We wish all of you good health and a hopeful spirit in the New Year!

What a year it has been, starting in the familiar and ending in a place none of us could have predicted.

In these challenging times, I am particularly proud that our organization has found new ways to express our passion for music and support the work of musicians, composers, and conductors as concert halls shuttered all around the world.

We began our 30th season by featuring our gifted musician colleagues Jeremy Moeller and David Perry, reimagining Gershwin's Concerto in F with the astonishing Marcus Roberts Trio, and ending with our multiple-year collaboration with Visceral Dance, all led by Artistic Director Scott Speck. We then, like all of you, were launched into the unknown.

We applied our creative skills to reimagining how we could connect with a COVID world, using our PPP money to provide free music lessons, supporting both our "at home" public and our musicians. We converted our "Side by Side with the Chicago Phil" into the virtual world, engaging with our community musicians of all ages. In addition to creating several innovative fall programs, each one lifting up a youth music education program, including live interviews and our own archived programming.

This year has also made us reexamine other aspects of our organizational priorities. In June and July, we published two statements in support of the Black Lives Matter movement and reflecting on the social injustices of our time, including the unacknowledged racism in classical music and the need for change.

As an important orchestral organization in the city that values community engagement, we have begun to invest resources to review the ways the Chicago Philharmonic can fulfill and align with our statements. As an egalitarian society of musicians, we strive for inclusivity in all that we do. In recognition that we have fallen short of that goal, we have held meetings with various committees and our staff, board, and Musicians Advisory Council to discuss how to live up to our ideals of diversity, equity, and inclusion. In response, we have eight new musician members of color elected and appointed to places of leadership. It is a good start and one we are proud of, but we are committed to continuing to change our leadership and structures to reflect our dedication to racial equity.

The next six months will perhaps be our most challenging yet. The lack of live performance will continue for some months. We will continue to tighten our belts, reduce office size, and reevaluate our programs in order to ensure that we remain a healthy organization in our next season and beyond.

We will perform with all of you and for all of you again. When the time comes for us to be fully back, know that we have done all the work we can to make us "stronger together."

With much appreciation,

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