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“Dream Big!”

League’s 79th National Conference to Take Place in Houston, TX, June 6-8, 2024

Conference Highlights Include:

- Keynote by composer and pianist **Gabriela Lena Frank**
- Remarks by Gold Baton Award Recipient **Lee Koonce**, Former President and Director, Gateways Music Festival
- Closing Luncheon speaker **Dr. Ahmad Naser Sarmast**, Founding Director of the Afghanistan National Institute of Music (ANIM)
- *Re-Envisioning Audiences* interactive General Session featuring **Donna Walker-Kuhne** and **Dr. Durell Cooper**
- **Host Houston Symphony performing Richard Strauss’ *Salome* in Concert, conducted by Music Director Juraj Valčuha.** Featuring soloists Jennifer Holloway, John Daszak, Linda Watson, Mark S. Doss, and Issachah Savage
- **Multiple performances featuring Houston-based orchestras:** Houston Youth Symphony, Immanuel and Helen Olshan Texas Music Festival Orchestra, Mercury Chamber Orchestra, and ROCO (performing works by women composers including Gabriela Lena Frank’s *Elegia Andina*)

New York, NY (May 16, 2024) – Nearly 1,000 orchestra administrators, conductors, musicians, board members, and volunteers will receive a Texas-style welcome at the [League of American Orchestras National Conference](#) in Houston, June 6-8, 2024, filled with music, learning opportunities, and networking events. This is the first time a League Conference will be held in Houston.

Hosted by the Houston Symphony and reflecting its “Dream Big!” theme, the Conference will feature high-level conversations, heightened cross-constituency dialogue, increased interactivity, and an unprecedented seven live performances by five local orchestras on the agenda.

“Conference is our field’s opportunity to come together with optimism as we consider the challenges and possibilities of our time,” said League President and CEO, Simon Woods, “I’m grateful to the superb Houston Symphony for hosting us in this most dynamic and diverse city, with its many orchestras and other classical music organizations who make such a huge impact on their communities.”

“We’re very excited to be hosting the 79th Conference of the League of American Orchestras,” said Houston Symphony Executive Director/CEO, John Mangum. “Houston has long been a hub of innovation, leading the way in space exploration, medicine, and the arts. Conference gives us a chance to share all that we here in Houston have accomplished with colleagues from around the world, and to shine a light on other orchestras who join us and our colleagues here in Houston in charting a sustainable future for orchestral music. I always find the exchange of ideas, best practices, and artistic vision invigorating and inspiring, and I leave Conference with a redoubled commitment to bring unforgettable, life-changing musical experiences to everyone in our community.”

The Conference [Opening Session and Gold Baton Award](#), at Jesse H. Jones Hall for the Performing Arts on **Thursday, June 6, from 4:15pm – 5:45pm**, will feature a keynote by composer and pianist Gabriela Lena Frank, as well as the presentation of the Gold Baton Award, the League’s highest honor, to Former President and Director of the Gateways Music Festival, Lee Koonce. John Mangum, Executive Director/CEO, Margaret Alkek Williams Chair, Houston Symphony; Juraj Valčuha, Music Director, Roy and Lillie Cullen Chair, Houston Symphony; and Simon Woods, President and CEO, League of American Orchestras will give welcome remarks. The Houston Youth Symphony, conducted by Artistic Director Michael Webster, will perform Jessie Montgomery’s *Soul Force* and Silvestre Revuelta’s *Sensemayá*.

On **Friday, June 7, from 1:30pm – 3:00pm** at the Marriott Marquis Houston, the League’s Annual Meeting will be followed by an interactive session led by Dr. Durell Cooper, Founder and CEO, Cultural Innovation Group, and Donna Walker-Kuhne,

President, Walker International Communications Group, Inc, on [Re-Envisioning Audiences](#).

The [Closing Luncheon](#), at the Marriott Marquis Houston on **Saturday, June 8, from 12:45pm – 2:30pm**, will feature Resilient Sounds, a Houston Symphony project—in partnership with Rice University, University of Houston, and Interfaith Ministries for Greater Houston—celebrating the determination and hope of Houston’s refugee communities. Dr. Ahmad Naser Sarmast, Founding Director of the Afghanistan National Institute of music (ANIM), will follow with remarks.

[Elective and Innovation Sessions](#) will be led by experts from inside and outside the orchestra field covering topics that include music and wellness; audience diversification; cultural advocacy; philanthropy and fundraising; leadership; equity, diversity, and inclusion; business models; and AI. A series of one-hour, conversation-based cross-constituency [Discovery Sessions](#) will be framed by a short presentation at the beginning and followed by facilitated discussions.

[Seven exciting performances by five orchestras](#) are planned during the Conference:

- Mercury Chamber Orchestra Presents Baroque to Boleros: Music from Latin America on June 5 at Discovery Green
- EarShot Readings with ROCO on June 6 at Kinder High School for the Performing and Visual Arts, Denney Theatre
- The Houston Youth Symphony at the Conference Opening Session on June 6 at Jesse H. Jones Hall for the Performing Arts
- ROCO Women Composers in Concert on June 7 at Kinder High School for the Performing and Visual Arts, Denney Theatre (including Gabriela Lena Frank’s *Elegia Andina*)
- Houston Symphony’s *Salome in Concert* on June 7 at Jesse H. Jones Hall for the Performing Arts
- Youth musicians from the Houston Youth Symphony’s Coda Program at the *Creative Partnerships to Maximize Youth Learning and Development* session on June 8 at the Marriott Marquis Houston
- Immanuel and Helen Olshan Texas Music Festival Orchestra on June 8 at Jesse H. Jones Hall for the Performing Arts

A **Tech Fair** on June 6, from 8:00am – 12:30pm, free of charge to all registrants, will showcase technology offerings in the areas of marketing, data management and CRM, ticketing, online program notes, audience engagement apps, in-hall concert technologies, and more.

Networking/social events include:

- ALAANA Affinity Group Breakfast on June 6, for League members who self-identify as people of African, Latinx, Asian, Arab/Middle Eastern, or Native American descent
- All-Delegate Reception on June 6
- LGBTQIA+ Reception on June 6
- Young Professionals Event on June 6
- Networking Break on June 7
- Post-Concert Tune-Up Party on June 7
- Coffee Catch-Up in the Exhibit Hall on June 8

The full Conference schedule and overview can be found on the League of American Orchestras' Conference website, along with Conference registration information: leagueconference.org.

The **Opening and Closing Sessions and four Elective Sessions** will be available for livestream to anyone who registers for the conference. Livestream Only tickets are also available for purchase on leagueconference.org.

Members of the media interested in **Conference access or interviews**, please contact Rachele Schlosser directly: rschlosser@americanorchestras.org.

Members of the media interested in **tickets for *Salome in Concert* on Friday, June 7** may contact Eric Skelly, Senior Director, Communications at the Houston Symphony, at Eric.Skelly@houstonSymphony.org.

Conference hashtag: #Orch2024

The **League of American Orchestras** champions the vitality of music and the orchestral experience, supports the orchestra community, and leads change boldly. The only national organization dedicated to orchestras and their communities, the League supports the field through advocacy, research, convenings, leadership development, artistic programs, and grants. Founded in 1942 and chartered by Congress in 1962, the League includes nearly 25,000 musicians, conductors, orchestra staff, board members, volunteers, and business partners working within our membership of 1,600 world-renowned orchestras, community groups, summer festivals, student and youth ensembles, conservatories and libraries, businesses serving orchestras, and individuals who love symphonic music. Visit americanorchestras.org.