

The Jacksonville Symphony Appoints Kevin Fitzgerald as Associate Conductor

Jacksonville, FL: Following an international search, the Jacksonville Symphony is pleased to announce that Kevin Fitzgerald will serve as associate conductor beginning in the 2022/23 season.

"Kevin comes to us with impeccable credentials and a wealth of experience," said Courtney Lewis, Music Director of the Jacksonville Symphony. "We're delighted to welcome him to the Symphony family."

Fitzgerald has garnered many accolades, establishing himself among the list of today's rising young conductors. Fitzgerald had the high honor of serving as one of two conducting fellows at the 2021 Tanglewood Music Center and was a 2020 and 2021 recipient of the prestigious Career Assistance Award from the Sir Georg Solti Foundation, U.S. Fitzgerald was also the sole American selected to participate in the 2018 Tanglewood Music Center Conducting Seminar.

Fitzgerald's other distinguished, nationwide engagements include performances with the North Carolina Symphony and several ensembles at Manhattan School of Music (MSM). Fitzgerald was also the MSM Symphony Orchestra's preparation conductor for MSM's April 2019 Centennial Gala Concert in Carnegie Hall. Next season, he'll perform Messiaen's "From the Canyons to the Stars" with the Chamber Orchestra of Pittsburgh.

"I couldn't be more ecstatic about joining the esteemed Jacksonville Symphony as their next Associate Conductor," said Fitzgerald. "Jacksonville has its own truly great orchestra, and I can't wait to collaborate with the musicians to bring great music to our diverse community."

He will arrive at the Jacksonville Symphony coming from his current positions as Assistant Conductor of the Alabama Symphony and Music Director of the Alabama Symphony Youth Orchestra where he has served since 2018.

A native of Brighton, Michigan, Fitzgerald's parents worked as a diesel mechanic and a school bus driver. He fell into music by chance through joining his middle school band program. Four years later, he began studying with Ramon Parcells, Principal Trumpet of the Detroit Symphony. At age 16, he began studying conducting and became obsessed.

"Coming from a blue-collar background, if it were not for public school education, I would not be a musician today," said Fitzgerald. "Therefore, I deeply believe that every person can fall in love with symphonic music, no matter their background. An orchestra is a symbol of

collaboration, communication, and cooperation--ideas that desperately need exemplification in our world today."

Fitzgerald's debut with the Symphony will be on September 23, 2022, when he conducts the Community Open House performance. He will also conduct for a variety of *Pops*, *Coffee* and *Symphony in 60* concerts along with a classical performance in the 2023/24 season.

About Kevin Fitzgerald

In his commitment to uplifting communities through music, Fitzgerald conducted a concert of Beethoven's Ninth Symphony in 2017 with musicians from the Detroit, Lansing and Grand Rapids Symphonies in response to the federal travel ban limiting immigration. Raising over \$10,000, the funds were donated to the International Rescue Committee and Freedom House Detroit, organizations which both support refugees.

In 2016, he also co-organized and conducted an impromptu performance in under 48 hours as a dedication to the victims of the Pulse Nightclub shooting in Orlando, Florida. The event, known as "Requiem for Orlando," featured over 400 volunteer musicians performing Mozart's Requiem Mass in d minor, K.626 and a full-capacity audience in Ann Arbor's Hill Auditorium.

Fitzgerald founded the Michigan-based contemporary music ensemble *ÆPEX* Contemporary Performance in 2015, which performs music by under-represented, twentieth and twenty-first century composers.

Fitzgerald received his bachelor's degrees in Trumpet and Music Theory from the Eastman School of Music, where he studied with James Thompson, Mark Scatterday and Brad Lubman. Under the tutelage of Kenneth Kiesler, he received his master's degree from the University of Michigan. Since then, he has participated in masterclasses with Michael Tilson Thomas and the New World Symphony, with Andris Nelsons and Alan Gilbert at Tanglewood, and with Matthias Pintscher at the Lucerne Festival Academy Orchestra.

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.

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