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Asked how SDS is doing financially, CEO Edward B. “Ward” Gill explains, “Well, we are expecting to end our 14th consecutive year with a balanced budget. During the 2011-12 season, and for the first time in the orchestra’s history, we broke \$5.1 million in ticket sales, which includes all music series.”

All were on the upswing regarding ticket revenues, including the Jacobs Masterworks series, which increased 3 percent over the previous season. The always-popular Summer Pops enjoyed an increase of 4.5 percent in 2012, resulting in more than \$2 million in ticket sales. Formerly called Winter Pops, City Lights specials and presentations increased 43 percent over the previous season. The recently instituted Chamber Music Series enjoyed a dramatic 117 percent increase in subscription revenue.

Gill says the large majority of big donors are attracted to SDS because of the Jacobs Masterworks. “As testament to its popularity and public appeal, this series increases from 12 to 14 weeks this season.”

In addition to Lang Lang and Joshua Bell, who bookend the Masterworks with opening and closing concerts in October and May, respectively, renowned composer John Williams returns in December to conduct a special concert that benefits the SDS musicians’ pension fund.

The projected budget for the 2012-13 season is approximately \$21 million. Ling’s contract has

recently been extended by the board on an evergreen basis.

In 2002, Joan and Irwin Jacobs made gifts and bequests to SDS totaling \$50 million to the endowment fund in increments of \$5 million per year for 10 years, and a \$50 million gift for operating revenues dispersed at \$5 million per year for 10 years. Since, they have provided a new stage floor, a shell and a piano lift to enhance the hall and its acoustics.

According to Gill, the annual Jacobs donation to operating funds has concluded its 10-year term. “The Jacobs’ continue to support the symphony financially,” says Gill, “but going forward—and since the symphony celebrated its centennial season in 2010-11—we have embarked on a capital campaign, which has given the community the opportunity to donate at a variety of levels.” The plan includes naming opportunities from the stage to lobbies, and a highly successful “Partner With a Player” program, which affords patrons rare, behind-the-scenes glimpses of their player and the orchestra in action.

Of the Jacobs’ generosity, Ling says, “No other orchestra in the world has such a thing, but people should realize that they still need to come together to support this magnificent orchestra. We have a lot of funding to do.”

Especially to garner the kind of international acclaim that Ling believes his orchestra deserves.

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