Marin Alsop
Music Director
Baltimore Symphony Orchestra

Marin Alsop is an inspiring and powerful voice in the international music scene, a Music Director of vision and distinction who passionately believes that “music has the power to change lives”. She is recognised across the world for her innovative approach to programming and for her deep commitment to education and to the development of audiences of all ages.

Her outstanding success as Music Director of the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra since 2007 has been recognised by two extensions in her tenure, now confirmed until 2021. As part of her artistic leadership in Baltimore, Marin Alsop has created bold initiatives that have contributed to the wider community and reached new audiences. In 2008 she launched ‘OrchKids’, which provides music education, instruments, meals and mentorship of the city’s neediest young people. Engaging the local community, the BSO Academy and Rusty Musicians schemes also allow adult amateur musicians the chance to play alongside members of the orchestra under Alsop’s baton. Alsop and the orchestra celebrate their centenary in 2016.

Alsop took up the post of Principal Conductor of the São Paulo Symphony Orchestra (OSESP) in 2012 and became Music Director in July 2013, with her contract now extended to the end of 2019. She continues to steer the orchestra in its artistic and creative programming, recording ventures and its education and outreach activities, as well as their annual Campos do Jordão International Winter Festival. Alsop led the orchestra on a European tour in 2012, with acclaimed performances at the BBC Proms in London and at the Concertgebouw in Amsterdam; they returned to Europe in October 2013, with concerts in Berlin, London, Paris, Salzburg and Vienna.

Since 1992, Marin Alsop has been Music Director of California’s Cabrillo Festival of Contemporary Music, where she has built a devoted audience for new music. Building an orchestra is one of Alsop’s great gifts, and she retains strong links with all of her previous orchestras – Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra (Principal Conductor 2002-8; now Conductor Emeritus), Eugene Symphony Orchestra (Music Director 1989-96, now Conductor Laureate) and Colorado Symphony Orchestra (Music Director 1993-2005; now Music Director Laureate).

Marin Alsop has guest-conducted the great orchestras of the world: Philadelphia, Cleveland, Los Angeles Philharmonic, Royal Concertgebouw, La Scala Philharmonic, Orchestre de Paris, Bavarian Radio Symphony. In Europe, she regularly returns to the Frankfurt Radio Symphony, Royal Stockholm Philharmonic and the Czech Philharmonic. Alsop has a close relationship with the London Symphony and London Philharmonic, appearing with both orchestras most
seasons, as well as with the Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment. She is also Artist in Residence at the Southbank Centre in London.

In September 2013, Marin Alsop made history as the first female conductor of the BBC’s Last Night of the Proms in London. She returned to the Proms in 2015 to conduct the Last Night and an all-Brahms programme with the OAE. 2015/16 highlights include a historic return for an American musician to Cuba, conducting Lang Lang and the National Symphony Orchestra of Cuba. In March 2016, Alsop will celebrate Carnegie Hall’s 125th anniversary conducting Bernstein *West Side Story* in the Knockdown Center, a restored factory in Queens.

Marin Alsop is the recipient of numerous awards and is the only conductor to receive the prestigious MacArthur Fellowship, given to US residents in recognition of exceptional creative work. She was only classical musician to be included in the *Guardian*’s “Top 100 women”, celebrating the centenary of International Women’s Day in 2011. Alsop is an Honorary Member of the Royal Academy of Music, London and the Royal Philharmonic Society and was recently appointed Director of Graduate Conducting Program at the Johns Hopkins Peabody Institute.

The latest disc of Alsop’s Prokofiev symphonic cycle with OSESP (Symphony No.3) was released in May 2015 and the first (Symphony No.5) was Orchestral Choice in BBC Music Magazine. Alsop’s extensive discography on Naxos includes a notable set of Brahms symphonies with the LPO, Brahms *Ein deutsches Requiem* with the MDR Leipzig Radio Choir and Symphony Orchestra and a highly-praised Dvořák series with the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra. Other award-winning recordings include Bernstein’s *Mass* (Editor’s Choice, Gramophone Awards 2010) and Jennifer Higdon’s Percussion Concerto (Grammy Award 2010). Alsop has also recorded for Decca Classics, Harmonia Mundi and Sony Classical.

