

*Harmony*TM

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Second Anniversary



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Second Anniversary

This fifth issue of *Harmony* marks the second anniversary of the operation of the Symphony Orchestra Institute.

The Institute was established in 1995 as an independent foundation devoted to helping participants better understand and address the complex issues and dynamics within symphony orchestra organizations. As of this publication, and publication of the Institute's first in a series of research studies (see p. 53), some 28 essays and reports have been published on a variety of symphony organization issues.

In the first edition of *Harmony*, the Institute published "Precepts and Direction," a statement of its beliefs, mission, and plans. As enunciated there, the Institute's primary goal was to foster

- ◆ greater organizational effectiveness in symphony orchestra organizations, marked by
- ◆ an enthusiastic constituency satisfied with organizational performance on an informed and sustained basis, and
- ◆ highly engaged organizational participants challenged both professionally and personally, leading to
- ◆ broader, deeper, and growing community value.

This continues to be the central mission of the Institute.

Two years of wide field contact and discussion have reinforced many of the Institute's basic tenets as delineated in "Precepts and Direction."

- ◆ There are generic organizational patterns within orchestral institutions which impede effectiveness, and which need greater recognition and evaluation.
- ◆ Significant change within organizations, however, will only result from a customized, institution-by-institution effort, with all components of an institution's leadership working as a team and addressing issues on a systemwide basis with will and energy.
- ◆ Comprehensive, concerted, and task-based involvement of all participants in the affairs and decision making of the institution contributes substantially to broadened organizational trust, more authentic interpersonal relationships, and the avoidance of stereotyping.

- ◆ Wide information sharing has many positive effects and is to be encouraged.
- ◆ Continuous concern with “organizational process”—and how such process can be improved—is a positive condition within any symphony organization seeking to be more effective. Such awareness is fostered by bold and secure leaders moving forward together with conviction and trust.

When founded, the Institute set out to pursue four operational programs: research, publications, forums, and education. Good initial progress has been made on the first two programs. We are actively evaluating an initial forum. The development of an educational program remains a more distant goal. Meanwhile, a new initiative has been identified: working with selected institutions on organizational study and change programs. Through these efforts, we intend to augment the fund of knowledge about the dynamics and functioning of symphony organizations, and to help some institutions advance along a path of concerted, self-directed change.

In the concluding paragraphs of “Precepts and Direction,” we invited critique of the Institute—its mission, concepts, central tenets, and programs. That invitation remains open. The “Precepts and Direction” statement can be accessed at the Institute’s Web site (see inside back cover). Please let us have your critique.