

## **Maestro Gerhardt Zimmermann's Final Letter to CSO Musicians**

Dear Canton Symphony Orchestra Musicians,

I hope this letter finds you well and surrounded by the joy of music. It is with profound sadness and a heavy heart that I write to you today to share some difficult news. After nearly 50 extraordinary years of leading this marvelous orchestra, it is my responsibility to inform you of a significant decline in my health and my transition to Hospice care.

Throughout the past half-century, it has been an absolute privilege and honor to stand before this exceptional group of musicians as your conductor. Together, we have created unforgettable experiences for ourselves and our audiences. The dedication, talent, and passion that each of you brings to our performances have made the Canton Symphony Orchestra a beacon of excellence in the world of classical music. The music we have brought to life, the harmonies we have crafted, and the emotional landscapes we have traversed are a testament to the power of our collective artistry. The Canton Symphony Orchestra has become my musical family; it is the gem that many people search their whole lives for and never find and I was lucky enough to have it for so many years.

Though my body may weaken, my love for music and the incredible talent each of you possesses remains undiminished. I implore each and every one of you to continue nurturing music; embrace the beauty of every note, find inspiration in every measure, and strive for excellence in every performance. Cherish the camaraderie that exists within this orchestra, for it is the bond that fuels our collective brilliance.

Please understand that I will forever be with you in spirit, even if I am unable to stand on the podium. Your dedication, talent, and commitment have made the Canton Symphony Orchestra an artistic force to be reckoned with, and I have the utmost faith in your ability to carry that torch forward. May music always be your guide, and may the passion in your hearts continue to ignite the souls of your audiences. Never stop pursuing the beauty that lies within each note.

Sitting in the orchestra for the first time at Bowling Green, it was as if the heavens opened up. From that moment on, a conductor was all I wanted to be. In life, if you're going to do it, give it all you can. Live it. Breathe it. Sing it. Enjoy it. Love it. Sing, sing, sing...

Maestro Gerhardt Zimmermann