BOSTON SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA AND ANDRIS NELSONS ANNOUNCE EXTENSION OF MR. NELSONS’ CONTRACT AS BSO MUSIC DIRECTOR THROUGH 2022, FOLLOWING HIS EXTRAORDINARY FIRST YEAR AT THE HELM OF THE ORCHESTRA

NEW EIGHT-YEAR CONTRACT REPLACES ORIGINAL FIVE-YEAR CONTRACT THAT BEGAN IN SEPTEMBER 2014; CONTRACT INCLUDES AN EVERGREEN CLAUSE REFLECTING A MUTUAL DESIRE BETWEEN THE BSO AND ANDRIS NELSONS FOR A LONG-TERM FUTURE TOGETHER

The Boston Symphony Orchestra and Andris Nelsons have reached an agreement to extend Mr. Nelsons’ contract as BSO Music Director through the 2021-22 season, following his extraordinary first year in that role, having received virtually unanimous praise and universal enthusiasm for his work with the orchestra from critics and audiences alike. Mr. Nelsons’ initial five-year contract with the BSO will be replaced with an eight-year contract, with an evergreen clause in place reflecting a mutual desire for a long-term commitment between the BSO and Mr. Nelsons well beyond the eight years of the new contract.

This news about Andris Nelsons’ contract extension with the BSO takes place just as Mr. Nelsons returns to Tanglewood to lead six programs, including a performance and webcast of Mahler’s Symphony No. 8 with the Tanglewood Music Center Orchestra, in celebration of the 75th anniversary of the BSO’s acclaimed summer music academy; Mr. Nelsons also embarks on his first tour with the BSO as its music director to Europe’s major summer music festivals and concert halls, August 22-September 5. The announcement also comes on the heels of the BSO’s and Andris Nelsons’ first recording release on the Deutsche Grammophon label on July 31: Shostakovich Under Stalin’s Shadow, featuring the composer’s Symphony No. 10—a recording which was just recently named Gramophone Magazine’s Recording of the Month, August 2015.

QUOTE FROM ANDRIS NELSONS, BSO MUSIC DIRECTOR
“I am so very honored and incredibly excited by this new chapter in my musical life with the Boston Symphony Orchestra,” said BSO Music Director Andris Nelsons. “This is a significant opportunity for me...
and the orchestra to work together on deeper levels, artistically and musically. And it is particularly through this kind of closeness in our work together that we will be able to go much further in our growth, in the hope to realize inspirational performances and embrace new audiences with wonderful music. The fact I am so thrilled over furthering our future together is tied with our passionate commitment to our wonderful patrons, generous donors and supporters, dedicated staff and management team and of course our fantastic audiences. I so look forward to sharing the remarkable beauty of this orchestra with music fans in Boston, throughout the country, and around the globe, and we extend our warmest invitation for you to come and hear us soon.”

QUOTE FROM MARK VOLPE, BSO MANAGING DIRECTOR

“After a genuinely and wonderfully successful first year as music director, it is clear that the BSO under Andris Nelsons’ leadership is poised to experience another thrilling period in its 134-year storied history,” said Mark Volpe, BSO Managing Director. “Andris’s magnificent musicianship, his extraordinary generosity of spirit, and his deeply felt enthusiasm for music and for life, have brought the BSO and its audiences a whole new level of appreciation for the transformative power of great music resulting from a partnership between conductor and orchestra that resounds so affirmatively on every level of interaction. New projects with Deutsche Grammophon, Google Play, and Great Performances on PBS, and, through our own bso.org platform, a web cast of this summer’s Mahler 8 with the Tanglewood Music Center Orchestra—along with the upcoming tour to Europe, and subsequent tours planned for Europe, Asia, and North America—are reflective of the many opportunities that are sure to keep the BSO and its new music director in the vanguard of orchestras worldwide as they embark on an extraordinary musical journey together over the next seven years and beyond.”

