

SAN DIEGO SYMPHONY

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San Diego Symphony Appoints Lea Slusher As Vice President of Artistic Administration and Audience Development

Gerard McBurney joins artistic planning team as creative consultant

San Diego, Calif. – The San Diego Symphony announces today the appointment of Lea Slusher as vice president for artistic administration and audience development. Slusher has been with Carnegie Hall since 1994 in various artistic roles and in 2007 began serving as director, artistic projects. Recently, she began programming Carnegie Hall Citywide, which presents more than 30 free concerts per year throughout New York City to underserved arts communities.

While at Carnegie Hall, Slusher also led the concert musical theater productions and has collaborated with Weill Music Institute on summer programs which bring young music students together with professional musicians. NYO2 was held in collaboration with the Philadelphia Orchestra in Summer 2017 and a new initiative, NYO Jazz, is scheduled for Summer 2018 with Sean Jones and Dianne Reeves.

Possessing extensive relationships with artists, Slusher has supported special audience development and education events with residencies of the Berlin Philharmonic with Sir Simon Rattle, and the Baltimore Symphony with Marin Alsop, among others. She has a long connection with artist managers, including working for Columbia Artists Management, Inc. in various roles from 1991-1994. Slusher has a bachelor of music degree from The Manhattan School of Music in viola performance.

“Lea came to San Diego for the last concerts of the 17/18 season, and it was immediately apparent to me that she has the experience and knowledge to support our artistic programming,” said Martha Gilmer, CEO of the San Diego Symphony. “She has a deep passion to connect the music to our audiences, which links closely to our institutional vision of changing lives through music. She is collaborative by nature, and will be a great addition to the artistic team.”

The programming of the San Diego Symphony includes 110 concerts a year that is comprised of: 18 weeks of Jacobs Masterworks; a five concert jazz series; a films series; chamber music; four City Lights concerts; the 10-week summer season "Bayside Summer Nights", which includes

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classical programming, Broadway musicals, featured guest artists and other genres; and other special performances and community concerts throughout the year.

“I’m thrilled to be joining the San Diego Symphony team under Martha Gilmer’s esteemed leadership, producing and planning concerts that will leave a lasting impression on audiences,” said Slusher. “When I heard the orchestra, I was impressed by their sound and enthusiastic playing. It is an exciting time to be in San Diego with Rafael Payare’s impending arrival, and I’m looking forward to working on innovative, accessible programming, and developing audiences not just at Copley Symphony Hall, but throughout the community.”

Slusher begins in San Diego on August 1, joining the artistic team of the San Diego Symphony, which includes Clement So, director of artistic planning, and Nuvi Mehta, concert commentator. Gerard McBurney completes the artistic planning team as creative consultant, working with the programming team and guest artists in programming and in creating unique content to enhance the concert experience and bring the music into vivid focus for audiences. Based in London, he also works to create the possibility of future international partnerships. McBurney is in residence in San Diego three times a year.

To purchase tickets or for a full listing of this season’s performances, visit www.sandiegosymphony.org.

About the San Diego Symphony

Founded in 1910, the San Diego Symphony is the oldest orchestra in California and one of the largest and most significant cultural organizations in San Diego. The Orchestra performs for over 250,000 people each season, offering a wide variety of programming at its two much loved venues, Copley Symphony Hall in downtown San Diego and the Embarcadero Marina Park South on San Diego Bay. In early 2018, the San Diego Symphony announced the appointment of Rafael Payare as music director designate. Payare will lead the orchestra’s 82 full-time musicians, graduates of the finest and most celebrated music schools in the United States and abroad, also serve as the orchestra for the San Diego Opera each season, as well as performing at several regional performing arts centers. For over 30 years, the San Diego Symphony has provided comprehensive music education and community engagement programs reaching more than 65,000 students annually and bringing innovative programming to San Diego’s diverse neighborhoods and schools. For more information, visit www.sandiegosymphony.org.

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