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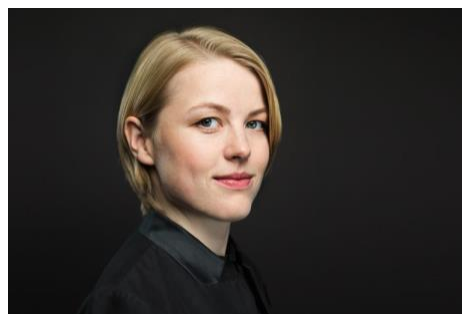
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**RHODE ISLAND
PHILHARMONIC
ORCHESTRA &
MUSIC SCHOOL**
ROBERT SPANO, PRINCIPAL CONDUCTOR

Rhode Island Philharmonic Orchestra & Music School Announces Ruth Reinhardt as its Next Music Director

Reinhardt is Music Director Designate effective immediately, and will become the organization's Music Director at the start of the 2025-2026 Season



PROVIDENCE, RI (June 3, 2024) – The Board of the Rhode Island Philharmonic Orchestra & Music School (RI Phil) voted to appoint German conductor **Ruth Reinhardt** as its next Music Director, as recommended by the organization's Music Director Search Committee.

Ms. Reinhardt's appointment as Music Director was announced at the RI Phil's season- ending Gala on Saturday, June 1st, from the stage of The VETS auditorium.

Reinhardt will become the 6th Music Director in the organization's 80-year history. This is her first Music Director position. Principal Conductor Robert Spano, who stepped in to provide leadership during the organization's search, will remain in his current role through the 2024- 2025 season and then transition to the role of Principal Guest Conductor.

One of her generation's rising stars, German conductor Reinhardt is building a reputation for the clarity of her musical ideas, imaginative programming, elegant performances and collaborative approach. She has guest-conducted many of the best orchestras in Europe and the United States, including the New York Philharmonic, Cleveland Orchestra, the Royal Stockholm Philharmonic, the Leipzig Gewandhaus Orchestra, Helsinki Philharmonic and symphony orchestras of San Francisco, Los Angeles, Dallas, Detroit, Houston, Baltimore, Milwaukee, and Seattle. She recently led her first staged opera, a production of *La Traviata*, for the Royal Swedish Opera in Stockholm. Reinhardt has established collaborative relationships with up-and-coming as well as prominent soloists. As an advocate for bringing less traditional solo instruments to the orchestra,

she worked with saxophonist Stephen Banks and percussionist Vivi Vassileva. Reinhardt is known for her innovative programming and brings new names and fresh faces to many orchestras for the first time. This includes a significant emphasis on women composers. In her two previous engagements with the RI Phil, she gave Rhode Island premieres of works by Polish composer Grażyna Bacewicz and Finnish composer Kaija Saariaho.

“We are thrilled to announce the appointment of Ruth Reinhardt as our next Music Director,” said RI Phil Board Chair **Susan Chung**. “We were all impressed by the way Ms. Reinhardt brought out the best in our musicians; she has that rare ability to be a leader who is clear about her ideas and eminently approachable. She has a wonderful rapport with the Orchestra and won rave reviews from our students and faculty at the Music School this past January. The search committee and the Board of Directors are confident that Ms. Reinhardt embraces and embodies the RI Philharmonic’s vision of being a world-class orchestra and music school, and we believe she will be a transformational leader for both the Orchestra and the School.”

This coming season, Reinhardt will conduct the Orchestra’s TACO and The White Family Foundation Classical Series Concert on November 9, with a program featuring Mendelssohn, Hindemith and Dvořák. Once she steps into the role of Music Director in 2025, she will lead the majority of the Orchestra’s 2025-2026 TACO and The White Family Foundation Classical and Amica Rush Hour Series concerts and its annual Gala. She also plans to lead the Orchestra’s Link Up Education Concerts as often as her schedule allows. Reinhardt will spend a significant amount of time in Rhode Island during non-conducting weeks, engaging students in the Music School, working with students in public schools and local universities, and finding other opportunities to connect the organization and community in meaningful ways. She will also continue guest conducting internationally.

