



CONTACT: Ann Stewart

Communications Manager

Cincinnati Chamber Orchestra

513.871.7465 Office 513.910.3488 Cell

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Cincinnati Chamber Orchestra Announces Music Director Finalists

The Cincinnati Chamber Orchestra has announced the five finalist candidates for the position of Music Director who will lead the orchestra starting in fall, 2016. They are: Donato Cabrera, Sarah Ioannides, Kelly Kuo, Daniel Meyer, and Eckart Preu. The position of Music Director of the CCO has only been held by four conductors in the past 41 years: Paul Nadler (1974-1984), Gerhard Samuel (1984-1991), Keith Lockhart (1992-2000), and Mischa Santora (2001-2014).

Each of the five finalist candidates will conduct an audition concert, where the audience will be asked to participate in a survey giving feedback on each conductor. The first candidate to audition for the permanent Music Director position will be CCO Interim Music Director **Kelly Kuo**. His audition concert will take place on **Thursday, September 3, 2015**. The other four candidates will each have an audition concert during **Summermusik 2016**.

“We at the CCO were both humbled and flattered to receive nearly 200 applications from three continents for the position of Music Director,” said search committee chair and Board Vice President **Wes Needham**. “The committee has spent over six months in its review, and has had the pleasure of getting to know many talented candidates. The CCO has a long history of excellence in artistic leadership, and we have labored enthusiastically to find a passionate, vibrant leader to continue our tradition of world-class chamber music. We are excited to arrive at this stage in our process, and announce the five finalists for the next Music Director of the Cincinnati Chamber Orchestra.”

Donato Cabrera presently serves as Resident Conductor, San Francisco Symphony; and Music Director of the San Francisco Youth Orchestra, California Symphony, and New Hampshire Music Festival. He is the former Music Director of the Green Bay Symphony Orchestra and former associate conductor for the

San Francisco Opera. He holds a Master of Music in Orchestral Conducting from the University of Illinois, Champaign-Urbana, and an Artist Diploma in conducting from the Manhattan School of Music.

“I’m thrilled to be a Music Director finalist for the Cincinnati Chamber Orchestra,” said Mr. Cabrera. “The CCO has a rich history of artistic collaboration and innovative programming, and I’ve already started to think of some of the repertoire that I’d like to explore and perform. I’m very much looking forward to sharing the stage with these wonderful, talented musicians next summer.”

Mr. Cabrera will guest conduct the CCO at his audition concert that will take place **August 20, 2016**. For more information about Donato Cabrera – www.donatocabrera.com

Sarah Ioannides will be familiar to Cincinnati audiences, since she is a former assistant conductor of the Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra and former Music Director of the Cincinnati Symphony Youth Orchestra (2002-2004). She is presently Music Director of the Tacoma Symphony Orchestra and the Spartanburg Philharmonic. She holds a diploma in conducting from the Curtis Institute of Music, and a Master in Orchestral Conducting from Juilliard School of Music.

“I am thrilled to return to Cincinnati and feel very honored to be selected as a finalist in the Chamber Orchestra’s search for a new Music Director,” said Ms. Ioannides. “Cincinnati has remained in my heart since I left the Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra’s conducting staff and took the reins of my own orchestras. I am excited about the possibilities ahead for Summermusik and look forward to creating a very special, exciting and memorable evening with the orchestra next summer!”

Ms. Ioannides will guest conduct the CCO at her audition concert that will take place **August 27, 2016**. For more information about Sarah Ioannides – www.sarahioannides.net

Kelly Kuo is currently interim Music Director of the Cincinnati Chamber Orchestra, Artistic Director of the Oregon Mozart Players, and Music Director and Conductor of the Butler Opera Center at The University of Texas at Austin. Prior to his current positions he was Music Director of the Xavier University Chamber Orchestra, Assistant Conductor of the Cincinnati Chamber Orchestra, and Assistant and Artistic Administrator for Opera Pacific. He holds a Master in Music in Piano from the Manhattan School of Music and a Bachelor of Arts from the University of Oregon where he majored in both music and Chinese.

