



KEVIN JOHN EDUSEI APPOINTED PRINCIPAL GUEST CONDUCTOR OF FORT WORTH SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA



Conductor Kevin John Edusei. Photo by Marco Borggreve.

FORT WORTH, TEXAS (December 7, 2021) — Fort Worth Symphony Orchestra Board Chair Mercedes T. Bass and President and CEO Dr. Keith Cerny today announced the appointment of German conductor Kevin John Edusei as the orchestra's next Principal Guest Conductor. Mr. Edusei has conducted widely across Europe, where he is known as a conductor who is deeply committed to the creative elements of performance, presenting classical music in new formats, cultivating audiences, introducing music by under-represented composers, conducting an eclectic range of repertoire from the baroque to the contemporary, and shaping his concert programs to communicate a dramaturgical narrative.

Mr. Edusei's initial three-year term begins with the 2022-23 Season. He will serve as Principal Guest Conductor Designate beginning January 1, 2022, and become Principal Guest Conductor on August 1, 2022. He succeeds Robert Spano, who was formerly the FWSO's Principal Guest Conductor, before becoming Music Director Designate on April 1, 2021. Mr. Spano assumes the title of Music Director on August 1, 2022, and he and Mr. Edusei will collaborate on programming and orchestra development. Former Music Director Miguel Harth-Bedoya will remain as Music Director Laureate. Mr. Edusei's appointment as FWSO's Principal Guest Conductor marks his first in the U.S.

Dr. Cerny said:

"With Robert Spano's appointment earlier this year as Music Director, and Kevin John Edusei's new role as Principal Guest Conductor, the Fort Worth Symphony Orchestra has secured truly exceptional artistic leadership of the highest international caliber. I look forward to working closely with these two visionary leaders to continue to elevate the already outstanding artistic quality and capabilities of the FWSO."

Kevin John Edusei said:

"I am thrilled to be joining the Fort Worth Symphony Orchestra as Principal Guest Conductor. When I made my debut here in September, I was struck not only by the superb musicianship of the instrumentalists, but also by the sense of shared musical purpose that infuses the entire organization. It is a special atmosphere that I look forward to being an even greater part of, and I couldn't ask for a better landing spot in the U.S. as I look to expand my horizons here."

Mr. Edusei made his FWSO debut September 17-19, 2021, leading a program featuring Brian Raphael Nabors' *Pulse* for Orchestra, Sibelius' Violin Concerto with Ray Chen, and Dvořák's Symphony No. 8. Following his debut, the *Dallas Morning News* praised Mr. Edusei as "an effective leader with a sure grasp of musical architecture."

Board Chair Mercedes T. Bass said:

"Following a highly successful debut with the FWSO earlier this season, we are absolutely delighted to welcome Kevin as our Principal Guest Conductor. He has conducted very successfully in Europe for many years, Maestro Edusei's North American career is gaining great momentum, and we are thrilled to engage him with our orchestra and community in his first major American position."

He returns to Fort Worth to conduct two concerts during the first year of his term. On February 11, 2023 he leads the orchestra in a program comprising British composer Dani Howard's *Argentum*, Brahms' Concerto for Violin and Cello with FWSO Concertmaster Michael Shih and Principal Cello Allan Steele, and Schumann's Symphony No. 1; then, on June 2, 2023, he conducts Kodály's *Peacock Variations*, Mozart's Bassoon Concerto with FWSO Principal Basson Joshua Elmore, and Brahms' Symphony No. 4. Following these special engagements, Mr. Edusei will conduct two subscription programs each season during his tenure. (The Fort Worth Symphony Orchestra will announce its 2022-23 season on January 12, 2022.)

Mr. Edusei's first appearance in the U.S. was in 2004 at the Aspen Music Festival where he was awarded the fellowship for the American Academy of Conducting by David Zinman. It was there that FWSO Music Director Designate Robert Spano first heard the conductor.

Mr. Spano said:

"I am delighted to bring such an extraordinary talent to the FWSO. We are looking forward to working with Kevin and incorporating his innovative programming and musicianship into our long-term programming strategy. I look forward to working closely with Kevin in his new role."



Kevin John Edusei conducts the Fort Worth Symphony Orchestra, September 17, 2021. Photo by Karen Almond.

ABOUT KEVIN JOHN EDUSEI

Kevin John Edusei is praised for the drama and tension that he brings to his music-making and for his clear sense of architecture and attention to detail. A commanding figure on the podium, he has conducted widely across Europe, dividing his time equally between the concert hall and opera house. Currently in his eighth and final season as Chief Conductor of the Munich Symphony, Mr. Edusei has broadened the orchestra's repertoire while endearing himself to audiences through performances of consistently high quality. Under his leadership, the orchestra was awarded the Excellence Initiative of the German Federal Government in 2018. He also served as Chief Conductor of the Bern Opera House from 2015 to 2019.

