



Robert Franz

Conductor

As Music Director of the Boise Philharmonic, and Associate Conductor of the Houston Symphony, Robert Franz's appeal as a first-rate conductor, energetic educator, and enthusiastic showman has been acclaimed by critics, composers and audiences of all ages. Composer Bright Sheng has praised Franz for his "extremely musical and passionate approach towards music making" and critics have hailed his "masterly pace, emphasis, and technical control" calling his conducting "viscerally thrilling."

Franz, in his fourth season as Music Director of the Boise Philharmonic, continues to make great strides in reaching out to the community with a mix of collaborations, world-class guest artists and solo performances by the orchestra's principal players and ensembles. This season the Boise Philharmonic celebrates its 50th anniversary with Franz conducting world premieres by composers Jake Heggie and David Earnest. A champion of new music, Franz has conducted numerous world premieres and works by living composers. During his tenure, Pulitzer-Prize winning composer Jennifer Higdon, Shulamit Ran, and Lawrence Dillon have been in residence with the Boise Philharmonic.

As Associate Conductor of the Houston Symphony, Robert Franz leads the Symphony with vibrant, athletic and entertaining direction in a broad range of creative educational and family concerts. Franz's emphasis on these programs has led him to a continuing relationship with Radio Disney.

With a wide and varying knowledge of symphonic and operatic works, Maestro Franz has worked with some of today's finest classical soloists, including James Galway, Joshua Bell and Rachel Barton, as well as top pops artists such as Chris Botti, Chaka Khan, and Judy Collins. He has been invited to guest conduct orchestras throughout the United States, including the St. Louis Symphony, Rochester Philharmonic, North Carolina Symphony, the Columbus Symphony, Asheville Lyric Opera, the Portland Symphony (ME), South Bend Symphony, and the Idaho Falls Symphony. In addition to guest conducting the Virginia Symphony and Musiqa (Houston) this season, he will return to the Fairbanks Summer Arts Festival in Alaska.

ASCAP has recognized Franz on two occasions for his advocacy in arts education. Under his direction, both the Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra in 2008 and the Louisville Orchestra in 2001 were awarded the Leonard Bernstein Award for Educational Programming. The Louisville Orchestra's award led to the creation of an education program for Kentucky Educational Television entitled, *Creating Music and Stories*. Winner of the 2008 BPO/ECMEA

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Music Educators Award for Excellence, Franz is a strong supporter of arts education, and has created arts education programs for the Carolina Chamber Symphony, Buffalo Philharmonic, Louisville Orchestra, West End Chamber Ensemble and the Winston-Salem Piedmont Triad Symphony, including that organization's innovative Bolton Research Project. As Associate Conductor of the Louisville Orchestra, he re-vitalized an ASCAP award-winning new music concert series, and served as co-host of *In a Different Key*, a weekly contemporary classical music radio program on WUOL.

The Idaho Education Committee recognized Franz's passion for music education this March when they asked him to address the Idaho Legislation on the importance of music in education. Further strengthening his commitment to bringing music education to young people Franz has authored his first children's book with a CD entitled, *Stella's Magical Musical Tour of America*. He hopes to introduce children to classical music by incorporating various musical excerpts intertwined throughout the story of a girl's journey in a hot air balloon. This book will also be the theme of a Boise Philharmonic family concert in 2012.

In addition to his current posts, Franz served as the Music Director of the Mansfield Symphony in Ohio from 2003-2010, Resident Conductor of the Buffalo Philharmonic from 2005-2009, and Associate Conductor of the Louisville Orchestra from 1997-2006. He has also led the Winston-Salem Piedmont Triad Symphony, the Louisville Youth Orchestra, and the Winston-Salem Youth Symphony. He continues to serve as Music Director Emeritus of the Carolina Chamber Symphony, an orchestra that he founded, and provides educational programming workshops at the National Repertory Orchestra during the summer.

Franz received his Master of Music degree in conducting from the North Carolina School of the Arts in 1992 and his Bachelor of Music degree in oboe performance in 1990 from that same institution. He has participated in conducting workshops in the Czech Republic, St. Petersburg (Russia), Nashville, the Festival at Sandpoint and was a participant in the 1997 National Conductor Preview.

When not on the podium, Franz is an avid runner and a proponent of the Alexander technique. For more information, please visit his website at www.robertfranz.com.

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