Born in New York City, Marin Alsop attended Yale University and received her Master’s Degree from The Juilliard School. Her conducting career was launched when, in 1989, she was a prize-winner at the Leopold Stokowski International Conducting Competition and in the same year was the first woman to be awarded the Koussevitzky Conducting Prize from the Tanglewood Music Center, where she was a pupil of Leonard Bernstein.

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Jamie Bennett
Executive Director
ArtPlace in America

Jamie Bennett is the executive director of ArtPlace America, a partnership among 16 foundations, 8 federal agencies, and 6 financial institutions working to position art and culture as a core sector of community planning.
and development by investing in, researching, and supporting those who lead and execute
creative placemaking projects.

To date, ArtPlace has invested $85 million in 233 projects in communities of all sizes across the
United States in which artists and arts organizations are working with their neighbors to help
shape communities’ social, physical, and economic futures.

Until December 2013, Jamie was Chief of Staff and Director of Public Affairs at the National
Endowment for the Arts, where he oversaw the national rollouts of the "Our Town" grant
program and partnerships with the US Departments of Agriculture, Defense, Health and Human
Services, and Housing and Urban Development.

Previously, Jamie was Chief of Staff at the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs, where
he oversaw the agency's partnerships with the NYC Departments for the Aging, of Education,
and of Youth and Community Development.

Jamie also provided strategic counsel at the Agnes Gund Foundation, served as chief of staff to
the President of Columbia University, and worked in fundraising at The Museum of Modern Art,
the New York Philharmonic, and Columbia College.

Before entering the public sector, Jamie served on the board of the HERE Arts Center. Jamie
received a B.A. in drama and theatre arts from Columbia University.

Dr. Monique M. Chism
Deputy Assistant Secretary, Office of Elementary &
Secondary Education
U.S. Department of Education

Dr. Monique Chism joined the Department in January 2013 as
member of the Senior Executive Service and is the Deputy
Assistant Secretary for Policy and Programs in the Office of
Elementary and Secondary Education (OESE). In this role she
serves as a principal advisor to the Assistant Secretary on grant
programs and initiatives in the Offices of Academic
Improvement, Safe and Healthy Students, School Support and
Rural Programs, Impact Aid Program, Migrant Education, and
Indian Education. Previously, Dr. Chism served as the Director
of the Office of Student Achievement and School Accountability and then transitioned to lead the new Office of State Support (OSS) in OESE. Prior to joining the department, Dr. Chism held a number of positions in the field of education as a teacher, researcher, and state policy maker at the Illinois State Board of Education, where she served as the Assistant Superintendent for Innovation and Improvement. In these positions she has influenced and shaped education policy with the goal of ensuring that every student has access to a high-quality education and the opportunity to learn. She is committed to creating environments that foster educational excellence. Through her work she continues to focus on effective strategies for improving equity and access for all students, closing opportunity gaps, and cultivating culturally proficient schools.

Alex Laing
Principal Clarinet
Phoenix Symphony

Alex Laing began studying the clarinet at age 11 in his hometown of Silver Spring, MD.

In 2002 he joined the Phoenix Symphony as principal clarinet.

A longtime believer in community engaged music making, Alex also recently founded and directs The Leading Tone, a nonprofit, after school project dedicated to exploring music as a context for youth development, serving just over forty students.

A graduate of Northwestern University, he received his master’s degree in Orchestral Performance from the Manhattan School of Music, an artist's diploma from the Sweelinck Conservatorium Amsterdam and a certificate in nonprofit management from Arizona State University’s Lodestar Center for Philanthropy and Nonprofit Innovation.

