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December 5, 2014

Dear community members, ticket buyers, members of the orchestra, plus friends and supporters of SONOS Chamber Orchestra:

We were excited by the possibility that SONOS Chamber Orchestra could provide live accompaniment for our ambitious production of the December 7 performance of “The Hip Hop Nutcracker” at the United Palace. The potential benefits for the production, SONOS, and the United Palace of Cultural Arts were manifold.

In the end, however, the production team concluded that our ambitions were too much for the short timeframe available to prepare so many participants for this complex undertaking.

The limited rehearsal time available has not been sufficient for the performers to master the intricacies of such a demanding, highly coordinated, performance with live music. The orchestra, led by the indefatigable Erik Ochsner, played beautifully during the two rehearsals (one with and one without dancers) and the dress rehearsal yesterday. The musicians’ professionalism could be heard in every note. The quality of the music is not in question. The decision is artistic, choosing to go with a recording that the dancers have rehearsed with for six weeks, familiar to them since the music is the same every time it is played. The responsibility for this decision rests with the show’s producers, including myself. We apologize to the musicians, Mr. Ochsner, and SONOS’s supporters for the inconvenience. It is disappointing to have put in so much blood, sweat, and tears without a final performance.

We appreciate the effort SONOS put forth in preparing for this performance and look forward to working with it in the future as we strive to create a home for live music in Washington Heights.

Respectfully,

Mike Fitelson  
Executive Director, UPCA