“Ruth Reinhardt is an exceptional conductor, artist and human being,” said RI Phil’s Executive Director **David Beauchesne**. “She is talented, intelligent, and radiates confidence and positivity. We found her to be an excellent communicator and collaborator; her energy and enthusiasm on the podium is infectious. Our community was impressed by her ability to engage the audience in the Orchestra’s performance of new works by speaking to them from the stage about the music. Ms. Reinhardt shares our values, and I have no doubt that we will be successful together, building on the work of predecessors Bramwell Tovey and Larry Rachleff.”

“I am tremendously honored to join the Rhode Island Philharmonic Orchestra & Music School as Music Director,” said **Reinhardt**. “From our very first encounters, I have been impressed and inspired by the musicians and their ability to bring tremendous energy and musical precision to whatever they play. The Orchestra’s collaborative, community-minded spirit is very much in tune with my own commitment to sharing music beyond the concert hall. I look forward to working with young musicians through the Music School and have been impressed by the quality and commitment of the faculty and students. I’ve worked with many wonderful guest artists who would inspire both audiences and students and I intend to bring them to Rhode Island, as well as discover and develop relationships with many more.”

The Music Director Search Committee, comprised of members of the Orchestra, Music School faculty, staff and Board Members, took just under two years to reach a decision. In order to attract the most qualified candidates and conduct a respectful search, the list of candidates was

confidential. “We designed the process to find the conductor who would be the best fit for this Orchestra, School and community,” said Search Committee Chair and RI Phil Board Member **Dr. Ed Wing**. “I believe that we have found an artistic leader and partner who is capable of and committed to making an impact on our organization and community for a long time.”

Current Principal Conductor **Robert Spano** also is enthusiastic about the outcome. “I am so pleased that Ruth Reinhardt will be joining the Rhode Island Philharmonic as Music Director. I very much look forward to working with her and joining forces to continue taking the Orchestra to new heights, especially given her reputation for bringing musical insight, tremendous energy and a spirit of collaboration to her work. I’m also delighted that the organization has asked me to stay on as Principal Guest Conductor after the conclusion of the 24-25 season.”

About the Rhode Island Philharmonic Orchestra & Music School

The Rhode Island Philharmonic Orchestra & Music School inspires, engages and empowers the people of Southern New England as lifelong music listeners, teachers, learners, creators and performers. It is the only professional orchestra in the country to officially designate music education and performance as equal priorities. In addition to the Orchestra’s Classical, Pops, Education concerts and in-school performances, the RI Philharmonic Music School offers music education programs and performance opportunities to people of all ages, incomes and ability levels. Currently the only comprehensive, non-profit community music school in Rhode Island, the Philharmonic engages approximately 1,500 students statewide on a weekly basis at its music schools in East Providence and Westerly with an additional 13,000 students through partnerships, residencies, education concerts and in-school performances.

The RI Phil has a tradition of attracting world-class conductors to Rhode Island. Music Director Larry Rachleff, who retired in 2017, was with the organization for 21 seasons. A longtime professor of conducting and orchestral studies at Rice University in Houston and former Music Director of the San Antonio Symphony, Rachleff, who passed away in 2022, was regarded as the greatest conducting teacher of his generation. His tenure was one of exceptional artistic growth for the Orchestra, as well as the organization’s service to the community, through its merger with the Music School and expansion of education programs into the public schools. International conducting sensation Bramwell Tovey succeeded Rachleff in 2019. A GRAMMY winner and orchestra builder in Music Director posts in Vancouver and Winnipeg, Canada, Tovey held titled positions with both the NY and LA Philharmonics and was a favorite guest of major orchestras around the world. He was also deeply committed to music education, and came to Rhode Island in part because of the organization’s status as the largest combined professional orchestra and community music school in the United States. While Music Director in Vancouver, Tovey helped found the Vancouver Symphony Orchestra School of Music, whose building is now named the Tovey Learning Center.

Bramwell Tovey’s tenure was interrupted by Covid-19 and ultimately cut short by his untimely passing in 2022. During this period of transition, the Orchestra has benefited from the leadership and counsel on and off the podium of exceptional conductors, including Leonard Slatkin, Interim

Principal Conductor Tania Miller (2022-23) and current Principal Conductor Robert Spano, while working to identify its next director.

