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ASCEND

League's 80th National Conference in Salt Lake City, June 11-13, 2025 to Feature Live Performances, Inspiring Learning, and Critical Conversations in Complex Times

Conference Highlights Include:

- Keynote by celebrated American soprano **Renée Fleming**, Goodwill Ambassador for Arts and Health, World Health Organization, a leading advocate for the study of the powerful connection between arts and health
- Additional sessions on health and wellness include a panel discussion on Renée Fleming's new anthology, *Music and Mind: Harnessing the Art of Health and Wellness*, and the introduction of a League guide on health and wellbeing
- Presentation of the League's highest honor, the Gold Baton Award, to conductor **Marin Alsop**
- Closing Luncheon performance and conversation with **Kinan Azmeh**, composer and clarinet player, founder of CityBand and Hewar and member of the Silkroad Ensemble
- **Conference host Utah Symphony** and Music Director Emeritus **Thierry Fischer** performing an adventurous and colorful program at **Maurice Abravanel Hall** featuring **Korngold's Violin Concerto**, with soloist **Clara-Jumi Kang** making her Utah Symphony debut, and works by **Revueltas**, **Varèse**, and **Gabriela Ortiz**
- **Utah Youth Philharmonic** and **Utah Youth Symphony** performing world premieres by **Clarice Assad** and **Quinn Mason**, conducted by Music Director and Conductor **Barbara Scowcroft**
- **Eden Festival Presents Clarice Assad and Friends** at **Tracy Aviary**, with special guest pianist **Lara Downes**

New York, NY (May 15, 2025) – 1,000 orchestra administrators, musicians, conductors, board members, and volunteers will convene in Salt Lake City to learn, network, and experience the excitement of live performance at the [League of American Orchestras National Conference](#), June 11-13, 2025. Hosted by Utah Symphony | Utah Opera, the Conference will take place at the Hyatt Regency Salt Lake City, with additional performances at the famed Maurice Abravanel Hall and a pre-Conference Eden Festival concert at Tracy Aviary. This is the first time a League Conference has been held in Utah.

“This year’s Conference theme, **ASCEND**, captures our field’s bold aspirations in a complex and challenging time for the arts in this country” said League President and CEO, Simon Woods, “With the Utah Symphony’s innovative programming and Salt Lake City’s breathtaking scenery as a backdrop, we’ll spend three days hearing from leaders like Marin Alsop, Kinan Azmeh, and Renée Fleming, listening to world-class artistry, and learning from each other through the critical conversations that take place when the orchestra field gathers together.”

“We know that our musical colleagues will be surprised in the best possible ways by Salt Lake City, our vibrant and beautiful home in the Intermountain West,” said Steven Brosvik, the O.C. Tanner President and CEO of the Utah Symphony | Utah Opera. “This is one of the fastest growing cities in the United States and Utah Symphony | Utah Opera is proud to be a key component of the quality of life that has drawn so many to our community. We can’t wait to share the exceptional musicianship of our orchestra, outstanding hospitality of our community, and stunning natural setting of our state with conference attendees from across the country.”

The Conference [Opening Session, Gold Baton Award, and Keynote](#), at Maurice Abravanel Hall on **Wednesday, June 11, from 4:00pm – 5:30pm**, will feature a keynote by American soprano Renée Fleming, Goodwill Ambassador for Arts and Health, World Health Organization, as well as the presentation of the Gold Baton Award, the League’s highest honor, to conductor and educator Marin Alsop by conductor Jessica Rivero Altarriba, Assistant Conductor of the Utah Symphony and a Taki Alsop Fellowship Award Recipient from 2024-26. Steven Brosvik will give welcome remarks and Simon Woods make his customary opening address to delegates. The Utah Youth Philharmonic and Utah Youth Symphony and Music

Director and Conductor Barbara Scowcroft will perform world premieres by composer and pianist Clarice Assad and composer and conductor Quinn Mason.

The [Closing Luncheon: Home, Freedom, and Belonging with Kinan Azmeh](#) at the Hyatt Regency Salt Lake City on **Friday, June 13, from 12:00pm – 1:30pm**, will feature a performance by the Syrian clarinet player and composer with pianist Jason Hardink, as well as a conversation between Azmeh and Martha Gilmer, President and CEO of the San Diego Symphony Orchestra, on the themes of home, freedom, and belonging.

Find the full list of [live performances](#) on the League's Conference website.

This year, the League has introduced a new series of session formats. [General Sessions](#) feature prestigious guest speakers, inspiring music, and key topics for the whole orchestra field.

[Insight Sessions](#) offer ideas and effective practices from inside and beyond the orchestra field on audiences and subscriptions; disaster preparedness and response; inclusion and belonging; music and wellness; organizational culture; philanthropy; and sustainability, among other relevant topics.

New this year: [Critical Conversations](#), an entire series of open discussions facilitated by experts across classical music, will take place on the afternoon of Thursday, June 12 and focus on topics including artist management, inclusivity, organizational culture, volunteer groups; and youth development.

[Workshops](#) are hands-on, actionable trainings where participants can learn and practice skills to take back to their organizations.

[Business Perspectives](#) feature presentations from consultants and service organizations, sharing deep industry expertise.

[Constituency Meetings](#) give group members the chance to have closed-door discussions with peers.

A [Tech Fair](#) on June 11, from 8:00am – 12:00pm, 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:

- Volunteers Meeting on June 11
- All-Delegate Reception on June 11
- LGBTQIA+ Reception on June 11
- Networking Event on June 11
- Networking Break on June 12
- ALAANA Affinity Group Lunch on June 12
- Lunch Break on June 12
- Dinner Break on June 12
- Post-Concert Tune-Up Party on June 12
- Coffee Catch-Up in the Exhibit Hall on June 13
- Networking Break on June 13

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

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

Members of the media interested in **tickets for the Utah Symphony concert** may contact Meredith Kimball Laing and Julia Lyon mlaing@usuo.org / jlyon@usuo.org.

Conference hashtag: #Orch2025

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.