

SoNA Raises Voices

Auditions set for new choral group

By Becca Bacon Martin

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In the original Greek, symphony means literally “sounding together,” says Paul Haas, music director of the Symphony of Northwest Arkansas. “We want to get past the idea that SoNA is just an orchestra, as fabulous as that orchestra is.”

To generate that growth, Haas promises “new initiatives in the near term, both on our own and together with other visionary organizations,” the first of which is the formation of the SoNA Singers, an auditioned group of the region’s best voices.

“This group will perform choral works, both a cappella and with orchestral accompaniment,” explains Barrett Johnson, SoNA’s newly named assistant executive director. “It will also serve as the anchor of the larger 200-person SoNA Chorale, which performs choral masterworks with the symphony.”

Every great orchestra needs a great choral group “to pull off the music of the greatest composers,” says Terry Hicks, the veteran director of choirs at Bentonville High School and the new director of the SoNA Singers. “When everybody thinks of the Atlanta Symphony, their next thought is the Atlanta Symphony Chorus. Same thing with Chicago.

“We’re hoping to find fabulous former singers who haven’t had the chance to really use their talent in a while,” he says.

Auditions will take place Sept. 10 and 17, and the group will debut at SoNA’s Christmas Pops concert on Dec. 10.

FAQ

SoNA Singers

Auditions

WHEN - 1-5 p.m. Sept. 10 & 17

WHERE – Bentonville High School choir room, 1801 SE “J” Street, on Sept. 10; Walton Arts Center’s McBride Studio on Sept. 17

AUDITION REQUIREMENTS – One solo (oratorio aria or art song preferred); pitch memory exercises; intervals; scales (major and minor)

INFO – Barrett Johnson at barrett@sonamusic.org or 521-4166

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