



ELGIN SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

News Release
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ESO attracts top talent for 2011-2012 guest conductor appearances

In just over one month, the Elgin Symphony Orchestra confirmed all open guest conductor appearances for its 2011-2012 performance season.

The guest conductor slots became available on short notice when former music director Robert Hanson retired. Mark Mallamo, ESO's director of operations and artistic administration, notes that an abundance of highly qualified candidates enabled the ESO to select from the best possible talent pool.

"It was a privilege to choose from the best of the best," commented Mallamo. "We've lined up several very exciting conductors for the coming season." Though all 2011-2012 guest conductor slots are filled, the ESO estimates that it has a waiting list numbering 75 or more interested conductors. "I still get phone calls every day," said Mallamo.

CEO Dale Lonis explains that the high levels of interest stem from the reputation that ESO musicians have earned over time. "Our musicians are among the best to be found anywhere. Guest artists know that and want to work with us," said Lonis.

Conductors for the season are as follows:

September 23-25 "Love and War: Russian Spectacular"

The 2011-2012 season opens with Ignat Solzhenitsyn on the podium. He is principal guest conductor of the Moscow Symphony Orchestra and son of the famed Nobel Prize winner Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn. Solzhenitsyn has just stepped down after six seasons as music director of the Chamber Orchestra of Philadelphia to become its conductor laureate. He is much in demand as a guest conductor, having recently led the symphonies of Baltimore, Buffalo, Dallas, Indianapolis, Nashville, New Jersey, North Carolina, Seattle, Toledo, and Toronto as well as many of the major orchestras in Russia. His career as a piano soloist is no less illustrious, having earned him the prestigious Avery Fisher Career Grant. Solzhenitsyn last performed with the ESO in November 2001.

November 5-6 "American Icons: Sights and Sounds"

In addition to other programs that already include him, ESO associate conductor Stephen Squires conducts "American Icons," ESO's "'Tis the Season" holiday program (December 9-11) and "How the West Was Won" (February 17-19). Audiences enjoy Squires' warm and engaging style. In addition to his 20 years with the ESO, Squires is principal conductor and professor of conducting in the music conservatory at Roosevelt University's Chicago College of Performing Arts. He maintains numerous professional appointments including music director of the Mendelssohn Chamber Orchestra in Rockford, principal conductor of the Salt Creek Ballet Company, music director of the Illinois Brass Band, and music director of the Millar Brass in Evanston.

January 6-8, 2012 "Forces of Nature"

Widely recognized as one of America's finest young conductors, Daniel Hege conducts the ESO's January concerts. Hege served for eleven seasons as the music director of the Syracuse Symphony and in June 2009, was appointed music director of the Wichita Symphony, beginning his tenure with that orchestra in September 2010. He last performed with the ESO in April 2007.

February 3-5, 2012 "My Passionate Valentine"

New to the ESO, conductor Jose Luis Gomez skyrocketed to the top of the international music scene after winning the 2010 International Sir Georg Solti Conductor's Competition in Frankfurt. His current position of assistant conductor with the Frankfurt Radio Symphony Orchestra was created especially for him following the competition. The Venezuelan-born, Spanish conductor continues to electrify concert halls around the globe as he makes conducting debuts with numerous orchestras.

March 2-4, 2012 "Two Titans and an Empress"

Audience favorite Tania Miller returns to the ESO to conduct an all-Beethoven program in early March 2012. Miller is music director at the Victoria Symphony, located in British Columbia. She is held in high regard for her vibrant and dynamic approach to conducting. She is a frequent guest conductor throughout North America.

March 30-April 1, 2012 "Headliners: Bach, Mozart, Mendelssohn and Laredo"

"Headliners" features the biggest names in classical music when the popular and acclaimed Jaime Laredo returns to the ESO for a showcase of violin virtuosity. In addition to an active career as a soloist and conductor with the world's foremost orchestras, Laredo is recognized internationally as a teacher of the highest caliber. Furthermore, he holds artistic appointments with the Vermont Symphony Orchestra, the Brandenburg Ensemble, the Fort Wayne Philharmonic and the 92nd Street Y in New York.

May 4-6, 2012 "One Thousand and One Nights"

Victor Yampolsky, another new conductor for the ESO, is an esteemed teacher, conductor, and violinist. Yampolsky serves as Carol F. and Arthur L. Rice Jr. University Professor in Music Performance at the Northwestern University School of Music, music director of the Peninsula Music Festival in Door County, Wisconsin, music director emeritus of the Omaha Symphony, as well as the honorary director of the Scotia Festival of Music in Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada.

Tickets to all ESO concerts are now on sale. Subscriptions and tickets for individual events are both available. The ESO Box Office is located at 20 DuPage Court in downtown Elgin near Al's Cafe & Creamery and the Elgin Area Chamber of Commerce. ESO box office hours are Monday through Friday, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. To purchase tickets, please call the Box Office at 847-888-4000 or order online at www.elginsymphony.org. Most ESO performances take place at the Hemmens Cultural Center in downtown Elgin, with the exception of four concerts per year at Schaumburg's Prairie Center for the Arts.

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