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The Spartanburg Philharmonic Announces John Young Shik Concklin As 10th Music Director in Organization's 95th Year

Concklin Lands Much Anticipated Music Director Position After Two Year Search

(Spartanburg, South Carolina—May 26, 2023) The long awaited moment has arrived. After a search spanning two years, nine candidates and many, many concerts, the Spartanburg Philharmonic, in its 95th Year, is thrilled to announce John Young Shik Concklin as their next Music Director. *"From the very beginning, the search committee committed to finding the perfect fit for our organization and for our musicians - we believe John Young Shik Concklin is that person,"* says Karen Parrott, Board President of the Philharmonic and Chair of the Search Committee. *"John gets us - Spartanburg, our community, our musicians - and we are thrilled that he is our 10th Music Director."* John will join the Philharmonic on a three year initial contract, yet he is already hard at work with the staff to finalize programming for the upcoming season which is set to launch Saturday, Sept. 16th with an original piece from resident composer Peter B. Kay and Antonin Dvořák's triumphant masterpiece, Symphony no. 9: *"From the New World."*

Concklin, a native of Atlanta, has been praised by musicians and audiences alike for his acute attention to detail, strong sense of rhythm, inviting gravitas and unique innovation. Concurrently John serves as Music Director for Hendersonville Symphony Orchestra and Conductor with the Atlanta Music Project and Piedmont Chamber Orchestra. He is also no stranger to Spartanburg or the Philharmonic as he started out as a violist for the long standing orchestra. John then made his conducting debut in 2018 when he led the Philharmonic's two John Williams concerts to huge acclaim.

The nationwide search began in August of 2021 as an extensive and experienced search committee began reviewing applications. The committee consisted of board members, musicians, Philharmonic staff and the expert advice from Henry Fogel, a leading arts executive and consultant for orchestras around the country. Out of approximately 160 applicants, the committee narrowed it down to just nine finalists, each bringing their own style and techniques to the table. Between 2021 and 2023, all nine candidates helped program and conduct a concert for the Philharmonic's Zimmerli Concert Series held at Twichell Auditorium on the campus of Converse University.

John was the guest conductor for his initial Music Director Finalist concert, *Epic*, in the spring of 2022. The concert consisted of a suite by Samuel Coleridge-Taylor and Gustav Mahler's first symphony nicknamed *"Titan."* This was Concklin's first concert to really show off his conducting gravitas as well as build a relationship with the musicians he previously played with, only this time from the conductor's platform. John also became a last minute hero for the first concert of the 2022-23 season, *Scheherezade*



& *Other Tales*, when the guest conductor and fellow Music Director Finalist was unable to make the September performance due to unforeseen circumstances.

Kathryn Boucher, Executive Director of the Philharmonic, declares, “*With John Concklin, the Philharmonic is poised for what I believe will be one of the most exciting chapters in its storied history. His connection to the musicians and the audience is unparalleled and we could not be more thrilled to welcome him home to Spartanburg.*”

John has certainly won the hearts of many, and he is excited to push the program to new heights. In a welcoming message to the City of Spartanburg he writes:

“I am deeply honored to be selected as the tenth music director of the Spartanburg Philharmonic. My musical and personal life are deeply intertwined with this community, and I always dreamt of what it would be like to lead this storied ensemble. After years of anticipation, here we are! The chapter ahead will be filled with meaningful collaboration and music making. I cannot wait to carry Spartanburg’s rich musical legacy forward; alongside you, the passionate Spartanburg community, the talented musicians and devoted patrons who have kept it vibrant for so long.”

John Concklin’s Role As Music Director

As Music Director, John is responsible for developing imaginative, varied, and compelling programs for the Philharmonic, selecting soloists, developing and maintaining a strong working relationship with the musicians, establishing and communicating the artistic path of SP, and setting, in conjunction with the Board and staff, the short and long-term plans of the orchestra. John will be tasked with helping shape the overall vision, identity and direction of the Philharmonic as he will be the new face of the organization. He is also the principal conductor for the orchestra, leading all rehearsals and performances. The Music Director reports directly to the Board of Directors, and will work closely with the Executive Director and staff of the Spartanburg Philharmonic.

About the Spartanburg Philharmonic

Almost a century old, Spartanburg Philharmonic has its roots in the 1895 May Festival, the precursor of the South Atlantic States Music Festival founded in 1898, and one of only four such festivals featuring orchestras in the United States at that time. Recognized as a pillar of creativity, inspiration, and entertainment, Spartanburg Philharmonic is a modern orchestra with a strong foundation in traditional and contemporary music.

As a firm proponent of diversity and inclusion, the Philharmonic is dedicated to creating innovative and exhilarating experiences through memorable performances of well-known and rarely played works by female composers, composers of color, as well as composers from the past and present, for all members of the Spartanburg community and beyond.



An arts organization whose mission is to enrich, inspire, and educate through live performances of high-quality music, the Spartanburg Philharmonic partners with a variety of community, health, and education organizations to provide opportunities for all ages and abilities to enjoy. Amongst the programs are *Music Sandwiched In*, a free and open to the public lunch hour series; the Spartanburg Philharmonic Youth Orchestras, offering instrumental music education to students grades 6 through 12 in 16 different schools across three counties; and Carnegie Hall's Weill Institute's Link Up program, providing a music curriculum to 4th graders throughout Spartanburg County. To learn more, please visit www.spartanburgphilharmonic.org.