



**Friends of the Annapolis Symphony Orchestra**

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Every year in Annapolis, MD, the winter holiday season kicks off with the Grand Illumination of the City Christmas Tree at the historic City Dock. Each year a different organization is chosen to decorate the massive tree. In 2023, the Friends of the Annapolis Symphony Orchestra (FASO) was awarded the bid to decorate this tree. This was an excellent opportunity for community outreach and education.

FASO partnered with other non-profit organizations, including the City of Annapolis Art in Public Places Commissions, the Downtown Partnership, and Maker Space, to design and make over 100 ornaments for the tree. The FASO Board members all joined in to produce ornaments in the shape of musical instruments. The forms were laser-cut from  $\frac{1}{4}$ " plywood, and spray painted in bright colors. A few ornaments were hand-painted with a caricature of the ASO maestro.



The Grand Illumination took place the Sunday after Thanksgiving. Hundreds of people crowded the streets of historic Annapolis to watch the festivities. The Annapolis Symphony Academy provided musical performances by their students, who played alongside ASO musicians. The Ballet Theater of Maryland performed

scenes from The Nutcracker. Santa appeared in his sleigh and lighted the Christmas tree. Thousands of people saw the tree through the holiday season and became aware that the city has a wonderful orchestra.



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