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CONDUCTOR JAMES DEPREIST APPOINTED DIRECTOR OF CONDUCTING AND ORCHESTRAL STUDIES AT THE JUILLIARD SCHOOL

Frequent and Popular Guest Artist Will be Resident Conductor

Conductor James DePreist has been named Director of Conducting and Orchestral Studies at The Juilliard School, beginning with the fall term in 2004. A frequent and popular guest conductor of Juilliard's orchestral ensembles for the past decade, Mr. DePreist will select via audition, and train, an expected class of five to six young conductors annually, in addition to leading at least four of the fourteen to sixteen concerts by Juilliard's orchestra and symphony during each season. Conducting students will be accepted into Juilliard's master of music degree program, and the school's elite doctor of musical arts program also may be open to conductors with exceptional credentials.

In making the announcement, Juilliard President Joseph W. Polisi said, "James DePreist brings extraordinary artistry and humanity to his new post at Juilliard. There is no question that he will continue the distinguished traditions in orchestral conducting that have been known at the School for many decades. His musical and personal integrity will exist as a model for all the members of our community."

As director of Juilliard's conducting and orchestral training programs, and the principal teacher, Mr. DePreist succeeds Otto-Werner Mueller, who was appointed Director of Orchestral Studies in 1986, and is retiring at the end of this school year. Mr. DePreist conducts his second Juilliard concert this season on Monday, April 26, when he leads the Juilliard Symphony in a program featuring Kernis' *New Era Dance*, Mozart's Symphony No. 41 in C, K. 551 ("Jupiter"), and the Mahler Symphony No. 1, at Carnegie Hall.

James DePreist is laureate music director of the Oregon Symphony and principal artistic advisor of the Phoenix Symphony. Previously he was music director of L'Orchestre Symphonique de Québec, Sweden's Malmo Symphony, L'Orchestre Philharmonique de Monte Carlo, and the Oregon Symphony, touring and recording extensively with each orchestra. He has been guest conductor with virtually every major orchestra in North America, and the leading orchestras of Amsterdam, Berlin, Budapest, Copenhagen, Helsinki, Manchester, Melbourne, Munich, Prague, Rome, Seoul, Stockholm, Stuttgart, Sydney, Tel Aviv, Tokyo, and Vienna. In April 2005, Mr. DePreist will make his London debut conducting the London Symphony Orchestra in a performance of Mahler's 5th Symphony, that later will be recorded. He appears regularly at the Aspen Music Festival, with the Boston Symphony at Tanglewood, and with The Philadelphia Orchestra at the Mann Music Center. Of his fifty-album discography, fifteen were recorded during his long tenure with the Oregon Symphony, including their most recent release, with soloist Niel DePonte, of Tomas Svoboda's Concerto for Marimba and Orchestra, which in December became the first of their recordings to be Grammy Award-nominated.

The close association between Mr. DePreist and The Juilliard School began in November 1987 when he led the Juilliard Orchestra in concert at Avery Fisher Hall with young Juilliard violinist Gil Shaham, as soloist in the Mendelssohn Concerto. He has returned to conduct at Juilliard nearly every season since.

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Born in Philadelphia in 1936, Mr. DePreist studied composition with Vincent Persichetti at the Philadelphia Conservatory of Music and earned bachelors and masters degrees from the University of Pennsylvania. A first prize-winner of the 1964 Mitropoulos Conducting Competition, he was selected by Leonard Bernstein to be an assistant conductor of the New York Philharmonic for the 1965-66 season. In 1969 made his highly acclaimed European debut with the Rotterdam Philharmonic, after which many prestigious appearances followed. Among his numerous awards are thirteen honorary doctorates, including one from The Juilliard School in 1993. He is an elected fellow of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences and the Royal Swedish Academy of Music; is a recipient of the Insignia of Commander of the Order of the Lion of Finland and the Medal of the City of Québec; and is an Officer of the Order of Cultural Merit of Monaco. Mr. DePreist is the author of two published books of poetry, and the nephew of the late legendary contralto, Marian Anderson.

Long known for its roster of renowned alumni in dance, drama, and all fields of music during its almost-100 year history, The Juilliard School has been the center of training for many accomplished orchestral conductors. Among them are Christian Badea, Herbert Blomstedt, Victoria Bond, Myung-Whun Chung, Catherine Comet, James Conlon, Dennis Russell Davies, Andreas Delfs, JoAnn Falletta, James Levine, and Leonard Slatkin. Many celebrated conductors also have taught at Juilliard – Albert Stoessel, Edgar Schenkman, Frederick Prausnitz, and the legendary Jean Morel, in addition to noted guest conductors who lead concerts and readings.

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For the first ten years after the school's founding in 1905, instrumentalists were taught ensemble disciplines via a small string orchestra conducted by violinist Louis J. Boestelman, who was a member of the faculty from 1911 – 1950. The New York Symphony Society, forerunner of today's New York Philharmonic, was pressed into service when an orchestra was needed at the school. Gradually winds were added, and in 1915 a student orchestra debuted at Aeolian Hall led by Juilliard's founder, Frank Damrosch.

