

OCYSO

ORANGE COUNTY YOUTH SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
THURSDAY, JUNE 1, 2017

OCYSO APPOINTS NEW GENERAL MANAGER

ORANGE, California - The Friends of the Orange County Youth Symphony Orchestra (OCYSO) are pleased to announce the appointment of Alex Nelson as general manager, effective today. He assumes the role from Teren Shaffer, who served as the orchestra's general manager for 11 years.

An arts administrator and pianist, Alex Nelson returns to Southern California after eight years working with top arts organizations in Bloomington, Indiana. "We are delighted to welcome Alex into the OCYSO family," says Daniel Alfred Wachs, OCYSO Music Director and Conductor. "Alex brings a fresh perspective and energy, to say nothing of experience, to the Orchestra and we look forward to announcing exciting developments under his leadership."

"I am thrilled to join the OCYSO team," said Nelson. "Thank you to the Friends, Daniel and Teren for entrusting me to continue the mission of this marvelous organization. In my youth and education I was fortunate to be surrounded and encouraged by excellent artists, mentors and programs. I see that same support in OCYSO as a forum with incalculable benefits to its young musicians and audiences. I look forward to emboldening the Orchestra's relationship to Orange County, and to explore the connections between community, education and our shared musical and artistic traditions. These are the big-picture connections I want to champion as we plan the upcoming 48th season of the Orchestra."

Nelson takes over the position from longtime OCYSO leader Teren Shaffer, who was recently named Executive Vice President of the Orange County School of the Arts Foundation. On his exit from the Orchestra, Shaffer remarked that "OCYSO has been an integral part of my education, both as a musician and as an arts administrator. I am tremendously grateful to John Koshak, Daniel Alfred Wachs, and the Friends of the OCYSO. It has been an honor to serve as general manager and I will always reflect fondly upon my time with this fine organization. I firmly believe the best is yet to come and I am eager to see many years of continued growth and excellence ahead."

Alex Nelson recently graduated with a master of arts in arts administration from the Indiana University (IU) School of Public and Environmental Affairs. During his time based in Bloomington he worked for the IU Jacobs School of Music, IU Opera & Ballet Theater, IU Eskenazi Museum of Art, IU Ballet Department, IU Arts Administration graduate recruiting and the Indianapolis Symphony Orchestra. He also served as production manager of Reimagining Opera for Kids for three seasons, organizing free performances at 50 area schools for 25,000 students. Previous experience includes archive assistant to the late distinguished ballerina Violette Verdy; associate director of Harbor Music, a select chamber music program organized in Downeast Maine; and time at the celebrated music series of The Phillips Collection in Washington, DC.

In his pre-college years growing up on the Palos Verdes Peninsula, Nelson studied piano with Dr. Janet Favreau. He went on to receive a bachelor of music in piano performance from the IU Jacobs School of Music, studying solo piano under the late Edmund Battersby and collaborative piano with Lee Phillips. In addition to his core piano focus he inclusively explored chamber, fortepiano, vocal and organ music, while also singing with numerous IU oratorio and opera productions. In his active performance years he participated in festivals in Austria, Canada, France, Hungary, Japan, Poland and throughout the US.

Nelson volunteers at two programs in San Pedro, Calif.: South Shores Magnet School for the Visual and Performing Arts and for the piano program at Richard Henry Dana Middle School. He recently performed with the LA Opera community ensemble in Britten's *Noah's Flood* at the Cathedral of Our Lady of the Angels in Los Angeles. He has taught private piano for 12 years.

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ABOUT OCYSO

The Orange County Youth Symphony Orchestra (OCYSO) is the official youth orchestra of Orange County, California. Since 1970, the Orchestra has maintained an enviable reputation for its artistic inspiration and performance training of young adult musicians.

For nine seasons, Music Director & Conductor [Daniel Alfred Wachs](#) has energetically led OCYSO through many prestigious performances, conferences, and competitions. Highlights of the upcoming 2017/18 season, the Orchestra's 48th, include the third annual family holiday concert featuring Humperdinck's semi-staged opera, *Hansel and Gretel*, with star soloists including mezzo-soprano Milena Kitic. Presented by the Philharmonic Society of Orange County, the Concerts for Fifth Graders continue at the Segerstrom Center for the Arts. Repertory to include Shostakovich's monumental Symphony No. 11 and Gershwin's masterpiece *An American in Paris*.

Alongside the Music Director, the General Manager of the Orange County Youth Symphony Orchestra leads and implements the vision and mission of the organization. Reporting to the Friends of the OCYSO, the GM is responsible for overseeing the human, financial, and physical resources of the Orchestra and its efforts in all administrative areas.

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The mission of the Orange County Youth Symphony Orchestra is to provide pre-professional training to Orange County's most talented young musicians through varied performance opportunities, and by establishing an environment that develops creative ability, self-expression and the desire for perfection.

For further details on the Orchestra, please [visit our website](#).

OCYSO partners with Chapman University, Philharmonic Society of Orange County, Musco Center for the Arts, Anaheim Ballet and the Orange County Department of Education.

General OCYSO Information (public):

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