1940-1945 - Utah State Symphony Orchestra was created as a WPA Orchestra under Roosevelt's New Deal, offering five concerts with 52 part-time musicians.

1946-1947 - Utah Symphony was officially established as a full-time, 26-week orchestra under Music Director Werner Janssen.

1947-1949 - Maurice Abravanel serves as Music Director of Utah Symphony, establishing an internationally acclaimed reputation for the organization.

1949 - Utah Symphony narrowly averts dissolution through heroic efforts of Maestro Abravanel, the musicians, staff, and board, but reduces operations to a part-time schedule.

1950-1973 - "Under the direction of Maurice Abravanel, Utah Symphony made first recordings of works by Varese, Milhaud, Honegger, Satie and a pioneering cycle of Mahler Symphonies that included the first commercial recording of the Eighth. The Orchestra has been nominated for Grammy Awards with both Maestro Abravanel (Le Roi David, Honegge – 1962; Sacred Service, Bloch – 1978; Symphony of Psalms, Stravinsky – 1979) and Michael Tilson-Thomas (Old American Songs, Copland – 1987)." Utah Symphony's recording legacy was recently rekindled by Keith Lockhart with the release of Symphonic Dances in 2005.

1966 - Utah Symphony's First international tour to Greece, Yugoslavia, Austria, West Germany, and England.

1967-1980 - Salt Lake County, in partnership with the LDS Church, builds Abravanel Hall and renovates the Capitol Theatre as part of the U.S. Bicentennial.

1972 - Glade Peterson returns from Milan, Italy, to Utah to establish Utah Opera.


1978 - Utah Opera presents its opening performance of La Bohème at Kingsbury Hall.


1985 - Utah Opera introduces the use of supertitles at every performance; at the time, the youngest regional company in America to do so.

1983-1998 - Joseph Silverstein assumes the reins as Music Director of Utah Symphony.

1985 - Utah Opera establishes the Utah Opera Production Studios, moving its rehearsals and set and costume operations to a centralized location.

1995 - Utah Opera premieres its first commissioned opera, Dreamkeepers.

1997-2008 - Keith Lockhart is named Music Director of Utah Symphony. During his tenure, Utah Symphony recorded and released a new CD and embarked on its 1st European tour in 19 years, visiting concert halls all over Germany and Austria, and was featured in a national PBS broadcast with the Mormon Tabernacle Choir performing the Ralph Vaughan Williams Christmas oratorio, Hodie.

1997-2008 - The Utah State Legislature, under the leadership of Haven Barlow, creates a line-item in the state budget to support the arts, and in particular, the Utah Symphony, which allows the organization to establish a 52-week season.

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2001 - Renovations on the Production Studios are completed, making it one of the finest rehearsal and construction facilities in the country.

2002 - USUO merges, becoming one of only two merged symphony and opera companies in the United States.

2002 - Utah Symphony and Utah Opera present Cultural Olympiad performances and Utah Symphony performs for the opening and closing ceremonies of the XIX Olympic Winter Games.

2003 - The Deer Valley® Music Festival, a four week, 6 days per week, festival is established, featuring pops, classical, chamber, and opera performances, as well as salon and education events.

2007 - Utah Opera presents the western United States premiere performance of The Grapes of Wrath, an opera co-commissioned/co-produced with Minnesota Opera.

2008 - Economic Recovery Plan concludes with most objectives reached, along with the finding of a new leader for the organization in Melia Tourangeau.

2008 - A new era creates economic challenges and a Board of Directors dedicated to building a financial foundation that will thrive into the future.

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