In 1911, Damrosch initiated a training program for U. S. Army Band leaders, selected by audition and testing from regional Army band units coast-to-coast. Each year, five bandleaders were selected for study in a two-year program, and had as their lab ensemble a recruit band of 25 Army musicians, housed at Governor's Island. Strings sometimes supplemented the band, and until the program was relocated to Washington, DC in 1922, New York City saw frequent concerts by the Army Music School Symphony Orchestra and Army Music School Concert Wind Band.

Juilliard's first conducting class didn't arrive until 1934, taught by Albert Stoessel, a self-taught conductor, who would go on to head Juilliard's first opera department while still teaching the conductors. The syllabus included typical study such as 'the technic of gestures', score-reading, theory, harmony, and history, as well as 'stage department' and 'the conductor as drill-master and pedagogue'. There was a more far-reaching segment on 'radio and recording techniques', and another unit on "the conductor as Program-maker and 'Leader' in his Community", still considered important to the development of today's Juilliard artist. The young conductors worked with pianos and lab orchestras, but rarely were invited to conduct public performances. They were assigned one annual concert for the display of their growing technique, however. (This is another tradition that lives on in Juilliard's current Conductors' Concert, one in the series of weekly free lunchtime concerts at Alice Tully Hall called *Wednesdays at One*.) The graduate school at Juilliard did not grant degrees originally, and the school's first master of science degrees in conducting were conferred in 1948. Today, conducting students at Juilliard receive a master of music degree, and those with extraordinary musicianship and intellectual accomplishment may enter Juilliard's doctor of musical arts program with full-tuition funding made possible by the C. V. Starr Foundation.

Among those early Stoessel students were Hollywood composer/conductors Bernard Hermann and Jerome Moross, composers Elie Siegmeister and Robert Ward, arrangers Herschel Gilbert and Elliot Morgenstern, and a host of men who

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worked with the NBC Symphony in the hey day of radio broadcast – Dean Dixon, Richard Korn, and Robert Lawrence. Frederick Prausnitz and Edgar Schenkman, became noted teachers at Juilliard, two of a number of devoted pedagogues whose long tenures demonstrated their commitment to their students and the school. Mr. DePreist joins an illustrious list of master teachers at Juilliard who were part of a developing conducting program that coincided with a growing cultural awareness in 20th century America: Albert Stoessel, who taught at Juilliard 1927 – 1943; Edgar Schenkman, 1940 – 1948; Frederick Prausnitz, 1945 – 1961; Frederic Waldman, 1947 – 1964; Jean Morel, 1948 – 1971; Sixten Ehrling, 1973 – 1987. Visiting conductors have included Boulez, Bernstein, Colin Davis, von Karajan, Masur, Mehta, Norrington, Ormandy, Solti, and Temirkanov, among many others; the likes of Walter Hendl, André Kostelanetz, Fritz Reiner, and Max Rudolf taught in Juilliard’s summer school, which existed from 1932 to 1952.

In 1979, the Lila Acheson Wallace-funded Young Conductors Project was begun at Juilliard, vastly expanding performing opportunities with orchestras as part of the curriculum. It pointedly addressed the fact that, unlike typical musicians, a conductor’s ‘instrument’ – a full orchestra – was difficult to come by. The Young Conductors Project also was billed as the first year-round program for conductors that provided practical – meaning performance – experience (as opposed to multi-day or –week master classes and workshops).

In the post-war period when numerous orchestras were formed in the US, and cultural programs were expanding, there still was an overwhelming preference for Europeans to lead from the podium. Up until that time, only two Americans, Leonard Bernstein and Lorin Maazel, had been appointed as music director of a major American orchestra. Juilliard, and specifically its president, Peter Mennin, hoped to rectify that situation with a long term and thorough commitment to creating a core of world-class American conductors. Ironically, the Young Conductors Project’s intense study and frequent conducting experience were supervised by two Europeans, noted Swedish conductor Sixten Ehrling, and renowned Italian pedagogue Franco Ferrara.

In 1993 Juilliard became the host organization for the Seaver/NEA Conductors Award, its goal to identify young American conductors who were slated for major careers. Administering the selection in sometimes two- sometimes three-year cycles, Juilliard convened an Executive Council comprised of industry professional who awarded substantial artistic development grants of \$50,000 that could be used by the awardee for a remarkable and very personalized range of professional and enrichment projects, so long as they were devoted to the furtherment of a career. Additionally, recipients gained access to master conductors, orchestras, and other important resources to broaden and enrich their artistic perspectives, their musical leadership, and their technical and intellectual growth. Before it ended in 2002, the Seaver/NEA program compiled an impressive roster of awardees, including Kent Nagano and Hugh Wolff, Jahja Ling, Robert Spano, David Robertson, JoAnn Falletta, and others.

With the appointment of Mr. DePreist in 2004, Juilliard establishes its next foothold of training for the conductor in an increasingly global profession, using its experience and skills as pedagogue, mentor, administrator, and presenter to create the next generation of accomplished professionals. As the school approaches its centennial in 2005, new initiatives for touring, commissioning, curriculum, and outreach all place Juilliard’s orchestral ensembles and its young conductors in the forefront of activity.

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