

Auburn Symphony Orchestra Announces New Season and 5-Year Contract Renewal with Music Director Wesley Schulz

Auburn, WA: Auburn Symphony Orchestra (ASO) is thrilled to announce the renewal of a five-year contract with Music Director Wesley Schulz through the 2027-28 Season. Maestro Schulz was first appointed in 2018 and is only the second Music Director in the 26-year history of the Orchestra.

Rachel Perry, ASO Executive Director, said, “Wesley has so much to offer our community through his innovative and collaborative approach to music-making and I am excited to see what the next five seasons bring. His commitment to engaging people of all ages in the thrill of live orchestral music is unmatched.”

Schulz has led ASO to present its largest season yet in 2022-23 with 11 symphony and chamber concerts and Carnegie Hall’s reputable Link Up education program. The additional offerings allow for a wide variety of programming including a popular film music concert. During the height of the pandemic in the 2020-21 Season, Schulz programmed smaller, unique groups of musicians to deliver 15 free online programs to the community, ensuring that ASO remain one of the most active orchestras in the region.

Special projects during his tenure so far have included collaborations with other arts groups such as one with the Reno Chamber Orchestra and the Guild Dance Company to co-commission new choreography for Aaron Copland’s *Appalachian Spring*. Another was to present the visual accompaniment by Adrian Wyard to Modest Mussorgsky’s *Pictures at an Exhibition*. Schulz and ASO were invited in July 2022 to perform for the closing concert of the American Guild of Organists National Convention with soloist Renée Anne Louprette at Benaroya Hall. With New Music USA’s Amplifying Voices program and New Music for America, ASO has been a proud partner in co-commissions of new music, often as the smallest budget orchestra in these nation-wide projects.

Schulz was also instrumental in bringing Carnegie Hall’s Link Up program to Auburn. This program engages all 1,200 Auburn School District and Muckleshoot Tribal School 4th graders first in their classrooms through a curriculum that covers singing, recorder, and music theory and history. Their learning culminates in an interactive program in the concert hall where students play along with the Orchestra from their seats. Now in its third year, this program has already touched thousands of students’ lives.

Schulz said, “It is with immense gratitude and excitement that I continue my relationship with the staff, board of directors, and musicians of the Auburn Symphony Orchestra. Over the last five years we have not only survived and thrived through the pandemic, but we’ve welcomed acclaimed guest artists to the stage such as Randall Goosby and Bella Hristova as well as presented great music by Anna Clyne, Adam Schoenberg, Florence Price, Sergei

Rachmaninoff, Igor Stravinsky and many, many more. I can't wait for our community to hear and engage with all of the wonderful performances to come in the near future."

ASO wraps up the 2022-23 Season with two outstanding concerts conducted by Schulz: Dvorak's Cello Concerto featuring Seattle Symphony Principal Cellist Efe Baltacigil on April 30, and Everything Old is New Again on May 14 in collaboration with Early Music Seattle.

2023-24 Season

With Music Director Wesley Schulz at the helm, ASO announces its 27th Season that includes two outstanding soloists, one co-commission and Washington State premiere, and a wide variety of programs that are sure to inspire and delight. The 2023-24 Season includes four classical concerts, one holiday concert, one pops concert, two chamber music concerts, and three summer concerts.

Some highlights include violist Jordan Bak performing Bela Bartok's *Concerto for Viola* in January 2024 and percussionist Garrett Arney joining the Orchestra for Emmanuel Sejourne's *Concerto for Marimba and Orchestra* in April 2024. ASO is also proud to be a partner in co-commissioning *The Cold Mountain Suite* by Jennifer Higdon, offering the Washington State Premiere in January 2024. The piece is inspired by the Cold War era novel by Charles Frazier. ASO's annual pops concert takes inspiration from adventure films like *Wonder Woman* and *Fantastic Beasts and Where to Find Them*. ASO's annual Holiday Spectacular features a live performance of the soundtrack to the beloved film, *The Snowman*, plus our annual sing-along and much more.

Auburn Symphony Orchestra musicians can be found out in the community over the summer. Free performances take place at the Auburn Farmers Market on July 16 and for the City of Auburn's Summer Sounds series on August 3. ASO's third annual concert at Soos Creek Botanical Garden caps off the summer season on August 27. ASO's Chamber Series is changing to a new night - Thursday - at St. Matthew's Episcopal Church in Auburn.

Subscriptions go on sale April 3 offering the best seats at the best price - 6 concerts for the price of 5 with a full season package. 4-concert packages are also available. Single tickets go on sale June 30. Details are available at auburnsymphony.org.