satisfaction for many SPCO Musicians.

### **V.C Principles to Guide the Organization of Chamber Music**

- Musicians, working with management, would form chamber ensembles on a non-permanent basis.
- Opportunities for chamber music performance would be created for every musician annually.
- Over time, every SPCO Musician would have the opportunity to play chamber music with as many members of the SPCO as possible.
- Chamber ensembles involving every SPCO musician (within the limits of practicability) would be integrated into each season's performance schedule.
- Meaningful chamber music rehearsal time would be provided as part of the SPCO master schedule, although at times musicians might decide to work together on their own time.

## **VI. Musician Involvement in Programming/Scheduling/Making Assignments**

### **VI.A Description**

Programming of the SPCO season and the obligations that it implies is an essential aspect of SPCO operations. How the programming process takes place is important to the energy and passion that all constituencies bring to the execution and performance of the season itself. The programming process has at least two fundamental aspects: 1) creation of the content of the season and 2) development of passion for the season. Over time both can be continually improved and refined, because the process is basically repeated yearly.

Understanding of the dynamics and mechanics of this process by all constituencies is important because of the 18 to 36-month lead-times required for key decisions, and complexity of factors leading to the development of a season.

### **VI.B Beliefs**

- Increasing the organization-wide understanding of programming opportunities and approaches will result in more buy-in from members of all constituencies.
- If musicians are meaningfully involved in season planning, there is a greater chance that the end result will produce the highest musical standards and financial viability.
- Transparency of the season planning process will increase overall belief in the choices ultimately made.

- Viewing season programming as a process that requires the input and involvement at a high level of the SPCO musicians who will perform the season has a great potential to lift the musicians' spirit.
- There is a difference between valuable input/information sharing and making decisions by committee

### **VI.C Principles**

- Concept Development: Representatives of all constituencies would be involved in the early phases of programming for input, reflection, and concept development
- Ongoing communication: Those responsible for programming would provide updates to all constituencies for reactions and suggestions, to gain their buy-in, engagement and passion for the programs as they develop.
- SPCO Musicians and other constituent representatives who would provide input about season programming would need to be positive, proactive and responsive to critical timelines and marketplace realities.
- Those responsible for season programming would develop the programming details of a season taking constituent input into consideration, but would have the freedom and responsibility to make programming decisions based on the realities of the marketplace, timeline and financial imperatives.

## **VII. Governance**

### **VII.A Description**

Governance is the process of setting overall organizational direction, making policy, and developing strategy. Governance includes fiduciary responsibility for the financial integrity of organization, and hiring, evaluation and dismissal of senior staff, in particular the SPCO President. Traditionally, governance has been viewed as "board" decision making and membership on the board has been a requirement for involvement in governance. But this is a narrow and exclusive view of governance, for each constituency group has a governance process of its own. Furthermore, as the SPCO contemplates a more cross-constituent view of decision making in many areas, the overall governance process will need to evolve.

### **VII.B Beliefs**

- While the board retains legal and fiduciary responsibility for the SPCO organization, board, staff and musicians should engage collaboratively in the artistic and financial direction of the organization.
- In governance activities and practices, it is essential to preserve the integrity of all entities, i.e. acknowledgement of their respective core purposes (see Section II.D.2-3).
- The board has the veto power over organizational decisions because of its legal and fiduciary responsibility.

- Governance practices which promote collaboration and engagement will benefit the entire SPCO organization.
- Collaboratively developed strategies will deepen broad commitment to them and to success in carrying them out.
- The governance of the SPCO must be transparent.

### **VII.C Principles**

- Develop practices that promote true multi-constituent engagement.
- Continue musician membership on the board and the Executive Committee.
- Deepen musician involvement in governance process by active encouragement of regular and broad musician participation in board/organization task force work.