

A WOMAN'S PLACE IS ON THE PODIUM.

Dear Friend,

After The Women's Philharmonic's artistic director, Apo Hsu, conducted a concert recently, a mother brought her young daughter up to meet her. The little girl asked her mother, "Mommy, can a man be a conductor?" Her mother thought for a minute and replied, "Yes, dear, if he is good enough."

The girl's question was music to our ears! It showed just how far women conductors have come in recent years, and it revealed a refreshing sense of entitlement. That girl believes that conducting music is a woman's domain.

Someday soon it will be. Thanks to an anonymous donor, The Women's Philharmonic will be embarking on the National Women Conductors Initiative – an incredible path toward enriching American music. I invite you to join us on this path.

I'm asking for your support for this new and visionary program, designed to:

- provide women conductors with the opportunities to enhance their professional skills, and
- help them become conductors and music directors of America's major orchestras and opera companies.

Is the National Women Conductors Initiative really necessary? Not according to the five-year-old who saw Apo Hsu conduct. But what she doesn't know is that:

- Less than 10 percent of the 609 orchestras who comprise the membership of the American Symphony Orchestra League have women conductors.
- Of those symphonies that do have women conductors, 70 percent have very limited budgets – under \$300,000 – compared to \$_____ for the San Francisco Symphony.
- There are no women music directors in the top 25 symphonies in America.

Most women musicians working as conductors in the United States suffer from chronic invisibility. Different standards exist for men and women about what is appropriate authority within an orchestral culture. And, sadly, reviewers often pay more attention to the dress of women conductors than to their music.

Yes, the National Women Conductors Initiative is really necessary. As executive director of The Women's Philharmonic, I am thrilled by this initiative – and not just because it's funded by the single largest grant in history for women in classical music.

The donor believed in The Women's Philharmonic enough to entrust us with this impressive program.

Her support, like yours, is critical. It ensures that women take their rightful place on the podium. It enables women to flourish as artists, as musicians and composers. And it makes the rest of us all the better for their efforts.

If you have attended a Women's Philharmonic concert, you know what I mean. To see a woman conducting, to hear women musicians playing, to listen to works composed by women, is nothing less than inspiring.

The Women's Philharmonic is getting people to expand not just their appreciation of music, but their thinking as well. By focusing on the promotion of women composers, we're cultivating unprecedented interest in symphonic and operatic music and a larger number of dedicated concert-goers.

We're fostering an environment for the next generation where women will have every opportunity to achieve their potential. And girls will live their lives knowing they're entitled to those opportunities.

Please give generously so that programs like the National Women Conductors Initiative and others at The Women's Philharmonic can thrive. The more people who ask if a man can be a conductor, the more we know we're being heard.

Sincerely,

Judy Patrick
Executive Director

P.S. Please send your donation today! Contributions received before _____ will be listed in our October __ Opening Night program.

(RESPONSE FORM)

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Yes! I want to support the National Women Conductors Initiative and other exciting programs at The Women's Philharmonic. Please accept my donation of:

- \$35
- \$50
- \$100
- \$150
- \$200
- \$250
- Other \$_____

- Check enclosed
- Please bill my Visa MasterCard

Account # _____ Exp. Date _____

Name on credit card _____

Signature _____

Your check should be made to The Women's Philharmonic and returned in the enclosed envelope.

Thank you!