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BACK BAY, BEACON HILL

Boston Landmarks Orchestra names new music director

Posted by Matt Rocheleau April 22, 2011 02:56 PM

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By Matt Rocheleau, Town Correspondent

Hub native and Harvard University alum Christopher Wilkins has been named the **Boston Landmarks Orchestra's** new music director.



(Courtesy: Boston Landmarks Orchestra)

Boston native Christopher Wilkins

“We believe he will further the vision of our founder [and former music director], **Charles Ansbacher**, who died last year, to break down the barriers for people to experience the thrill of hearing great orchestral music by providing free concerts at our home at the DCR’s Hatch Shell and in the community,” said orchestra Chair Jeff Makholm in an announcement this week.

Ansbacher’s wife, Ambassador Swanee Hunt added, “Charles had great confidence in Chris, as a conductor and as a civic leader. I’m sure that on opening night this summer he’ll be dancing.”

Wilkins also serves as music director of both the Orlando Philharmonic Orchestra and the Akron Symphony Orchestra and will continue in those positions, the announcement said. The orchestra describes Wilkins further:

Born in Boston with his parents still living in Concord, he attended Milton Academy and earned his bachelor's degree from Harvard College in 1978. In 1979-80, he attended the Hochschule der Künste in West Berlin, as a recipient of the John Knowles Paine traveling fellowship, awarded by the Harvard music department. As an oboist, he performed with many ensembles in Massachusetts, including the Berkshire Music Center Orchestra at Tanglewood and the Boston Philharmonic under Benjamin Zander. He studied with Otto-Werner Mueller at Yale University, receiving his master of

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music degree in 1981, and was a conducting fellow at the Berkshire Music Center at Tanglewood.

As a guest conductor, Mr. Wilkins has appeared with many of the leading orchestras of the United States and abroad. He has served as Music Director of the San Antonio Symphony, where he and the orchestra received the Morton Gould Award for creative programming. He led the Colorado Springs Symphony and is currently Artistic Advisor to the Opera Theatre of the Rockies there. He also served as resident conductor of the Youth Orchestra of the Americas. He was associate conductor of the Utah Symphony, assisting his former teacher Joseph Silverstein; assistant conductor of the Cleveland Orchestra under Music Director Christoph von Dohnányi; and conducting assistant with the Oregon Symphony under Music Director James DePreist.

Formed in 2001, the orchestra has held concerts – all free of charge – in and around Boston drawing in nearly a half million people combined to performances during the past decade.

The orchestra recently moved to a [new office headquarters](#) in Brighton. The DCR'S Hatch Memorial Shell on the Esplanade remains the orchestra's performing home. The orchestra's performances have been based there 2007, but the orchestra also performs elsewhere in Greater Boston.

The orchestra said its official season will open at the Hatch Shell July 13 at 7 p.m. and run every Wednesday night through August 31.

In addition, the orchestra plans to perform at PineBank in Jamaica Plain on July 31 and its Concerts for Children will take place in collaboration with Project STEP at the Yawkey Boys and Girls Club in Roxbury and in Dorchester.

Other upcoming events include a free preview of the season with a string ensemble from the orchestra at Shreve, Crump & Low on May 5 and the orchestra's annual Gala to be held this year at the State House on June 13, the announcement said.

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