



Conductor Robert Franz's New Podcast Inspires the Art of Listening in Audiences of All Ages



Robert Franz, Music Director of the Windsor Symphony Orchestra and Fairbanks Summer Arts Festival Orchestra, and Associate Conductor of the Houston Symphony is hosting the newest episode of the Houston Symphony podcast *On the Music*, devoted entirely to the art of listening. **To listen to the podcast [click here].**

Franz will celebrate his 10th anniversary as Associate Conductor of the Houston Symphony in June 2017, conducting and programming student concerts, and the Symphony's Family Concert Series, popular with children and families. Robert also conducts numerous Houston Symphony concerts at non-traditional venues throughout the city engaging many first-time concert-goers in schools, community centers and churches. He has made innovative use of partnerships in the Houston area, bringing in people and institutions such as NASA, Houston Rodeo, Houston Ballet and Opera, the Houston Astros, the Alley Theatre, and performers from area schools.



Since his arrival at the Symphony in 2008, attendance at family and educational concerts has almost doubled, and the scale of the Student Concert Series has increased from 15 to 20 concerts annually in response to overwhelming demand. In his first eight seasons, he reached close to 250,000 people while having one goal in mind - making classical music fun and engaging for young audiences and the adults that accompany them.

As Franz says, active listening is the main skill he cultivates in the 60,000 schoolchildren who attend the Student Concert Series each year. Not just so they achieve a better understanding of classical music - as wonderful as that is - but because it's a fundamental skill that builds confidence and achievement in all areas, including academic subjects.

Franz is nationally recognized for his achievements in music education, having won two Leonard Bernstein Awards for Educational Programming presented by ASCAP. At this past spring's Symphony Ball, the Houston Symphony honored Robert with the 2016 Raphael Fliegel Award for Visionary Leadership in recognition of his efforts to inspire Houstonians of all ages, and to encourage them to listen. Franz's expertise in music education was recognized by the Idaho Legislature recently when he was invited to speak about its importance to the education committee. Franz was also invited to speak at the League of American Orchestra conference on the topic of New Music: Opportunities to Broaden Audiences.



Maestro Franz is in increasing demand as a guest conductor whose recent engagements include appearances with The Cleveland Orchestra, the Baltimore and St. Louis Symphonies, and the Orchestra da Camera Fiorentina in Italy. This season he will add several concerts with the Phoenix Symphony to his active guest conducting schedule.

To learn more about Robert Franz, visit www.RobertFranz.com

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