



KANSAS CITY SYMPHONY

Aram Demirjian Chosen as Symphony Assistant Conductor

Kansas City, MO | February 23, 2012 – After an intensive audition process, Aram Demirjian has been selected as the Assistant Conductor for the Kansas City Symphony beginning with the 2012-13 season. Demirjian's primary role will be conducting the Family and Pops Series concerts, as well as select Classical performances including the popular Symphony in the Flint Hills. He will succeed Steven Jarvi, an audience favorite for four seasons in Kansas City.



"I am excited and honored to be appointed Assistant Conductor of Kansas City Symphony. It is a privilege to have the opportunity to work closely with Maestro Michael Stern, the phenomenal musicians of the KCS, and its wonderful staff. I am so happy to be joining the Kansas City community, and I look forward to all of the great musical experiences we will share!" said Demirjian.

Aram Demirjian is the winner of the prestigious 2011 Robert J. Harth Conductor Prize (Aspen Music Festival) and is among the most promising emerging conductors in America. Described as "spirited and lively" by the Boston Musical Intelligencer and "awe-inspiring" by the Harvard Crimson, Mr. Demirjian is active as a conductor of symphonic and operatic repertoire, and a dedicated advocate for new music. He graduated in the inaugural class of NEC's prestigious Orchestral Conducting program led by Hugh Wolff, Calderwood Director of Orchestras.

Music Director Michael Stern said, "I am absolutely delighted to welcome Aram Demirjian to the Kansas City Symphony as our new Assistant Conductor. His keen musicianship and abundant energy on the podium is impressive, and I know he will be a tremendous asset to all of us. The position of Assistant Conductor in our organization is a vital one, and we were very fortunate to have Steven Jarvi with us for these past years. Steve has contributed so much to me, to the musicians, and to the entire organization in so many ways, on and off the podium. I am so grateful to him for his work, and wish him well in his next chapter. And with the bar now set high, I am thrilled that Aram will be with us, with his great talent and creative intelligence, to help us craft our next chapter in both our music making and our service to the greater musical life of Kansas City."

"I join Michael Stern in thanking Steven Jarvi for his excellent work here. He has grown as a conductor and musician, and has built strong relationships in the community. We wish him all the best for what will certainly be a bright future. Aram Demirjian is the ideal person to fill the position of Assistant Conductor at this important time in the Symphony's history. Aram was selected from among six talented candidates, and he distinguished himself with strong musical ideas, excellent technique, and an

engaging personality. I look forward to our audiences getting to know this exceptional young conductor,” said Executive Director Frank Byrne.

Steven Jarvi remarked, “It is with bitter sweet emotion that I announce that this will be my final season with the Kansas City Symphony. I have had such an incredible journey with this orchestra and was so proud to be a part of the opening season of the Kauffman Center and our stunning new home, Helzberg Hall. I love this orchestra, this city and this position. However, it is time to leave the nest. The experience I have gained from my nearly 150 concerts with the KCS over the past four years has helped me grow in unimaginable ways and I will always be grateful for the time I spent with this fine orchestra. My sincerest thanks to Frank Byrne, Michael Stern and the entire staff of the Symphony for being such inspiring leaders and colleagues. Unfortunately, my increased schedule of opera conducting and guest conducting away from Kansas City has made it unrealistic to continue. My wife, Joanne, and I will continue living in Kansas City and we will keep you all posted on our goings-on. And, of course, you will see me in the audience - I wouldn't miss concerts this good!”

About Aram Demirjian

Aram Demirjian is rapidly emerging as one of the most promising young conductors in America. He is the most recent winner of the prestigious Robert J. Harth Conductor Prize from the Aspen Music Festival, where he has been invited for three consecutive years as a Conducting Fellow in the American Academy of Conducting at Aspen. In 2011, Mr. Demirjian was awarded Third Prize in the Memphis Symphony's 1st International Conducting Competition.

Increasingly in demand as a guest conductor, Mr. Demirjian has appeared with the Memphis Symphony, Boston Pops, New England Conservatory Symphony, and Yo-Yo Ma and members of the Silk Road Ensemble, performing the Silk Road commission, *Night Music: Voices in the Leaves* by Dmitri Yanov-Yanovsky. In February 2012, Mr. Demirjian was invited by Kurt Masur to participate in the 7th annual Masur Conducting Seminar at Manhattan School of Music, where he was selected by Maestro Masur to conduct on the seminar's final concert.

Mr. Demirjian served for two years as music director of the Harvard Bach Society Orchestra, a post held in the past by such accomplished musicians as Alan Gilbert, Hugh Wolff, John Adams and John Harbison. He is regularly engaged as a cover conductor, by orchestras including the Charlotte Symphony and Boston Pops, and he has also been a conducting apprentice of Harry Christophers and the Handel & Haydn Society. He is currently on the faculty of New England Conservatory Preparatory School, where he conducts the String Repertory Orchestra.

Equally at ease in the opera pit as on the podium, Mr. Demirjian has served as music director, to critical acclaim, of Lowell House Opera, New England's oldest opera company, conducting the company's first production in its seventy-three-year history of Leonard Bernstein's *Candide*. While at Harvard, Mr. Demirjian spearheaded the performance of the Bach Society Orchestra's first-ever concert opera, Aaron Copland's *The Tender Land*. He also has led the New England Concert Opera Players in Mozart's *Le Nozze*

di Figaro, as part of a charitable venture in partnership with Partners in Health: *Symphonic Relief for Haiti*.

Mr. Demirjian is of full Armenian descent and is highly engaged in the Armenian arts community, having been a featured artist in the 59th Armenian Night at Pops and in multiple gala events for the Armenian General Benevolent Union (AGBU). He is a two-time recipient of the AGBU Performing Arts Scholarship. A native and lifetime resident of Boston, MA, Aram is a dedicated fan of the Boston Red Sox, New England Patriots and Boston Celtics and has sung the national anthem at Fenway Park. He is a devotee of the Aaron Sorkin drama, *The West Wing*.

Mr. Demirjian was one of only two conductors selected for the inaugural class of the Masters Orchestral Conducting program at New England Conservatory (M.M. '11), where he studied with Hugh Wolff. He also holds a B.A., cum laude in Music and Government from Harvard University. His teachers and close mentors include Hugh Wolff, Robert Spano, Larry Rachleff, Mei-Ann Chen, David Loebel, Murry Sidlin and David Halen.

About The Kansas City Symphony

The Kansas City Symphony is the region's only full-time professional symphony orchestra, setting the standard for musical excellence. Led by Music Director Michael Stern since 2005, the Symphony has experienced impressive artistic growth, garnering national and international acclaim. The orchestra's 80 full-time musicians are area residents, and each season touch the hearts of more than a million people through our Classical, Pops and Family concerts; special holiday events; chamber concerts; major civic gatherings such as Bank of America Celebration at the Station, which draws over 55,000 people, and the Symphony In the Flint Hills annual concert. During its 42-week season, the orchestra also presents educational programs, community outreach performances, and serves as the orchestra for the Lyric Opera and the Kansas City Ballet. Classical performances are broadcast weekly on KCUR 89.3 FM during the Kansas City Symphony Hour, Thursdays at 9 pm. Visit the Kansas City Symphony online at kcsymphony.org.

For more information, contact:

Megan Felling, Marketing Manager | 816.218.2621 | mfelling@kcsymphony.org