

INTERNATIONAL CELLIST ALISA WEILERSTEIN WILL JOIN THE SYMPHONY FOR ANNUAL GALA

Jacksonville, FL (February 20, 2019) --- World-renowned cellist Alisa Weilerstein will join Music Director Courtney Lewis and the Jacksonville Symphony for their annual Gala on Saturday, March 2, 2019. The performance will open with Schumann's Fourth Symphony and close with Weilerstein performing one of the most famous cello concertos of all time: Antonín Dvořák's Cello Concerto in B minor.

"There is a spine-tingling thrill and generosity of feeling to Weilerstein's performance of Dvořák that make it irresistible." - The London Telegraph

Event Details and Tickets: The *2019 Symphony Gala* will feature a Red Carpet Reception, concert, VIP dinner with Music Director Courtney Lewis and Alisa Weilerstein, and a Silent Disco to end the evening. There are a *limited* number of VIP packages (reception, concert, dinner, silent disco) left for this concert and they can be purchased by calling the Symphony's Development Department at 904.354.1473.

Concert-only tickets start at \$75 and can be purchased at JaxSymphony.org or by calling the Symphony Ticket Office at 904.354.5547. Patrons can add on the pre-concert Red Carpet Reception to their Concert Ticket purchase for only \$100. Reception includes complimentary hors d'oeuvres and cocktails.

NEW this season is the addition of a Young Professionals package for \$250. This includes the Red Carpet Reception, concert, VIP dinner and the Silent Disco. Please call the Symphony's Development Department at 904.354.1473 to reserve your Young Professionals tickets.

Auction: NEW to this season's Gala is the addition of two auctions: a Live Auction for those attending and an online Silent Auction open to the public. The Live Auction will be held for VIP patrons attending the Gala Dinner and will feature four high-price items including a dinner for eight with Music Director Courtney Lewis and a catered cruise for 10 on the St. Johns River on Haskell's *Casa Mia*. The Silent Auction will have over 50 items including tickets to the Masters Golf tournament, luxurious vacations, artwork and more. A link for the Silent Auction will be posted on the Symphony's website on Monday, February 25, 2019.

Alisa Weilerstein: "A young cellist whose emotionally resonant performances of both traditional and contemporary music have earned her international recognition,...Weilerstein is a consummate performer, combining technical precision with impassioned musicianship." So stated the MacArthur Foundation when awarding Alisa Weilerstein a 2011 MacArthur "genius grant" Fellowship, prompting the *New York Times* to respond: "Any fellowship that recognizes the vibrancy of an idealistic musician like Ms. Weilerstein... deserves a salute from everyone in classical music."

Born in 1982, Weilerstein discovered her love for the cello at just two and a half, when her grandmother assembled a makeshift set of instruments from cereal boxes to entertain her while she was ill with chicken pox. Although immediately drawn to the Rice Krispies box cello, Weilerstein soon grew frustrated that it didn't produce any sound. After persuading her parents to buy her a real cello at the age of four, she developed her natural affinity for the instrument and gave her first public performance six months later! At 13, she played

Tchaikovsky's "Rococo" Variations for her Cleveland Orchestra debut, and in March 1997, at the age of 15, she made her first Carnegie Hall appearance with the New York Youth Symphony.

In addition to making a splash on stage, Weilerstien has also made an impact outside of the concert hall. In November 2008, Weilerstein, who was diagnosed with type 1 diabetes when she was nine, became a Celebrity Advocate for the Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation. "I really wanted to impress upon newly diagnosed families, especially young children, that there's nothing you can't do," she says. "Once you have the right information, this is something you can live with and thrive with.

Throughout her career, Weilerstein has appeared with all the foremost orchestras of the United States and Europe, collaborating with conductors including Marin Alsop, Sir Andrew Davis and Gustavo Dudamel. She has recorded multiple works, including Dvořák's Cello Concerto (the piece she will perform with the Symphony) with the Czech Philharmonic, which went on to top the U.S. classical chart. Committed to expanding the cello repertoire, Weilerstein is an ardent champion of new music. She has premiered multiple works, including Pascal Dusapin's *Outscape*, Matthias Pintscher's Cello Concerto and two works by Grammy Award-nominee Joseph Hallman.

When: Saturday, March 2, 2019 at 7 p.m.

Schedule of Events:

- 5:30 p.m. – Red Carpet Reception & Silent Auction
- 7 p.m. – Performance Starts in Jacoby Symphony Hall
- 8:30 p.m. – VIP Gala Dinner on the Moran Theater Stage
- 10 p.m. – Dessert and Silent Disco

Where: Jacoby Symphony Hall, Times-Union Center for the Performing Arts

Sponsors: Presented by Bank of America/Merrill Lynch. Chairing the event is Martha Barrett from Bank of America/Merrill Lynch and Jacksonville Symphony Board member.

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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 JacksonvilleSymphony.