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Letter, 1975 August 8, from Dolores Ardoyno to Levi Patton

Dolores Ardoyne

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DONALD DORR
Artistic Director

August 8, 1975

Dear Mrs. Patton:

Thank you very much for your letter and its list of questions. It makes it very simple to itemize the information you want.

I had delayed answering because, as you and your company realize I'm sure, taking a production on tour is rarely feasible unless several play-dates can be combined. We are seeing if we can make a schedule which would allow us to divide the cost among several cities, to make a manageable budget, with the chance of income for the host organizations.

So, for right now, I cannot give you an exact budget - unless you want me to work out one on the basis of our playing just in Chattanooga, which would be quite high. But I can answer your other questions, and if you wish a budget for your city alone, I'll send it along when you let me know that is what you wanted.

To answer your questions:

- 1: May could be possible, depending on when in May, but I don't don't think June would be because our chorus would have scattered by then. But a date that does not tie in with our Jackson date would mean extra cost, since the cast and production directors would have to be brought back from New York and Chicago, rather than just from Jackson.
- 2: You had said you would prefer to use your own orchestra, and we think it would make a more exciting production for your city. We spoke with Mr. de Pair and he said he could plan to rehearse them before coming to Jackson so that would be no problem; and it would be cheaper than having to transport the orchestra from Jackson. So, if we plan on the Chattanooga orchestra, our cost will not cover it, though it will cover the conductor's fee.
- 3: We were thinking of using budget motels for the cast. If you prefer to put them up - perhaps in a campus set-up if that is possible - it would certainly cut cost. Unless you make such provisions, however, we will budget rooms - and that will be included in the tour fee.
- 4: It would be better if you handled the theatre, stagehands, tickets, or any other actual production cost directly, since you already have arrangements with these services, and you are in Chattanooga. Our budget would assume that these costs were being covered by you. We could furnish you brochures with the date and place blank - or we could send just the brochure and

let your printer rework it as you wish. Unless you ask us to furnish brochures, however, our cost will not include them.

5. We do not make recordings or tapes - the fees are too exorbitant. However, we are negotiating with a major record company and hope this performance will be recorded.
6. There is almost no chance that we would ever do "Porgy." Feeling runs rather high against it among black artists. Then too, it seems that a number of companies are using it as a Bicentennial offering, for ~~what~~ ^{want} of anything else.

Your questions covered so much that there's little I can add. Our planning was along the lines of bringing our production in by bus and truck. Mr. dePaur would rehearse your orchestra the last week in March - if your musicians are like ours in Jackson they will do some work on their own with the difficult parts. The opera is scored for 40 players, incidentally, and we would furnish the music and the orchestra break-down early enough for your contractor to find the players he wanted. Mr. Dorr would bring in his assistants and, working with the theatre stage crew there, hang the show and light it; the cast would come in by bus, have a walk-through staging, and we would perform the following evening. We could if you wished stage a full rehearsal with costume, and let you use it as a student performance as another source of income. In that case the performance could be the next night. The cast would leave the next morning, of course, and the production crew would oversee the striking and loading of the sets and costume, and leave that same day.

I'll let you know what develops with other cities - and if you wish the budget for just Chattanooga I'll be glad to send it along.

Incidentally we have not announced this for the spring yet, and if we do tour, tour plans will be included in all national releases. Since OPERA/SOUTH gets extensive coverage nationally, the national publicity might be of value to your own promotional program.

Sincerely,

Dolores Ardoyno

Dolores Ardoyno

Mrs. Levi R Patton
153 North Crest Road
Chattanooga, Tennessee