



SPOTLIGHT ON: The Cleveland Orchestra: Behind the Scenes at Severance Hall Tour Guide Program

Who We Are:

Since 1921, Friends of The Cleveland Orchestra (formerly Women's Committee of The Cleveland Orchestra) has been a volunteer and fundraising arm for The Cleveland Orchestra. The Friends' mission is to provide support for our world-class Orchestra through music education activities, volunteer service, and fundraising opportunities. Friends offers its 200 members opportunities to assist the Orchestra with educational outreach programs.

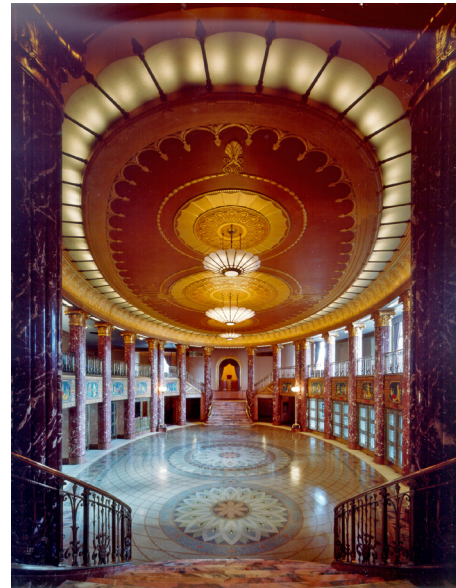
What We Do:

The Severance Hall Tour Guide Program was developed to formalize a "Behind the Scenes" tour with trained volunteers, welcoming local, national, and international guests to Severance Hall. The project has developed relationships with other educational and community organizations, attracting wider audiences in all age ranges. Continuing expansion of the Tour Guide Program has provided orientation for Orchestra staff, volunteers, board members, donors, and additional constituencies. Regarded by many music lovers as one of the most beautiful and acoustically perfect concert halls, The Cleveland Orchestra saw the value of showcasing Severance Hall, combined with its rich past, present, and future history, to an expanding audience.

Northeast Ohio has suffered many economic downturns over the years, but the community support for The Cleveland Orchestra has never wavered. Following a major renovation of Severance Hall in 2000, the Tour Guide Program was instituted with volunteers welcoming guests into Severance Hall.

How it Works:

Volunteer Tour Guides are recruited, trained, and scheduled in coordination with Severance Hall's calendar. Small group tours are conducted at various times throughout the year.



What it Takes:

- Number of volunteers needed to plan this project: One Volunteer Tour Guide Coordinator.
- Number of on-site volunteers needed to staff this project: Corps of 25 trained Tour Guides. (One Tour Guide for each 20 tour guests.)
- Staff involvement: Assistant Hall Manager, Box Office, Group Sales, Archivist, Stage Crew, and Housekeeping.



Results:

Thousands of guests have toured Severance Hall since the inception of the project, with extremely favorable feedback. The Tour Guide Volunteers have become enthusiastic advocates of the program and the Orchestra. The Orchestra has recognized the value of the volunteers' service.

New Information and Ideas:

- Recognition that there was and still is an enthusiastic audience for this program
- Valuable contributions from the Archivist and other resources to generate the template and brochure for the tours, with ongoing collaboration to further illuminate the Orchestra's rich 100-year history

Keys to Success:

- Low-cost start up and maintenance
- Fun and enriching for both volunteers and guests
- Many returning guests
- Creation of a Self-Guided Tour brochure

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