



COURTNEY LEWIS

MUSIC DIRECTOR

HASKELL ENDOWED CHAIR

DAVID M. STRICKLAND

CHAIR

ROBERT MASSEY

PRESIDENT AND CEO

JACKSONVILLE SYMPHONY INVITED TO PERFORM AT THE KENNEDY CENTER ONE OF FOUR SYMPHONIES SELECTED FOR SHIFT: A FESTIVAL OF AMERICAN ORCHESTRAS

Jacksonville, FL (June 13, 2018) --- The Jacksonville Symphony is one of four American orchestras to be selected to participate in the Kennedy Center and Washington Performing Arts' prestigious *SHIFT: A Festival of American Orchestras* in March of 2020. The other three participating orchestras will be the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra, the Knoxville Symphony Orchestra and the Orpheus Chamber Orchestra. The announcement was made by Robert Massey, President & CEO of the Jacksonville Symphony.

SHIFT: A Festival of American Orchestras highlights the vitality of American orchestras and seeks to showcase how orchestras are responding to and reflecting their communities in meaningful ways, inside and outside the concert hall. *SHIFT* re-imagines what such a project can be when anchored by two of the nation's leading cultural institutions—the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts and Washington Performing Arts—in the nation's capital. By giving this festival of American orchestras a truly national platform in Washington, D.C., and by expanding the project scope to create a brief residency featuring inspired community-focused programming, connectivity across the orchestras, and engaging discussions, *SHIFT* demonstrates that North American orchestras are doing vital, high-impact, exciting work.

A fundamental belief held by both the Kennedy Center and Washington Performing Arts is that an orchestra's artistic role is to lead and not follow, and that imaginative programming advances, and not just satisfies, expectations. They firmly believe that each orchestra instigates and inspires unique and powerful connections with other organizations throughout its home community.

The festival will begin on March 23 and the Jacksonville Symphony will be the first to perform on the John F. Kennedy Center stage the following evening, Tuesday, March 24. The Symphony's program will explore the many influences that jazz artists and composers have had on traditional classical composers. The theme is "Bridges" and will feature a work by the Symphony's Mary Carr Patton Composer-in-Residence, Courtney Bryan. Also included on the program is Aaron Copland's famed Clarinet Concerto, performed by New York Philharmonic Principal Clarinetist Anthony McGill, Henri Dutilleux's *Métoboles*, a work that Duke Ellington wrote specifically for the Jacksonville Symphony entitled *Celebration*(premiered in 1972), and Igor Stravinsky's Symphony in C.

"The Jacksonville Symphony is honored to be recognized as one of the country's most innovative and inspiring 21st century orchestras," said Massey. "Each year, we enrich the human spirit of more than 250,000 individuals throughout the First Coast through symphonic music. We're excited to represent Jacksonville on a national stage."

The *SHIFT* application required the Symphony to discuss its goals and accomplishments as well as propose new and creative programs that the organization would present if accepted into the festival. Although all of these details covered a lot of ground, first and foremost, the *SHIFT* application focused on the Symphony's role in the First Coast community.

"From the first time Robert and I spoke about the future of the Symphony, we both agreed that our community and our audience were an imperative part of our growth," said Music Director Courtney Lewis. "We have endeavored to produce accessible and engaging programming that not only serves to

nurture and build the audience of today, and tomorrow, but creates a culture of symphonic music that has the ability to impact our community and its residents. Being accepted into the *SHIFT* festival is a resounding affirmation that we have been making progress towards the goal we set out to accomplish three years ago.”

As a *SHIFT* participant, the Jacksonville Symphony will participate in the six-day festival that will feature “mini-residencies” throughout Washington, D.C. The Symphony will take its innovative and creative artistic ideas out into the D.C. area to showcase its ability to engage with the community. During the six-day period, Symphony personnel and musicians will also have the opportunity to collaborate and exchange ideas with fellow *SHIFT* participants.

“Three years ago, we embarked on a five-year campaign to grow and stabilize the Jacksonville Symphony within our community,” said Massey. “In 2020, that campaign will come to an end and I can think of no better way to celebrate that endeavor than through the remarkable opportunity for this orchestra to participate in *SHIFT*.”

#

The Jacksonville Symphony is North Florida’s leading music nonprofit offering live performances at Jacoby Symphony Hall in the Times-Union Center for the Performing Arts and other venues throughout the area. In addition, the Symphony provides music instruction for youth and operates the Jacksonville Symphony Youth Orchestras. For more information about the Symphony, visit JaxSymphony.org, like them at facebook.com/JaxSymphony; follow them on @jaxsymphony, on Instagram at JaxSymphony and on YouTube at Jacksonville Symphony.