The Orchestra was founded in 1944. Originally run by boards in five founding communities – Providence, Pawtucket, Cranston, Warwick and Westerly – the Philharmonic eventually consolidated its operations in Providence, with The VETS and PPAC as its primary performance venues. In 2000, the Philharmonic merged with The Music School. In December 2006, the RI Philharmonic moved its administrative offices to East Providence and in Fall 2008 opened the Carter Center for Music Education & Performance, the first facility of its kind in Rhode Island. The Center has dramatically increased the RI Philharmonic's ability to provide high quality, comprehensive and accessible music education through its Music School to thousands of students through scholarships and community partnerships. Students come to its two school sites from virtually every community in the state, including nearby Massachusetts and Connecticut.

About Ruth Reinhardt



A native of Saarbrücken, Germany, **Ruth Reinhardt** discovered early her affinity for music studying violin and singing, and by age 17 had already composed a full opera which she conducted with her local music school. Formal training continued at the Zurich University of the Arts (Zürcher Hochschule der Künste) for violin performance (with Rudolf Koelman) and conducting (Constantin Trinks, Johannes Schlaefli), and then at The Juilliard School in conducting studies with Alan Gilbert and James Ross. While at Juilliard, Ruth won several conducting fellowships with the Tanglewood Music Center, Taki Concordia and Seattle Symphony. Upon graduation, she joined the Dallas Symphony as assistant conductor to Jaap van Zweden for two seasons, during which Ruth was also a Dudamel Fellow at the Los Angeles Philharmonic. In summers 2018 and 2019, she was the assistant conductor at the Lucerne Festival Academy Orchestra, a distinguished laboratory orchestra founded by Pierre Boulez, focusing on contemporary European orchestral music.

After Dallas, Reinhardt returned to Europe and began guest conducting world-wide, building a repertoire for herself that is modern and contemporary, yet grounded in the classics of her native Germany. She has since conducted throughout Europe and North America – including major orchestras on both continents, among them Cincinnati, Cleveland, Detroit, Los Angeles, Milwaukee, Minnesota, New York, San Francisco, Deutsches Sinfonie-Orchester, Konzerthausorchester Berlin, RSB Berlin, Deutsche Kammerphilharmonie, Stockholm

Philharmonic, Orchestre National de France, Helsinki Philharmonic, MDR-Sinfonieorchester, Tonkünstler-Orchester Wien, WDR Köln, and many others. During this past season, Ruth made her opera conducting debut at the Royal Swedish Opera in *La Traviata*, and this coming month will be conducting the famed Gewandhausorchester Leipzig.

Programmatically, Reinhardt's interests have led her toward an in-depth exploration of contemporary repertoire. With significant emphasis on women composers of the late 20th and early 21st centuries, she brings new names and fresh faces to many orchestras for the first time. Among those whose works appear often in her programs are Grażyna Bacewicz, Kaija Saariaho, Lotta Wennäkoski, Daniel Bjarason, Dai Fujikura, and Thomas Adès.

Acclaim for Reinhardt

"In a wide-ranging program posing very different demands, [Ruth Reinhardt] made an impressive showing. Her animated podium presence, devoid of histrionics, affirmed a sturdy musical intelligence and emotional vitality. From start to finish, the musicians responded in kind.

— *Musical America*

"Reinhardt...led both new works with evident assurance. But it was after intermission, in a vibrant, splendidly shaped account of Dvořák's Fifth Symphony, that she truly showed what she could do. In particular, Reinhardt had a powerful success in one of the main challenges with Dvořák — how to retain his distinctively dark, heavy orchestral colors without letting the rhythms bog down. In the two outer movements especially, the textures sounded aptly rich, but Reinhardt's sleek, physical podium manner kept things moving handsomely.

— *San Francisco Chronicle*

"Reinhardt knew how to... deploy her gifts as an elegant, versatile and committed conductor in the search for expressive colors, carefully nuanced by the orchestra.

— *Scherzo*