

## Media Release

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### The Saskatoon Symphony is on the move!

#### A new home for the SSO is music to the ears of Riversdale.

*SASKATOON, SK* - The Saskatoon Symphony has announced a move to a new facility in Riversdale, along Saskatoon's burgeoning cultural corridor. For the first time, the organization will be housed under one roof, instead of in separate, sometimes makeshift spaces across the city.

Plans for the as-yet-unnamed centre, located in an existing building at 408 20th Street West, allow space for rehearsals, meetings, administration, storage, and for the Symphony's Book & Music Sale. The sale, which raised a record \$119,585.08 this year, will have a permanent processing and storage area and the sale itself will be held at the centre.

Over time, the SSO will use space in the centre for music-making, education, and creative exchanges with the neighbourhood and community. The proximity of the Roxy Theatre, just down the street, offers possibilities for programming events also. Major concerts will still be held at TCU Place.

"This move is a necessary next step for the SSO and represents tangible proof that Saskatoon's orchestra has turned a corner and is poised to make an even bigger contribution to the city," says Jane Wollenberg, President of the Symphony Board. "We are excited at the benefits of bringing everyone under one roof. We are keenly aware of our fiscal responsibility and the need to remain fiscally prudent, but we were made an offer we couldn't refuse and it was the time to seize the opportunity."

The decision was made easier by Edmonton businessman and philanthropist Tom Hutchinson of Magic Lantern Theatres, owner of the property. Hutchinson, already credited with saving the Roxy Theatre, was keen on helping to bring another cultural icon to the area. "I'm a business person," says Hutchinson, "and good business involves wise investment. Just as we invested in the Roxy Theatre in the hope that others would see its worth and support it, we know that investing in the future of the Saskatoon Symphony, and bringing its energy to Riversdale, where it can be part of all the positive change happening there, will pay huge dividends to everyone involved."

Jill Reid, General Manager of the SSO, credits Terry Stannard, of Magic Lantern Theatres, and Randy Pshebylo, Executive Director of the Riversdale Business Improvement District, for helping pave the way for the plan. Stannard went out of his way to see that the building, part of which has been used to warehouse theatrical equipment, could be adapted to the orchestra's needs without a huge initial cost. "Terry understood that the SSO's budget is modest at best, and that



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we will grow into the building and make changes as needs become clear and funds become available,” Reid says.

As for Pshebylo, she says “Randy sold us on Riversdale. We’ve worked with him and the Riversdale BID on the annual silent film festival and he’s been a great advocate for the relocation of arts organizations to Riversdale. We are looking forward to being part of the change that’s happening in the area.”

Pshebylo is pleased his efforts have paid off. “The Riversdale Business Improvement District is delighted, excited, and ignited with this announcement,” he enthused. “The new symphony centre will be a jewel in the crown of our Business District, and it joins other examples like the historic Roxy Theatre which continues to emerge as a place for people to gather and hold events.”

Wollenberg emphasizes that the new centre is significant for the entire community, saying “this move will make for a healthier organization that will be able to make even stronger connections with our community. Through these connections, the SSO can positively influence the lives of children, youth, and adults with the power of music. That can only be a good thing for all.”

There is agreement on that point from City Hall. Mayor Don Atchison commented that “a growing city like Saskatoon needs strong cultural institutions to help provide the creativity that is the hallmark of great cities and to contribute to the quality of life that we all enjoy. The Saskatoon Symphony’s bold move shows how the development that is happening in the city is creating the confidence needed to take us to even greater heights.”

More details of the Symphony’s new home will be released in the coming weeks, as will details of a program to encourage financial support for the centre—a key component of the business plan. In the meantime, administrative staff will move to the centre during the second week of June, with others to follow within several weeks.

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Photos: Articulate Eye