



## HARK! A New Harp is Needed

**T**he Spokane Symphony is in need a new concert harp. The Symphony's current harp is badly cracked, has unreliable intonation and is incapable of producing volume sufficient for use in a professional orchestra. Harps have a limited professional lifespan due to the massive pressure on the wood sounding board and frame (over 3,000 lbs. of force). Over time this pressure warps the harp, causing loss of stability, inaccurate intonation and poor sound quality. The Salvi harp currently owned by the Symphony was built in the early 1970s, and has been moved frequently and used rigorously. There are now nine major cracks in the sounding board, the instrument is breaking expensive strings at an alarming rate and the instrument has poor intonation and sound.

Like the tympani or piano, professional orchestras generally own and care for their own harps. Unfortunately, the Spokane Sym-

phony's harp is no longer of professional quality and is increasingly unstable. At this point in its life, it can be compared to an old, high mileage car, which is expensive to maintain yet offers rapidly diminishing performance and reliability. Over the course of the past several years Maestro Preu has consistently sought more harp sound in the orchestra; however, the current instrument cannot provide the sound quantity and quality that is needed. A new harp could elevate the orchestral sound to a new level with the unique beauty that only the harp can provide.

"The current instrument is failing fast," says Earecka Tregenza, Spokane Symphony's principal harpist, who was hired by the orchestra in 2008. "It is frustrating to be unable to provide the sound that I want to contribute to the Symphony due to an insufficient instrument. The gift of a new harp would make a lasting and indelible mark on the Symphony. The harp is a beautiful and glamorous instrument whose sparkling sound is essential to the orchestra's timbre."

Purchasing a harp requires a hearty financial investment, but would you expect anything less for an instrument often depicted being played by angels? That melodic heavenly sound comes at a high price, making it an expensive endeavor. The Symphony has narrowed their list to two viable options: The Style 30 Lyon and Healy Harp, which runs \$25,000, and the Salzedo Lyon and Healy Harp, which is \$37,000.

Decisions, decisions! Luckily, the weight of the decision is not up to those of us who slip into the upholstered seats to listen to the Symphony, but there is an opportunity to donate to support whichever harp they choose. For any people interested in donating, contact Jennifer Hicks at the Spokane Symphony ([jenniferhicks@spokanesymphony.org](mailto:jenniferhicks@spokanesymphony.org)) to find out more. There will be a special invitation-only concert for all donors, featuring the new harp when it arrives. How heavenly! **S**