



Kansas City Symphony Names New Assistant Conductor for 2016-17 season

*Associate Conductor Aram Demirjian to pass baton to
new Assistant Conductor Jason Seber*

KANSAS CITY, Mo. | Dec. 3, 2015 — The Kansas City Symphony knows how to guarantee a smooth baton handoff.

Following a demanding audition process, the Symphony has selected a new assistant conductor for the 2016-17 season. Jason Seber will succeed Aram Demirjian, who has served as Kansas City Symphony associate conductor since the 2012-13 season and will continue his duties with the Symphony through June 2016. Seber will begin his duties in September 2016.

“The role of assistant conductor is very important to our organization, and we wanted to select exactly the right person,” says Executive Director Frank Byrne. “We knew it would take a special musician to fill this role. The assistant conductor has an enormous range of musical responsibilities and is also an important community representative. Aram is incredibly effective on and off the podium, and we are delighted to have found an individual as talented as Jason Seber to build on the excellent work Aram has done.”

Seber will relocate from Louisville, Ky., where he is in his third season as the Louisville Orchestra education and outreach conductor. During his tenure, he has conducted family, pops and special concerts, and has served as the classical series cover conductor. A passionate advocate for music education, Seber also has led the Louisville Youth Orchestra as music director for 11 seasons. Seber earned his master’s degree in orchestral conducting from the Cleveland Institute of Music and two bachelor’s degrees from Baldwin Wallace University.

Now completing his fourth year with the Kansas City Symphony, Demirjian has determined that this is the time to take the next steps in his professional career. He is a candidate in several music director searches across the country and has experienced an increasingly busy guest conducting schedule. Demirjian will remain with the Symphony through the end of his current contract in June 2016.

“As I reflect on my time as Associate Conductor of the Kansas City Symphony, I am filled with overwhelming gratitude and affection toward every one of our exceptional musicians and staff, devoted board members and inspiring audience members,” Demirjian says. “I am especially thankful to Michael Stern, Frank Byrne, Bill Lyons and Shirley Helzberg for their mentorship and

trust in allowing me to be a steward of this world-class organization. We have achieved so much together in the last four years, and as I take this exciting new step on my musical journey, I look forward to carrying on the experience and knowledge I have gained here to every orchestra with which I work. It has been a privilege to serve this community. No matter where I am in the world, I will always hold Kansas City close in my heart and proudly call myself a Kansas Citian.”

Music Director Michael Stern is not surprised that Demirjian has caught the attention of other orchestras. He says Demirjian has been an “integral” part of the Kansas City Symphony and an engaging ambassador for music in Kansas City.

“Aram has set a new standard for his position, and I will miss him as a friend and colleague,” Stern says. “I applaud and support him as he pursues a new chapter in what promises to be a wonderful career. Happily, we welcome another gifted colleague into the fold, Jason Seber, who impressed everyone with his skill and musicianship in a variety of different repertoire. I know that he too will be a great addition to Kansas City, and we welcome him warmly.”

Seber says he is thrilled to join the Symphony as assistant conductor next season.

“I look forward to building upon the great relationship that this world-class orchestra has with the Kansas City community, as well as to presenting engaging programs for audiences of all ages and interests,” Seber adds. “I am excited to work with such exceptional musicians, Maestro Stern, and a dynamic administrative and artistic staff that is second to none.”

Ensuring a smooth transition, Seber will visit Kansas City in December and several times during the next few months to become familiar with the various roles and responsibilities of the job, which include conducting nearly every format the Symphony presents.

In addition to conducting family, pops, holiday, special and education concerts during his tenure, Demirjian led several of the Symphony’s new concert formats, including Classics Uncorked and Screenland at the Symphony. Demirjian also assists Michael Stern and guest conductors for the Classical Series and made his Classical Series debut at the podium in the 2014-15 season. Seber will have a similar set of musical responsibilities in his new role.

As a finale to his time with the orchestra, Demirjian will conduct the televised and high-profile event, Kansas City Symphony’s Bank of America Celebration at the Station during this coming Memorial Day weekend in May 2016. He also will take the podium for the fourth time to lead the Signature Event of Symphony in the Flint Hills in June 2016.

To learn more about the Kansas City Symphony, including its 2015-16 concert offerings, please visit kcsymphony.org or call the Symphony Box Office at (816) 471-0400.

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About the Kansas City Symphony and Chorus

Founded in 1982, the Kansas City Symphony has established itself as a major force in the cultural life of the community. Praised for performances of uncompromising standard, the orchestra is the largest in the region and enjoys a national reputation under the artistic leadership of Music Director Michael Stern. The Kansas City Symphony Chorus is a volunteer, 160-member ensemble led by multi-Grammy® award-winning conductor, Charles Bruffy, that continues its long tradition of excellence as the choral voice of the Kansas City Symphony. The Kansas City Symphony performs more than 100 concerts each year, while also serving as the orchestra for the Kansas City Ballet and Lyric Opera of Kansas City, and it often welcomes guests of international acclaim as part of its Classical and Pops Series.

Complementing its full schedule of concerts, the Symphony enriches the lives of Kansas City residents by providing music education opportunities for children and adults, such as KinderKonzerts, Young People's Concerts, an instrument petting zoo and concert comments. Highlights each season include a range of free master classes, events and concerts reaching more than 200,000 community members, including the annual Bank of America Celebration at the Station concert each Memorial Day weekend and Symphony in the Flint Hills every summer. Additionally, the Symphony has released five CDs with Reference Recordings — *Shakespeare's Tempest*, the Grammy®-winning *Britten's Orchestra*, an Elgar/Vaughan Williams project, *Miraculous Metamorphoses* that highlights composers Hindemith, Prokofiev and Bartók, and most recently, the Saint-Saëns Symphony No. 3, "Organ." Two additional projects have been recorded and slated for future release, including the music of contemporary composer Adam Schoenberg (recorded June 2014) and Holst's *The Planets* (recorded January 2015).

The Symphony and Michael Stern also have recorded for the Naxos label. Kansas City Symphony performances can be heard locally each week on KCUR 89.3 FM, Kansas City's NPR affiliate. More information on the Kansas City Symphony is available at kcsymphony.org.