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Sao Paulo Symphony Orchestra appoints Thierry Fischer as Music Director, effective March 2020

Current Music Director Marin Alsop becomes Conductor Emeritus

The São Paulo Symphony Orchestra (OSESP), long recognised as South America's leading symphony orchestra, today announced the appointment of Swiss conductor **Thierry Fischer** as its next Music Director. Fischer will conduct the Orchestra for eight weeks in 2020 and for 12 weeks in subsequent years.

Fischer was the first choice for the search committee led by OSESP's musicians, management, board members and international advisors who were all impressed by his inspirational music making in concert and his rigorous attention to style and clarity of sound in rehearsal.

Fischer's first concert as Music Director Designate will be on 9 July 2019 on the 20th anniversary of the opening of the Orchestra's home, the Sala São Paulo. In his first concerts as Music Director he will conduct Beethoven's *Missa solemnis*, part of the São Paulo Symphony Orchestra's wide-ranging Beethoven 250 cycle. In 2020 Fischer will conduct Beethoven's Symphonies Nos. 1 – 8, with Marin Alsop conducting the Ninth in her last concerts as Music Director in December 2019.

Current Music Director, **Marin Alsop**, will assume the title of Conductor Emeritus. Since her appointment in 2012, Alsop is credited with having raised the quality of music making by the São Paulo Symphony Orchestra and for leading it in many award-winning recordings and tours, including its latest when it became the first South American orchestra to tour China.

From its home in one of the world's most beautiful concert halls, the Sala São Paulo, the São Paulo Symphony Orchestra is internationally recognised for its world-class level of playing, broad repertoire, commissions, education work throughout the São Paulo State area, award-winning recordings, the live-streaming of its concerts to viewers around the world and for the Winter Festival of Campos do Jordão, the biggest classical music festival in South America which this year celebrates its 50th anniversary.

Thierry Fischer's most recent appearances with the São Paulo Symphony Orchestra in September 2018 were with a typically eclectic programme of Berlioz's *Symphonie*

fantastique – a signature work for Fischer – and the Latin American premiere of a new flute concerto written for Emmanuel Pahud by Philippe Manoury.

Established as an experienced Music Director, (13 years at the Utah Symphony and positions with the Seoul Philharmonic, Nagoya Philharmonic and BBC National Orchestra of Wales), Fischer is celebrated for his imaginative programming, recordings and elevating the work of the Orchestras he's associated with.

Thierry Fischer commented:

“For me it was a coup de foudre. I was instantly excited by these players who have an infectious ambition to be the best example of what an orchestra can be in the 21st century. Their embrace of projects that challenge them and their attitude in approaching anything asked of them is fed by living in this great, vibrant, audacious, creative city. Their confidence and hunger is a magnetic force that is immensely exciting to me. I felt this from my first rehearsal with them and felt instantly connected to their aversion to repeating what's been done before or doing things for the sake of it. I am deeply excited about what we can do together in the years ahead.”

Marcelo Lopes, São Paulo Symphony Orchestra's Executive Director commented:

“The São Paulo Symphony Orchestra is ambitious for its future as a great symphony orchestra committed to expanding the repertoire of the classical canon to include Latin American music and to increasing access to great music throughout the world. In Thierry Fischer we know we have found the right Music Director to continue and expand on the great work done by Marin Alsop who everyone at the São Paulo Symphony Orchestra thanks for her invaluable contribution over the last eight years.”

Arthur Nestrovski, São Paulo Symphony Orchestra's Artistic Director commented:

“From the very first encounter, Thierry's unique talent, his depth of knowledge, and sheer enthusiasm for music have been an inspiration to us all. We hope the Brazilian experience will be inspiring for him too, and we are very happy to welcome him to the São Paulo Symphony Orchestra.”

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Editor's Notes

Sao Paulo Symphony Orchestra

Founded in 1954, the São Paulo Symphony Orchestra (OSESP) is internationally renowned for its musical excellence and as a major force in the cultural life of both the state of São Paulo and Brazil as a whole, promoting deep cultural and social changes.

The Sala São Paulo was opened in 1999 and in the following years, Symphonic, Chamber, Youth and Children's Choirs were created, along with the Centre for Musical Documentation, educational programmes, a music publishing division and the Music Academy.

The creation of the OSESP Foundation in 2005, represents a milestone in the orchestra's history. With former Brazilian president Fernando Henrique Cardoso heading up the Orchestra's board, the Foundation puts into practice new management standards that have become benchmarks in the Brazilian cultural environment.

The São Paulo Symphony Orchestra, Sala São Paulo and all music and educational projects are public programmes generously supported by the São Paulo State Government along with many private sponsors.

Appointed in 2011, Marin Alsop has toured with the Orchestra to London's BBC Proms and Royal Festival Hall; the Edinburgh and Lucerne Festivals, as well as many other leading international venues such as Amsterdam's Concertgebouw, Berlin's Philharmonie Hall and the Salle Pleyel in Paris. Recordings include the complete Prokofiev symphonies for Naxos.

www.osesp.art.br/home

Thierry Fischer

Thierry Fischer was appointed Music Director of the Utah Symphony in 2009 and took up the position full-time in September 2011; he leaves in August 2022 to become Music Director Emeritus. There he has proved himself a first-rate orchestra builder, and has developed a huge and loyal audience base, charmed donors, attracted top players from illustrious orchestras across the US, and refreshed the programming with ground-breaking cycles and innovative programme combinations. He took the orchestra to Carnegie Hall for the first time in many years, commissioned new works every season, and recorded Mahler symphonies and has just completed a Saint-Saens cycle for Hyperion – both with excellent international press.

Fischer has been Principal Guest of the Seoul Philharmonic for the past 3 years, touring to Europe with them in December 2019, and has extended to the end of 2020; and remains Honorary Conductor of the Nagoya Philharmonic in Japan. He was Principal Conductor of the BBC National Orchestra of Wales 2006-2012, appearing annually at the BBC Proms and touring internationally.

Fischer has guest conducted orchestras of the calibre of London Philharmonic, Royal Philharmonic, Boston Symphony, Atlanta Symphony, Oslo Philharmonic, Rotterdam Philharmonic, Maggio Musicale Firenze, Chamber Orchestra of Europe and Ensemble Intercontemporain, to name but a few.

www.thierryfischer.com