QUOTE FROM JAMES SOMMERVILLE, PRINCIPAL HORN, BOSTON SYMPHONY

"Speaking on behalf of the members of the Boston Symphony Orchestra, I’d like to express our sincerest congratulations, both to Maestro Nelsons and to our administration, for the extension of Andris' contract as music director,” said Jamie Sommerville, Principal Horn, BSO. “The opportunity to work closely with Maestro Nelsons during his first season as music director has deepened our faith in his outstanding musical gifts, his passion for our art, and his warm, genuine and sincere nature. The performances we have shared have been electrifying and inspired, and the respect he so clearly feels for the players at every rehearsal, performance, and social interaction, has proved to be a revitalizing force to our orchestra. When we look out from the stage, and see our audience galvanized by Andris' enthusiasm, and transported by the profundity of his interpretations, we feel an immense gratitude that our opinions are shared by our listeners and patrons. We look forward to many of these glorious moments together with Maestro Nelsons over the coming years.”

SOME DETAILS OF BSO AGREEMENT WITH ANDRIS NELSONS

Andris Nelsons, who took on the title of BSO Music Director as of the 2014-15 season, has extended his contract with the Boston Symphony Orchestra through the 2021-22 season. During each year of the contract, Mr. Nelsons will lead the orchestra in a minimum of 12 weeks of programs at Symphony Hall. Mr. Nelsons will also lead several programs each season at Tanglewood, the orchestra’s summer music festival in the Berkshire Hills of western Massachusetts. Annual tours—including trips to Europe, Asia, and North America and beyond—are planned for each season of Mr. Nelsons’ tenure with the BSO. Expanding upon his successes in his first year as BSO Music Director, Andris Nelsons will also make media a high priority for the BSO. During the 2014-15 season, Mr. Nelsons and the BSO released two new CDs and three digital downloads, signed media contracts with Deutsche Grammophon and Google, were featured in a Great Performances broadcast nationally on PBS, and will produce their first webcast,
New Tanglewood Tales, On Stage and Off, putting the orchestra on pace to expand its media efforts in 2016.

When Mr. Nelsons took on the title of BSO Music Director on September 27, 2014, at age 35, he became the youngest conductor to hold that title with the orchestra in over 100 years. The fifteenth music director since the Boston Symphony Orchestra’s founding in 1881, Mr. Nelsons is also the first Latvian-born conductor to assume the post.

HIGHLIGHTS FROM ANDRIS NELSONS’ FIRST SEASON AS BSO MUSIC DIRECTOR

ANDRIS NELSONS’ UPCOMING ACTIVITIES WITH THE BSO

Mr. Nelsons returns to the BSO at Tanglewood to lead six performances, August 1-15, highlighted by a performance of Mahler’s Symphony No. 8 on August 8 in celebration of the 75th anniversary of the Tanglewood Music Center, the BSO’s acclaimed summer music academy. The performance will be broadcast live from Tanglewood on a 16-foot screen in Copley Square free for music lovers in the Boston community; a video webcast of this performance of Mahler’s Eighth Symphony, along with features about the TMC 75th anniversary, will be made available in mid-August at www.tanglewood.org for on-demand viewing.

From Tanglewood, Andris Nelsons will lead his first tour as music director of the Boston Symphony Orchestra, conducting the famed ensemble in an extensive 12-concert, 8-city European tour, August 22-September 5, to include stops in the major music capitals of Austria, England, France, Germany, Italy, and Switzerland. Click here for further information.

OVERVIEW OF BSO 2015-16 SEASON WITH MR. NELSONS

BSO Music Director Andris Nelsons will lead the Boston Symphony Orchestra in thirteen extraordinarily wide-ranging programs in the 2015-16 BSO season, highlighted by new programming and recording initiatives centered around the music of Shostakovich, three weeks of thematic concerts honoring the 400th anniversary of Shakespeare’s death, concert performances of Strauss’s Elektra with Christine Goerke in the title role, and new works by Hans Abrahamsen, Sebastian Currier, Giya Kancheli, and George Tsontakis.

