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Restoration work starts on Severance Music Center's stone façade thanks to Timken Foundation of Canton gift



(© Roger Mastroianni)

CLEVELAND – The Cleveland Orchestra announced that restoration work to the stone façade of Severance Music Center will begin on Wednesday, June 21.

Work on the 92-year-old Severance Music Center is expected to last through September. Crews will clean the stone at both ground-level entrances, coat the light poles at the main entrance, and replace broken stone panels. The laser cleaning process will allow workers to restore the building's ornamental molding with precision and a coating on the cornice will help prevent copper stains from overflowing rainwater.

The Timken Foundation of Canton is a key supporter of the \$1 million capital improvement project to help preserve this historic and iconic building.

“We are delighted the Timken Foundation of Canton provided the underwriting needed to restore the stone façade of our beloved Severance Music Center. Their generosity will preserve the beauty and majesty of this iconic building for generations to come,” said Richard Smucker, board chair of the Orchestra.

Construction of The Cleveland Orchestra's permanent home was announced in 1928 with a \$1 million pledge from John Long Severance and his wife, Elisabeth. The groundbreaking for Severance Music

Center, then known as Severance Hall, was on November 14, 1929, and the hall was completed just 14 months later. It was designed by Cleveland architectural firm Walker & Weeks, the same firm responsible for Cleveland Public Auditorium, the Federal Reserve Bank, and the Cleveland Public Library. The building was recognized by the Cleveland Landmarks Commission in 1974 and added to the National Register of Historic Places in 1983.

About The Cleveland Orchestra

Now firmly in its second century, The Cleveland Orchestra, under the leadership of Franz Welser-Möst since 2002, is one of the most sought-after performing ensembles in the world. Year after year the ensemble exemplifies extraordinary artistic excellence, creative programming, and community engagement. In recent years, *The New York Times* has called Cleveland “the best in America” for its virtuosity, elegance of sound, variety of color and chamber-like musical cohesion, “virtually flawless,” and “one of the finest ensembles in the country (if not the world).”

Founded by Adella Prentiss Hughes, the Orchestra performed its inaugural concert in December 1918. By the middle of the century, decades of growth and sustained support had turned the ensemble into one of the most admired around the world.

The past decade has seen an increasing number of young people attending concerts, bringing fresh attention to The Cleveland Orchestra’s legendary sound and committed programming. More recently in 2020, the Orchestra launched several bold digital projects, including the streaming broadcast series *In Focus*, the podcast *On A Personal Note*, and its own recording label. A long history of strong community support from across the ensemble’s home region continues to drive the Orchestra forward and has provided remarkable energy and focus throughout the uncertainty of the COVID-19 pandemic. New initiatives for audience growth and community service have been launched in recent years, including new technological infrastructure and capabilities at its home, Severance Music Center, to capture the Orchestra’s unique artistry and the musical achievements of the Welser-Möst and Cleveland Orchestra partnership.

The 2022–23 season marks Franz Welser-Möst’s 21st year as music director, a period in which The Cleveland Orchestra earned unprecedented acclaim around the world, including a series of residencies at the Musikverein in Vienna, the first of its kind by an American orchestra. The Orchestra’s 100th season in 2017–18 featured two international tours, concluding with the presentation of Welser-Möst’s *Prometheus Project*, featuring works by Beethoven, on three continents.

Its acclaimed opera presentations, including Verdi’s *Otello* (2022), Strauss’s *Ariadne auf Naxos* (2019), Debussy’s *Pelléas et Mélisande* (May 2017), Bartók’s *The Miraculous Mandarin* and *Bluebeard’s Castle* (2016), and Janáček’s *The Cunning Little Vixen* (2014 and 2017), have showcased the ensemble’s unique artistry and collaborative work ethic.

Since 1918, seven music directors—Nikolai Sokoloff, Artur Rodziński, Erich Leinsdorf, George Szell, Lorin Maazel, Christoph von Dohnányi, and Franz Welser-Möst—have guided and shaped the ensemble’s growth and sound. Through concerts at home and on tour, broadcasts, and a catalog of acclaimed recordings, The Cleveland Orchestra is heard today by a growing group of fans around the world. [Find](#)

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Media Contact:

Jen Steer, jsteer@clevelandorchestra.com, 216-231-7637