

RICHMOND SYMPHONY

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Richmond Symphony names Valentina Peleggi as new Music Director

Richmond, Va. (April 7, 2020)—In the midst of this difficult time, the Richmond Symphony is pleased to share some very good news.

We are proud to announce the appointment of award-winning Italian conductor **Valentina Peleggi** as our next Music Director. Peleggi will begin her role on July 1, 2020, for an initial four-year period conducting at least ten weeks a season, making Peleggi our sixth Music Director, and first woman in that leadership role.

Peleggi's engagement comes after a two year search to replace former Music Director Steven Smith, who stepped down at the end of the 2018-19 season after a distinguished decade of service. The Search Committee, comprised of symphony musicians and board members, unanimously selected Peleggi after she spent two weeks with the Symphony in early March, garnering overwhelming support from the orchestra. Peleggi's repertoire for the masterworks concert included –

Rossini's Overture to *La gazza ladra* (The Thieving Magpie), Tchaikovsky's *Francesca da Rimini*, Opus 32, Joan Tower's *Fanfare for the Uncommon Woman*, No. 2, C. Schumann's *Piano Concerto in A Minor*, Opus 7 and Respighi's *Pines of Rome* with guest artist Angela Cheng, pianist.

Peleggi will conduct eight weeks of concerts in the 2020/21 Season, including opening the Symphony's season with a 'Big Tent' open-air community festival, four Masterworks concert weeks, and chamber orchestra concerts in the Symphony's Rush Hour and Metro Series.

Speaking to her appointment:

"The passion, enthusiasm and profound musical sensitivity of the musicians of the Richmond Symphony impressed me enormously from our very first rehearsal. Making music with these wonderful artists is truly a privilege!" said Peleggi. "I look forward to creating exciting new projects, sharing inspiring music with our community, and working with the Symphony's staff and the orchestra's innovative educational and choral programs. We will get through these challenging times as we focus on shaping and imagining the future together. I believe we will be a great team and I can't wait to call Richmond my new home."

Valentina Peleggi

Described by the BBC Music Magazine as "rising star", Peleggi has led orchestras from around the world, including the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, BBC Orchestra of Wales, Norrköping Symphony (Sweden), Orchestra della Toscana and Baltimore Symphony Orchestra, and will shortly release her first CD on Naxos.

Originally from Florence, Peleggi was the first Italian woman to enter the conducting program at the Royal Academy of Music in London, and was recently honoured with the title of Associate. Currently a Mackerras Fellow with the English National Opera and Guest Music Director with the Theatro São Pedro in São Paulo, Brazil, Peleggi previously served as Resident Conductor of the São Paulo Symphony Orchestra, Principal Conductor and Artistic Advisor of the São Paulo Symphony Chorus and as Music Director for ten years of the University Choir of Florence, where she now holds the position of Honorary Conductor after receiving a special award from the Italian Government in recognition of her work. She won the 2014 Conducting Prize at the Festival International de Inverno Campos do Jordão, the Bruno Walter Memorial Foundation Conducting Prize at the Cabrillo Festival of Contemporary Music in California, and the 2015-2017 Taki Concordia Conducting Fellowship under Marin Alsop.

David Fisk, Executive Director, commented: *"I am delighted that the Richmond Symphony has attracted Valentina Peleggi: her growing international reputation as one of the brightest talents of her generation makes her an exciting new addition to the American symphonic world. We look forward to her taking the orchestra to new heights, and to all we can do under her leadership to reinforce our commitment to making music - and music education - accessible to everyone, in the many communities we serve."*

Elisabeth Wollan, who led the Search Committee, commented: *"Within hours of Ms. Peleggi's first interaction with the Symphony, members of the search committee knew she was very special, and by the time of her Masterworks concerts, there was unanimous agreement that she was "the one." We have brought some wonderful and charismatic conductors to the stage this season, but Ms. Peleggi stands out as a superb and passionate leader who brings to the orchestra a remarkable depth of musicianship, a charming connection with audiences, and a deep respect for the RSO's commitment to this community. She is inspiring! We cannot wait to welcome her to Richmond."*

Interview opportunities with Valentina Peleggi are available, upon request.

High-res photos are available.

For more information about Valentina Peleggi, please visit:
<https://www.valentinapeleggi.com/>

About the Richmond Symphony (www.richmondsymphony.com)

Launching its 63rd Season in September 2020, the Richmond Symphony is the largest performing arts organization in Central Virginia. The organization includes an orchestra of more than 70 professional musicians, the 150-voice Richmond Symphony Chorus and more than 275 students in the Richmond Symphony Youth Orchestra programs.

Each season, more than 200,000 members of the community enjoy live concerts and radio broadcasts. The Symphony also provides educational outreach programs to more than 55,000 students and teachers each year and was one of 21 American orchestras initially selected as a leader in orchestra innovation by the League of American Orchestras through its Futures Fund Initiative. The Richmond Symphony is partially funded by the Virginia Commission for the Arts and the National Endowment for the Arts. Visit www.richmondsymphony.com for more information.

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