



**FAYETTEVILLE SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA ANNOUNCES NEW
MUSIC DIRECTOR FOLLOWING A TWO-YEAR INTERNATIONAL SEARCH**

Today, the Fayetteville Symphony Orchestra (FSO) announced that it has named Stefan Sanders as the new Music Director following a two-year, international search.

Sanders is an imaginative musician, devoted educator and ardent champion of many types of music. He currently holds the Montante Family Endowed Associate Conductor Chair with the Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra, where he leads performances on the Classical, Know the Score, and Pops series, as well as Education and Family concerts. Sanders also serves as the Music Director for the Round Rock Symphony (TX) where he is attracting much praise for innovative programming and collaborations with local arts organizations while attracting broader audiences and redefining the orchestra's role in its community.

"Stefan is exactly what the Fayetteville Symphony Orchestra needs for the future. He demonstrates a passion for artistic excellence as well as a desire to connect with our audience and our community," said Christine Kastner, Fayetteville Symphony President/CEO. The Symphony announced its decision Saturday night at an event at Studio 215. Sanders was present to discuss his excitement over his new position with the FSO.

Sanders stated, "the FSO's long lasting commitment to the culture of Cumberland County is extraordinarily inspiring to me. The musicians, administration, and board of directors motivate me to continue strengthening our community's sense of identity through meaningful collaborations and performances of all kinds of music. It is my distinct honor to serve as the next music director and conductor of your Fayetteville Symphony Orchestra."

Sanders has spent the past several weeks working with FSO staff to plan the upcoming 2017-2018 season. His first concert of the season will be on Saturday, October 14, 2017 at Methodist University. Season tickets will be available in late May.

The search for a new Music Director began in August 2015. The search committee included three board members, three community members, and three FSO musicians. They received 273 applications from all over the world and narrowed it down to five who each planned and guest conducted a concert on the 2016-2017 season. Each candidate spent a week in Fayetteville touring our community, meeting with donors, board members, and the public, as well as conducting rehearsals and the concert. Feedback was solicited from all of the constituencies. Stefan Sanders was the unanimous choice of the search committee and his name was unanimously approved by the FSO Board of Directors as well.

Stefan Sanders brings a unique skill set and approach to his conducting following a career as an internationally renowned trombonist, having performed as a soloist in North America, Asia and Europe. Sanders was a member of the Buffalo Philharmonic's trombone section for seven seasons and has performed as a trombonist with several orchestras including the New York Philharmonic and the Seattle Symphony Orchestra. Beginning formal conducting studies at the University of Texas at Austin, Sanders continued his studies as a fellow at the American Academy of Conducting at Aspen. He is a graduate of the Juilliard School, the University of Texas at Austin, and the Interlochen Arts Academy.

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Sanders was one of five finalists brought into Fayetteville for the 2016-2017 season. The others included Al Sturgis, Aram Demirjian, Joseph Young, and Dina Gilbert. The previous Music Director, Fouad Fakhouri, finished his term in April 2016 following eleven seasons with the FSO.

The Fayetteville Symphony Orchestra was founded in 1956 in Fayetteville, North Carolina, and is a professional, regional orchestra whose mission is to educate, entertain, and inspire the citizens of the Fayetteville, North Carolina region as the leading musical resource. The Fayetteville Symphony performs 6-8 concerts during any given season performing both at Methodist University and Fayetteville State University. Partnerships with other arts agencies include collaborative performances with Cape Fear Regional Theatre, chamber concerts at St. John's Episcopal Church, as well as a military appreciation concert held over Memorial Day Weekend. The Symphony brings music to the schools and the community by performing educational concerts, as well as having its own Fayetteville Symphony Youth Orchestra and Summer Music Camps.

For more information, please contact:

Christine Kastner

President/CEO

Fayetteville Symphony Orchestra

W (910)433-4690 | C (910)624-6023

www.fayettevillesymphony.org

The Fayetteville Symphony Orchestra, founded in 1956, is the longest standing performing arts agency in Fayetteville, NC. It is a professional, regional orchestra whose mission is to educate, entertain, and inspire the citizens of the Fayetteville, North Carolina region as the leading musical resource. Praised for its artistic excellence, the symphony leads in the cultural and educational landscape for Fayetteville and the southeastern North Carolina region.



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