North Carolina Symphony Appoints Conductor Carlos Miguel Prieto as Artistic Advisor

Carlos Miguel Prieto, a distinguished conductor with an international career spanning more than 20 years, will join the North Carolina Symphony’s artistic leadership as Artistic Advisor beginning in the 2021/22 season. As the Symphony’s music director search continues, Prieto will help ensure the continued artistic excellence of the orchestra.

In addition to making guest conductor appearances leading the orchestra, Prieto will fill duties off the podium including participating in the audition and musician tenure processes, and overseeing the hiring of long-term substitute musicians.

To this special adviseryship, Prieto, who was Musical America’s “Conductor of the Year” for 2019, brings considerable experience leading renowned orchestras—having held music director posts at the Louisiana Philharmonic, Orquesta Sinfónica Nacional de México and Orquesta Sinfónica de Minería in his native Mexico, and Orchestra of the Americas. He is a champion of Latin American music and has conducted more than 100 world premieres of works by Mexican and American composers, many of which he also commissioned.

Prieto has enjoyed a longstanding relationship with NCS, joining for numerous guest conducting engagements since 2011. He most recently led the Symphony in Orff’s choral and orchestral tour de force Carmina Burana, as well as works by composers Anna Clyne and Gabriela Ortiz, in May 2019.

“I have the deepest respect for the musicians of the North Carolina Symphony and their artistry, and am honored and delighted to serve as Artistic Advisor,” says Prieto. “The pandemic has instilled in me an even greater calling to make a difference in people’s lives through music. I am greatly looking forward to collaborating with the musicians and leadership at the Symphony to deliver exceptional music making that connects with the citizens of North Carolina—long time audiences and new friends alike.”

“All of us at the North Carolina Symphony are thrilled to welcome Carlos Miguel Prieto as Artistic Advisor,” says NCS President & CEO Sandi Macdonald. “Attracting an artistic advisor of his international stature speaks to the Symphony’s growing profile and reputation. And Carlos is not only an extraordinarily talented conductor and musician who has led the orchestra in dynamic performances, but is also passionate about building meaningful relationships with students and adults throughout our state.”

Prieto joins an exceptional artistic leadership team who, along with the Symphony’s musicians, are guiding the Symphony’s programming, artistic reputation, and community impact during the music
director transition period. Also ensuring stability, Grant Llewellyn—who concluded his tenure as Music Director at the end of the 2019/20 season—continues in his role as Music Director Laureate.

With artistic excellence in place, NCS continues an international search for its next music director and is planning its 2021/22 concert season. Program details will be announced this summer.

About the North Carolina Symphony
Founded in 1932, the North Carolina Symphony (NCS) is a vital and honored component of North Carolina’s cultural life. Each year, the North Carolina Symphony’s 300 concerts, education programs, and community engagement events are enjoyed by adults and schoolchildren in more than 90 North Carolina counties—in communities large and small; in concert halls, auditoriums, gymnasiums, restaurants, clubs, and outdoor settings; and, since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, online.

In immediate response to the pandemic, NCS began creating high-quality digital education and performance content in March 2020. The Symphony’s streaming concert series has now been enjoyed by more than 124,000 people.

NCS’s state headquarters venue is the spectacular Meymandi Concert Hall at the Duke Energy Center for the Performing Arts in downtown Raleigh. The Symphony’s service across the state includes series in Chapel Hill, Fayetteville, New Bern, Southern Pines, and Wilmington, as well as the Summerfest series at its summer home, the outdoor Koka Booth Amphitheatre in Cary. NCS brings some of the world’s greatest talents to North Carolina and embraces home-state artists from classical musicians to bluegrass bands, creating live music experiences distinctive to North Carolina.

Committed to engaging students of all ages across North Carolina, NCS leads the most extensive education program of any symphony orchestra. In alignment with the curriculum set by the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction, the Symphony provides training and resources for teachers, sends small ensembles into classrooms, offers introductions to the instruments, and presents full-orchestra Education Concerts that bring the fundamentals of music to life. Music Discovery for preschoolers combines music with storytelling, and at the middle and high school levels, students have opportunities to work directly with NCS artists and perform for NCS audiences. In the 2019/20 season, the Symphony engaged more than 100,000 learners—across North Carolina, in all 50 U.S. states, and around the world—through its in-person and online programs.

NCS is dedicated to giving voice to new art, and has presented more than 50 U.S. or world premieres in its history. In 2017, NCS appeared at The John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts in Washington, D.C., as one of four orchestras chosen for the inaugural year of SHIFT: A Festival of American Orchestras—an honor that recognized the Symphony’s creative programming and innovative community partnerships.

The first state-supported symphony in the country, NCS performs under the auspices of the North Carolina Department of Natural and Cultural Resources. To learn more, visit ncsymphony.org.