



MZANSI NPO funding to the CPO

22 December 2022

Last night's public announcement by Bongani Tembe that the Cape Town Philharmonic Orchestra is receiving R3,2 million from the Mzansi National Orchestra is a deliberate attempt to mislead the audience and legitimize an unsustainable public funding model in support of a national ensemble that benefits only a small group of musicians.

At the time of making the announcement, Mr Tembe and the Chairman of the MNPO well knew that the CPO had already rejected the offer until its demands regarding transparency and a clearly defined business plan are met. Mr Tembe's public announcement at the concert in the Cape Town City Hall was therefore a calculated attempt to perpetuate misinformation and change public perceptions. It is an obfuscation of the truth.

In the interest of the future of all musical and orchestral development in South Africa, the CPO has since April been requesting that the details of the funding model and the operational budget of the newly formed Mzansi National Philharmonic are shared with all major role players in the orchestral music sector. This information is vital to ensure that funds are spent equitably across that sector, and that it doesn't benefit only those who toe the line.

The offer of R3,2 million to the CPO, which runs a vast education project and performs up to 120 concerts per year, represents less than 6% of the total funding received by the Mzansi National Orchestra in the past year. Mr Tembe was entrusted with some R54 million granted to him by the DSAC, so far used for essentially only two projects, of which this no-expense spared national tour was one. The annual administration component of these limited projects, according to Mr Tembe, amounts to some R10.7 million.

The CPO has taken a firm stand in this regard and in principle will not become complicit in an unjust and potentially corrupt system that could lead to the

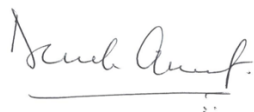
demise of regional orchestras.

The CPO advocated from the start that a proper feasibility study should be done before embarking on unsustainable showcase tours. The three-city tour that was undertaken by the MNPO over the past week did not make any meaningful contribution to the long-term orchestral landscape in South Africa.

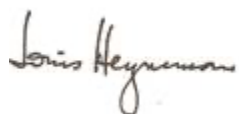
In a letter addressed to Justice Leona Theron, Chairman of the MNPO and copied to the CEO and Artistic Director Bongani Tembe, the CPO Chairman Derek Auret requested “*full disclosure in respect of its establishment, a proper feasibility study preceding its formation, a detailed business plan and other relevant information*”, and added: “*In the light of these concerns, the Board of the CPO regrets that it is unable to accept the proposed grant. Apart from the failure to provide relevant information as repeatedly requested, the Board has grave doubts about the legality of one orchestra, in this case the Mzansi Philharmonic Orchestra distributing taxpayers’ money as proposed.*”

The CPO assured the MNPO Board that it remains “*deeply committed to the promotion of classical music of all forms throughout South Africa*” and requested an urgent meeting in order to discuss “*our difficulties as well as possible solutions.*”

Ends



Derek Auret
Chairman



Louis Heyneman
CEO and Artistic Director