“It has been an honor to help the CCO develop an innovative and dynamic festival which has already planted seeds to deepen relationships with its stakeholders, musicians, and the community it serves,” said Mr. Kuo. “There are plenty of reasons to be optimistic about this organization, and I am thrilled to be one of the five Music Director candidates who are being considered to cultivate the next chapter for the Cincinnati Chamber Orchestra.”

Mr. Kuo’s audition concert will be the closing concert of Summermusik 2015 on **September 3, 2015**. For more information about Kelly Kuo – www.kellykuo.com

Daniel Meyer is Music Director of the Erie Philharmonic and Asheville Symphony, and Artistic Director of the Westmoreland Symphony Orchestra. He is the former Assistant Conductor of the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra and Knoxville Symphony Orchestra, as well as former Music Director of the Pittsburgh Youth Symphony Orchestra. He was a doctoral student at Boston University’s College of Fine

Arts, where he won the Orchestral Conducting Award. He holds a Master in Music in Conducting from the College-Conservatory of Music, University of Cincinnati.

“I think the CCO has a bright future,” said Mr. Meyer. “As a CCM student, I remember how impressed I was by the orchestra and its programming at Memorial Hall. I see now that the CCO has taken some courageous steps to strengthen its place in the rich arts life of Cincinnati, especially with its Summermusik festival format. I believe there is an enormous amount of potential to be creative, to be bold, and to curate musical events that capitalize on the talented musicians and artistic partners of the CCO. Whether it’s creating uniquely themed concerts, inviting unusual collaborators, interviewing composers or performers, or saying a few salient words before I conduct... I am always looking for ways to excite a new listener while challenging the long-time fan.”

Mr. Meyer will guest conduct the CCO at his audition concert that will take place on **August 13, 2016**. For more information about Daniel Meyer – www.danielmeyermusic.com

Eckart Preu is currently Music Director for Spokane Symphony and Stamford Symphony. He is the former Associate Conductor of Richmond Symphony and Resident Conductor for the American Symphony. He has a Graduate Professional Degree in Orchestral Conducting from Hartt School of Music, and received his Conducting Diploma from the Conservatory of Music Weimar, Germany.

“I am enthusiastic about my collaboration with the Cincinnati Chamber Orchestra – an inspiring partner with a commitment to re-think and re-define what a chamber orchestra in the 21st century is all about,” said Mr. Preu. “I am looking forward to a group of fantastic musicians who are not only passionate about performing, but also willing to rip the dusty wig off classical music.”

Mr. Preu will guest conduct the CCO at his audition concert that will take place on **September 1, 2016**. For more information about Eckart Preu – www.orchestraconductor.org

Link to musician bios and photos:

https://www.dropbox.com/sh/uy6n95zj1svw8zo/AACHqTrLXhrN8XPPysPdxp_8a?dl=0

ABOUT THE CINCINNATI CHAMBER ORCHESTRA...

The Cincinnati Chamber Orchestra is an independent ensemble of 32 professional musicians that celebrated its 40th anniversary season in 2014, and launched an innovative festival – Summermusik – in August, 2015. The CCO offers a vibrant and fresh musical experience in an intimate and informal setting, for both the seasoned and novice concert patron. The CCO’s size allows for flexibility and creativity in programming, the ideal ensemble for presenting orchestral works ranging from the Baroque and Classical eras to commissioned works by contemporary composers. Collaborations have become a hallmark of the CCO, including ongoing partnerships with VAE: Cincinnati’s Vocal Arts Ensemble and Madcap Puppets.

2015 Summermusik sponsors include Macy’s Inc., Chavez Properties, USA Eagle Corporation, The Wohlgemuth Herschede Foundation, Rosemary and Mark Schlachter, the Robert A. and Marian K. Kennedy Charitable Trust, The John A. Schroth Family Charitable Trust, PNC Bank, Trustee, Jonathan and Nancy Lippincott Family Fund of The Greater Cincinnati Foundation, Huntington Bank and ArtsWave.