His musical versatility is also on display in a series of U.S. debuts this season, including the [Baltimore](#), [Dallas](#), and [Indianapolis](#) Symphony Orchestras and the [Minnesota Orchestra](#). He also conducts in New York for the first time, leading the Juilliard Orchestra at Alice Tully Hall. His programs include several works by Ravel over the course of these engagements, as well as music by composers from Brahms to Schreker to contemporary composers Samy Moussa and Wolfgang Rihm. His European debuts this season include the Royal Philharmonic and Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestras, the City of Birmingham and Berlin Radio Symphony Orchestras, and the Essen Philharmonic.

Mr. Edusei has recorded with the Munich and Bern Symphonies and the Tonkünstler and Chineke! Orchestras. Among his recordings as Chief Conductor of the Munich Symphony are three discs of Schubert symphonies, as well as an album of works by Walton, Hartmann, and Bartók that was nominated for an International Classical Music Award and praised for its "perfectly judged performances, with superb precision throughout" by *BBC Music Magazine*. With the Chineke! Orchestra, he has recorded works by Dvořák and Sibelius—a Presto Classical's "Editor's Choice"—and the title work, by

Hannah Kendall, of the orchestra's album *Spark Catchers*—one of *The Times* (U.K.)'s 2020 Records of the Year.

Highlights from past seasons include performances with the London Symphony Orchestra, Royal Scottish National Symphony, BBC Scottish Symphony, Deutsche Symphony Orchestra Berlin, Rotterdam Philharmonic, Netherlands Radio Philharmonic, and the Chineke! Orchestra at the BBC Proms and Royal Festival Hall. In 2017, he made his U.S. conducting debut leading the Colorado Symphony.

In 2019, Mr. Edusei concluded his tenure as Chief Conductor of Bern Opera House, where he led numerous new productions including Britten's *Peter Grimes*, Strauss' *Salome*, Bartók's *Bluebeard's Castle*, Wagner's *Tannhäuser* and *Tristan and Isolde*, Janáček's *Káťa Kabanová*, and a cycle of the Mozart-Da Ponte operas. He has also conducted at the Semperoper Dresden, Hamburg State Opera, Hannover State Opera, Volksoper Wien, and Komische Oper Berlin. Most recently he made his debut at the English National Opera in a new production of Mozart's *The Marriage of Figaro*, and he makes his debut at London's Royal Opera House in a coming season.

Mr. Edusei is of mixed Ghanaian and German ancestry and resides in Germany with his wife and three children. He studied conducting at the Berlin University of the Arts and the Royal Conservatoire The Hague, The Netherlands. He was a prize-winner at the Lucerne Festival conducting competition under the artistic direction of Pierre Boulez and Peter Eötvös; and, in 2008, he won First Prize at the International Dimitris Mitropoulos Competition.

For more information about Kevin John Edusei, [click here](#).

For press materials, including photos, [click here](#).

ABOUT FORT WORTH SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

The Fort Worth Symphony Orchestra is deeply committed to uniting its community through performance, education, and outreach, reaching an audience of more than 200,000 annually. Since its beginnings in 1912, the FWSO has been an essential thread in the city's cultural fabric and the very foundation of Fort Worth's performing arts. As the principal resident company of the acoustically superb Nancy Lee and Perry R. Bass Performance Hall, the Orchestra performs a full season of concerts featuring internationally acclaimed guest artists and works by living composers. The Orchestra performs and partners with the Texas Ballet Theater, Fort Worth Opera, The Cliburn, and Performing Arts Fort Worth. Each summer at the Fort Worth Botanic Garden, the FWSO presents *Concerts in the Garden* – a series of family-friendly concerts that has become a city-wide tradition. Additionally, the orchestra hosts an annual Festival of Orchestras, providing an opportunity for non-professional orchestras across the state of Texas to perform in Bass Performance Hall. The FWSO keeps exceptional musical experiences at the heart of its community. For more information, visit FWSymphony.org.

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PRESS CONTACTS

Fort Worth Symphony Orchestra:

Lisa Jaehnig | Shuman Associates

ljaehnig@shumanassociates.net | (212) 315-1300

Carrie Ellen Adamian | Fort Worth Symphony Orchestra

ceadamian@fwsymphony.org | (817) 665-6500 ext. 139