Alex is fortunate to have garnered a number of awards and honors during his career including fellowships from the Tanglewood Music Center, New World Symphony, Aspen Music Festival and the Detroit Symphony Orchestra.
DeRay Mckesson  
Activist, educator, organizer  
We The Protestors

DeRay Mckesson is a protestor, activist, and educator focused primarily on issues of innovation, equity and justice. Born and raised in Baltimore, Maryland, he graduated from Bowdoin College and has advocated for issues related to children, youth, and families since he was a teen. DeRay has served as an educator, student leader, and founding director of an after-school/out-of-school program. He has also provided leadership to the executive teams of two large urban school districts. Spurred by the death of Mike Brown and the subsequent protests in Ferguson, Missouri, DeRay has become a leading voice in the effort to confront the systems and structures that have led to the mass incarceration and police killings of black and other minority populations. The co-founder of the Protestor Newsletter and Campaign Zero, DeRay has worked to connect individuals with knowledge and tools, and provide citizens and policy makers with commonsense policies to end police violence. As a civil rights activist, DeRay's work has had national impact - leading Fortune Magazine to name him one of 2015’s 50 World’s Greatest Leaders, and the New School to award him an honorary doctorate in 2016.

Anne Parsons  
President and CEO  
Detroit Symphony Orchestra

Anne Parsons was named President and Chief Executive Officer of the Detroit Symphony Orchestra in April 2004. Under her leadership, since 2011 the DSO has achieved record ticket sales growth and has doubled its donor base. Her vision of making the organization more accessible has resulted in the launch of two innovative new products, the first of their kind among American orchestras. The Neighborhood Residency Initiative has established seven DSO residencies across metro Detroit where suburban fans of all ages enjoy chamber music, senior engagement concerts, music therapy sessions, educational in-school performances, and the initiative’s centerpiece, the Neighborhood Concert Series. In 2011, she oversaw the inaugural season of “Live From Orchestra Hall,” the DSO’s series of live HD webcasts that engage audiences worldwide through an interactive online interface. In 2013, the DSO took the stage at Carnegie Hall for the first time in 17 years as part of the “Spring for Music” festival and also presented a special one-night-only performance at Lincoln Center, featuring the works of Chinese composer Ye.
Xiaogang. The DSO’s adoption of a new governance structure, as well as its work towards a more inclusive culture between orchestra, staff and board members, are credited as being largely responsible for the 2014 settlement of the musicians’ labor contract, which was achieved eight months early.

Over the last decade, Parsons has been passionate about pursuing professional development opportunities with non-profit peer leaders. She has participated in several multi-year executive leadership programs associated with the Center for Creative Leadership, National Arts Strategies, and the League of American Orchestras.

In 2015, recognizing her outstanding leadership and distinguished career in the city of Detroit, Parsons was awarded a McGregor Fund Eugene A. Miller fellowship.

For over 30 years, Parsons has served in management positions for a variety of major arts organizations. She was General Manager of the New York City Ballet 1998-2004, General Manager of the Hollywood Bowl in Los Angeles from 1991 to 1998 and Orchestra Manager of the Boston Symphony Orchestra from 1983 to 1991. Parsons also held several positions with the National Symphony Orchestra in Washington, D.C. from 1981 to 1983. Parsons received a Bachelor of Arts degree from Smith College in Massachusetts in 1980 where, as a Music Minor, she studied flute and managed the Smith College Orchestra. She was among the first class of American Symphony Orchestra League Fellows in 1980-81.

In addition to her role at the DSO, Parsons is an active board member for several other Detroit-area cultural organizations. She was a founding board member of the Cultural Alliance of Southeast Michigan (now CultureSource) and currently serves on the board of New Detroit. Nationally, she serves on the board of the League of American Orchestras, the Board of Overseers at the Curtis Institute of Music, and the advisory board for the Sphinx Organization. A native of New York, Parsons now resides in Detroit with her husband Donald Dietz, a photographer, and daughter Cara is completing her freshman year at Smith College.
Gayle S. Rose
Board Chairman
Memphis Symphony Orchestra

Gayle S. Rose has worked tirelessly to improve the quality of life in Memphis for the past three decades through business and economic development and her visible advocacy for the poor. A social activist and serial entrepreneur, she has founded five charitable organizations and two for-profit businesses in her successful career. She is currently Founder and CEO of a leading technology company, EVS Corporation. She is also the Founder and Chairman of the Rose Family Foundations private charity as well as Team Max, named after her late son, Max Rose. Ms. Rose is also the Chairwoman of the Board of the Memphis Symphony Orchestra.