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WELZ KAUFFMAN
PRESIDENT AND
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

WELZ KAUFFMAN Ravinia Festival President and CEO

Biography

Building on three decades of artistic leadership from coast to coast—the New York Philharmonic to the Los Angeles Philharmonic—Welz Kauffman dedicated his Ravinia tenure, which began in 2000, to educational goals. These include the expansion of audiences for classical music through innovative programming in a uniquely welcoming setting; diversifying festival repertoire and audiences; exposing new listeners to great music from all genres, especially youngsters in budget-strapped schools without music programs; and developing the artistic and performing strengths of emerging talents from around the world. It's a philosophy he's distilled into three words: "REACH*TEACH* PLAY."

Both of Kauffman's parents were professional educators, and he germinated his own music career as a piano teacher. Education remained a key component of his work from the J. Paul Getty Trust to several orchestras where he managed education services, including the Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra; the Atlanta Symphony, where he collaborated with the legendary vocal conductor Robert Shaw and former President Jimmy Carter; and the Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra, where he developed community programs with Hugh Wolff and Bobby McFerrin.

In addition to the more-than-600,000 people who annually attend music events from concerts to master classes at Ravinia, more than 75,000 Chicago-region residents benefit from services Ravinia brings to the community under Kauffman's REACH*TEACH*PLAY umbrella.

The flagship of Ravinia's education programs is *One Score, One Chicago*, which entices listeners of all levels of understanding of classical music to embrace, experience and discuss a different masterwork each season, through concerts, school programs, resource guides and free full-length downloads of the selected work.

(more)

FRESH NIGHTLY

Working with the Chicago Public Schools, Ravinia has installed classroom programs, teacher training and artist residencies in grammar and high schools that did not have music programs of their own, and Kauffman has established the long-term goal of reaching all K-3 students in Chicago and the surrounding counties. Ravinia also runs a free conservatory in Lawndale, where students of all ages can receive applied music lesson as individuals and as families.

Ravinia's lauded Jazz Mentors program gives performance opportunities to Chicago's brightest young musicians who not only work one-on-one with professional jazz musicians but then band together as an ensemble that performs throughout the region. In January 2010 the Women's Board of Ravinia Festival, in conjunction with Ravinia's professional education staff and the People's Music School of Chicago established the creation of a new student orchestra for children 8 to 12 years old at the William G. Hibbard Elementary School in the Albany Park neighborhood of Chicago.

Ravinia also offers applied programs to young professionals through its internationally recognized Steans Institute for Young Artists, which celebrated its 20th anniversary in 2008. Emerging talents from around the world compete for the coveted slots in this program, which allows them to study with the artists who frequent the festival—such as Barbara Cook, George Hearn, Dimitri Hvorostovsky, Thomas Quasthoff, Christoph Eschenbach and James Conlon—and to hone their performance skills before Ravinia's discerning audiences.

Kauffman continues to work with other professional educators to ensure that the festival's programs at Ravinia and in the community fit the educational needs of the Chicago region.

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