

For Immediate Release



Miguel Harth-Bedoya Will Conclude Twenty Years as FWSO Music Director in 2019-2020 Season

FORT WORTH, TX –May 10, 2018 – Miguel Harth-Bedoya announced today that he will conclude his tenure as Music Director of the Fort Worth Symphony Orchestra in July, 2020, at the culmination of his 20th year as the orchestra’s artistic leader. Following the 2019-2020 season, he will assume the title of **Conductor Laureate** of the FWSO, and will be returning to conduct in upcoming seasons.

“I am so proud of the work the Fort Worth Symphony Orchestra and I have done together over the last nearly two decades. These 18 years with the FWSO have touched and changed me deeply,” stated FWSO Music Director Miguel Harth-Bedoya. “Working together with the orchestra toward higher and higher artistic levels - even through the challenges - has been profoundly rewarding. Our musicians’ extraordinary playing constantly inspires me, and because of them I have become a better conductor. Our recent success on an international stage at the Kennedy Center, like our Carnegie Hall performance a decade ago, is a testament to our relevance as an outstanding American orchestra.”

Harth-Bedoya continued, “Because we have reached many shared artistic goals and such a high level of artistry, I believe that after a tenure of twenty seasons, it will be the right time for the orchestra to close a chapter and to begin a new one, exploring new challenges, points of view, opportunities and ideas. It is the right thing to do for the institution. Working with such talented colleagues, a stellar staff, and a supportive board is an immense joy. I look forward to many more magical moments over my two final seasons as artistic leader, and I will proudly maintain my close relationship with the institution in the years beyond.”

Harth-Bedoya, who began his first season as Music Director in 2000 is the orchestra’s eighth artistic leader since its founding in 1912. He has made a significant impact on the orchestra and its audiences through numerous artistic and institutional achievements, including live recordings for international labels, premiering new works by renowned visiting composers, fostering important artistic partnerships, expanding the repertoire, and making relevant contributions at the national level through touring. His initiatives have shaped the sound of the

FWSO as the organization moved into the new millennium and into its second century. Nearly 40% of the current orchestra has joined the FWSO since his first season. Despite the nationwide economic downturn experienced in 2008 and 2009 and a work stoppage in 2016, the FWSO has expanded its annual budget from \$9Million in 2000-2001 to nearly \$13Million in 2017-2018 and has increased the number of full-time orchestra positions by 25%.

“From the moment I first heard Miguel during an audition/rehearsal, I knew he was the one to lead the FWSO into the new millennium,” stated FWSO Board Chair Mercedes T. Bass. “During his time here, he has transformed this institution and the orchestra to ever-increasing levels of artistic achievement. We are tremendously proud of Miguel’s many accomplishments, and I have enjoyed working with him during these 20 years. I admire his musicianship and consider him among one of the great conductors of his generation. He is truly admired and loved by our board members, generous patrons, and the Fort Worth community as a whole. His vision and passion will continue to live on after his tenure concludes, and I look forward to celebrating his many accomplishments over the next two seasons.”

Harth-Bedoya’s commitment to new music and living composers has impacted both concert programming and recording projects. He has commissioned or co-commissioned works by Osvaldo Golijov, Kevin Puts, Antonio Juan-Marcos, Jimmy López, and Victor Agudelo. In addition, he has programmed works by Jennifer Higdon, Gabriela Lena Frank, Mason Bates, Behzad Ranjbaran, Anna Clyne, Adam Schoenberg, and Andrew Norman, among others, inviting each to Fort Worth for the performances. Since 2000, Harth-Bedoya and the FWSO have released 13 recordings – with several being world premiere releases – garnering international acclaim.

He has introduced and conducts community outreach and educational programs, including side-by-side performances with the Fort Worth Youth Orchestra, the annual Festival of Orchestras, which he launched in 2017, and a Fundamentals of Orchestral Conducting Workshop, the first of which will take place in 2018 at Texas Christian University. Additionally, he conceptualized a bi-lingual *Peter and the Wolf* program, which includes dance, and has been performed for more than 120,000 Fort Worth second graders through the Children's Education Program at Bass Hall since its inception.

Under his leadership, the orchestra has completed two prestigious national tours, including an April 2018 performance at the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts as part of SHIFT: A Festival of American Orchestras and a 2008 performance at Carnegie Hall, both of which garnered rave reviews from the media.

“There is no doubt that The Fort Worth Symphony Orchestra has flourished under the baton of Maestro Harth-Bedoya. Because of his ground-breaking artistic vision, the orchestra has been thrust into the national and international spotlight,” stated Ed Jones, FWSO Principal Tuba and Chair of the Orchestra Players Committee. “He has emerged as a community leader, and his contributions to the city of Fort Worth are immeasurable. The musicians of the Fort Worth Symphony Orchestra are grateful for the impact he has made in our lives and the lives of the

greater Fort Worth community. Maestro Harth-Bedoya's high standards of musical excellence have propelled the orchestra to the highest artistic levels in its 106 year history. His leadership and artistic vision will be sorely missed by everyone who is associated with the Fort Worth Symphony Orchestra. We wish Miguel and his family all the best and we look forward to collaborating with him in the future."

Harth-Bedoya has been the recipient of numerous awards and honors, including an Emmy Award in 2000, the Seaver/National Endowment of the Arts Conductor's Award in 2002, and GRAMMY nominations in 2008 and 2016. He serves as a Distinguished Guest Professor of Conducting at Texas Christian University and was named a Regents Lecturer at UCLA in 2014. As a respected member of the Fort Worth community, Harth-Bedoya was named to the *Fort Worth Business Press'* list of "40 Under 40" in 2003 and was one of *Hispanic Business Magazine's* "100 Influentials" in 2010. He received a Doctorate Honoris Causa from Texas Christian University in 2014, and the Fort Worth Arts Council's 2015 Heart of Gold Award for lifetime achievement in the arts. He also reigned as the Grand Marshal of Fort Worth's 2014 Parade of Lights and has even thrown the first pitch at a Texas Rangers game. Harth-Bedoya makes Fort Worth his home and is invested in the community, its young musicians, and in building the orchestra's audience.

A search committee will be formed, headed by FWSO Board Chair Mercedes T. Bass, to begin the search for Harth-Bedoya's successor.

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. Music Director Miguel Harth-Bedoya, now in his 18th season at the artistic helm of the FWSO, has led the orchestra into the 21st century to new levels of excellence. Under his leadership, the FWSO has performed at Carnegie Hall and the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts as part of SHIFT: A Festival of American Orchestras. Throughout his tenure, the FWSO has released 13 recordings – with several being world premiere releases – garnering international acclaim. Miguel Harth-Bedoya and the FWSO have embraced creative collaborations through residencies, partnerships, and commissions. 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. After all—life is better with music!

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