

THE JACKSONVILLE SYMPHONY ENDS THE SEASON WITH MAHLER FIVE

Jacksonville, FL (May 28, 2019) --- On June 7 & 8, the Jacksonville Symphony will perform its season finale of Mahler's Fifth Symphony and Alban Berg's *Lulu* Suite. The concert will be conducted by Music Director Courtney Lewis.

WHAT: Composed in the 1920s and 30s, *Lulu* is Alban Berg's second and final opera consisting of two acts and an incomplete third act due to his untimely death in December 1935. Prior to his death, Berg put together 'Symphonic Pieces from the opera *Lulu*' which is known today as the Suite from *Lulu*. *Lulu* is a tragedy that follows the story of the anti-heroine Lulu who uses her seductive prowess to gain wealth and success until she comes to a violent end at the hands of Jack the Ripper.

Composed in 1901 and 1902, Mahler's Fifth Symphony was inspired by Alma Maria Schindler, whom he married in March of 1902. The piece consists of five movements divided into three parts. The symphony begins with a lone trumpet signaling a funeral march and painting an emotional scene. It then leads to the second part in which Mahler develops a lively tune in the scherzo. The third and final part of the symphony consists of an Adagietto, written for his wife Alma, and concludes with a rondo combining elements featured in the previous movements to create a dramatic ending of triumph over tragedy; a fitting end for a symphony as well as for a season.

WHO: Having been the Jacksonville Symphony's music director for four years, Courtney Lewis has established himself as one of his generation's most talented conductors. Lewis' previous seasons in Jacksonville have featured an expanded repertoire including Mahler and Sibelius cycles, Adès' *Asyla*, Ligeti's Piano Concerto, and Andres' *The Blind Banister*, while raising the caliber of guest artists with performances by violinist Anthony Marwood and pianists Lang Lang, Inon Barnatan and Jonathan Biss. In addition to initiating the return of opera productions with Humperdinck's *Hänsel und Gretel* in 2017, the 2017-2018 season featured Renée Fleming at the annual Gala, and Christine Brewer with Jay Hunter Morris performing selections from Wagner's *Götterdämmerung*.

As a young conductor, Courtney Lewis served as assistant conductor of the New York Philharmonic, associate conductor of the Minnesota Orchestra, and Dudamel Fellow with the Los Angeles Philharmonic. From 2008 to 2014, Lewis was the music director of Boston's acclaimed Discovery Ensemble, a chamber orchestra dedicated not only to giving concerts of contemporary and established repertoire at the highest level of musical and technical excellence, but also bringing live music into the least privileged parts of Boston with workshops in local schools.

Born in Belfast, Northern Ireland, Lewis read music at the University of Cambridge during which time he studied composition with Robin Holloway and clarinet with Dame Thea King. After completing a master's degree with a focus on the late music of György Ligeti, he attended the Royal Northern College of Music, where his teachers included Sir Mark Elder and Clark Rundell.

WHEN: The performances will take place on Friday and Saturday, June 7 & 8, both at 8 p.m. *Insight*, the Symphony's pre-concert talk with the conductor, will take place an hour before each performance: Friday and Saturday at 7 p.m.

WHERE: The performances will take place in the Times-Union Center for the Performing Arts' Jacoby Symphony Hall.

TICKETS: For more information or to purchase tickets, please call the Ticket Office at 904.354.5547 or visit JaxSymphony.org.

SPONSORS: *Season Finale! Mahler 5* is a part of the *Florida Blue Masterworks Series*.

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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 Twitter @jaxsymphony, on Instagram at JaxSymphony and on YouTube at JacksonvilleSymphony.