UofM-MSO Partnership Will Make Campus Premier Destination For Music Training, Performance and Artistic Outreach

In an unprecedented collaboration between a university and a professional symphony orchestra, the Memphis Symphony Orchestra (MSO) will partner with the UofM to create the premier destination in the Mid-South for music training and performance, music outreach and arts-centered, cross-sector community development. “This unprecedented partnership will bring wonderful opportunities for both our students and our faculty in the UofM Rudi E. Scheidt School of Music. I believe the collaboration will become a model for future relationships between professional symphonies and universities across the country. The University of Memphis is fortunate and honored to be partnered with the Memphis Symphony Orchestra. It’s great for the city, great for the symphony and great for the University of Memphis,” said UofM President M. David Rudd.

The Memphis Symphony Orchestra in Residence at the University of Memphis will offer a series of world-class symphonic music on campus, while retaining a presence at The Cannon Center. These top quality performances at the UofM will create a rich opportunity for students, faculty, patrons and all citizens of the Mid-South to experience the full range of musical offerings created by the partnership. “This is a game-changer for the MSO,” said Gayle S. Rose, Chairman of the Board. “We bring a wealth of professional musicians from across the globe, a 62-year history of artistic excellence and an industry-leading community engagement program to the table to join forces with the UofM Rudi E. Scheidt School of Music and a dynamic student-centered environment, allowing both of us to innovate in ways we could not separately.”

Brett Egan, President of DeVos Institute of Arts Management and consultant to the MSO, noted, “This level of collaboration is certainly unprecedented. I’m confident that this partnership will create synergies between both organizations that open a world of possibilities.” The MSO’s body of professional musicians will complement the world-class faculty at the UofM School of Music, creating a one-stop shop for aspiring musicians in the Mid-South. In addition, the MSO’s global music network will attract leading ensembles and soloists to campus. Four guest conductors or soloists will provide master classes for UofM students each year. “I am happy for the serendipity of timing, that I get to take the artistic home with so much good news abounding. New artistic leadership, new educational and civic partnerships – an incredible new chapter ahead for all of us,” stated Robert Moody, MSO’s incoming Principal Conductor.

The collaboration also will position Memphis as a hub for arts-centered social innovation. The Institute for the Arts, Social Enterprise and Entrepreneurism will engage the MSO, UofM faculty and students, and community partners in developing arts-centered solutions for two sectors: business and government. The Institute will provide practical, problem-solving services in Memphis and catalog the city’s efforts to utilize arts and culture as a catalyst for social change. “The magnitude of potential in
classical music and the arts as a whole surrounding this partnership has all the MSO family swirling in possibility,” said Jen Bradner, interim CEO of the MSO.

“The UofM-MSO partnership re-established the close ties that helped sustain each organization in its formative years,” said John Chiego, Director of the Rudi E. Scheidt School of Music. “It promises to allow both to attain new heights of national and international prominence. This is a great collaboration for our students, our program and for all music in Memphis.