ANDRIS NELSONS AND THE BSO: RECORDINGS, BROADCASTS, AND NEW MEDIA

The Boston Symphony Orchestra released its first CD and digital download with Andris Nelsons on BSO Classics in early December, featuring Wagner’s Tannhäuser Overture—the first piece Mr. Nelsons conducted as BSO Music Director—and Sibelius’s Symphony No. 2, recorded from live performances of the first few programs of Mr. Nelsons’ music directorship. In April the Boston Symphony Orchestra, Andris Nelsons, and Deutsche Grammophon announced a new partnership that launches with a project entitled Shostakovich Under Stalin’s Shadow, focusing on works composed during the period of Shostakovich’s difficult relationship with Stalin and the Soviet regime; the first of this series of recordings, featuring Shostakovich’s Symphony No. 10, will be released on July 31. On June 15, the Boston Symphony Orchestra and Andris Nelsons entered into a new partnership to create Classical Live, a unique initiative that offers a new paradigm for the distribution of live classical music recordings, available only on Google Play Music. The Boston Symphony Orchestra’s first releases on Classical Live, launched on June 15, feature live concert recordings drawn from Andris Nelsons’ first season as music director: the Suite from Bartók’s The Miraculous Mandarin and Tchaikovsky’s Symphony No 6, Pathétique (from October 1, 2, and 3, 2014).
**A Great Performances** special, **Boston Symphony Orchestra: Andris Nelsons’ Inaugural Concert**, aired Friday, May 29 at 9 p.m. on PBS—with a special focus on the exciting new collaboration between Mr. Nelsons and the BSO, and featuring music performed during Mr. Nelsons’ inaugural concert as BSO Music Director. The program showcased two of the conductor’s close colleagues: his wife, the acclaimed Latvian soprano **Kristine Opolais**, and the outstanding German tenor **Jonas Kaufmann**, each singing selections from the Wagnerian and Italian verismo repertoires. The concert broadcast opened with Wagner’s *Tannhäuser* Overture and closed with Respighi’s spectacular orchestral showcase, *Pines of Rome* (more details of the program appear below).

**BSO 2014-15 SEASON HIGHLIGHTS**

The Boston Symphony Orchestra’s 2014-15 season shone a welcoming spotlight on Andris Nelsons as he made his highly anticipated debut as BSO Music Director, leading performances that featured an eclectic offering of music and an impressive line-up of guest artists, and presented programs that illuminated touchstone moments in his life as a musician, from his youngest days as a child in Riga, to his present-day stature as one of the world’s most sought-after conductors. Mr. Nelsons’ first season with the Boston Symphony Orchestra began in grand style on Saturday, September 27, when he opened a celebratory program with Wagner’s Overture to *Tannhäuser*—the work that first inspired a five-year-old Nelsons to a life in music. Two singers strongly associated with Mr. Nelsons’ artistic life, the acclaimed soprano **Kristine Opolais** and the great tenor **Jonas Kaufmann**, joined the BSO and its new conductor for an evening of operatic and symphonic showpieces featuring works by Puccini, Respighi, and Wagner, among others. The following week, Mr. Nelsons returned to the BSO to lead a powerhouse program of three major orchestral works—Beethoven’s Symphony No. 8, Bartók’s *Miraculous Mandarin* Suite, and Tchaikovsky’s Symphony No. 6, *Pathétique*, for his first full week of subscription programs. Mr. Nelsons’ three subsequent appearances with the BSO—in November 2014 (music from the Slavic and Scandinavian traditions, and musicians with whom Mr. Nelsons has frequently collaborated), January 2015 (Mr. Nelsons’ favorite works from the great German-Austrian tradition, music of Beethoven, Brahms, Bruckner, Haydn, and Mozart, among others), and March/April 2015 (monumental works by Mahler, Shostakovich, and Strauss) each took on its own musical focus and offered insights into the many influences behind Mr. Nelsons’ musical life past and present, including the role of new music with programs featuring works by **Brett Dean**, **Ēriks Ešenvalds**, **Michael Gandolfi**, **Sofia Gubaidulina**, **John Harbison**, and **Gunther Schuller**. Mr. Nelsons’ final three BSO programs of the season, including Mahler’s Symphony No. 6, Shostakovich’s Symphony No. 10, and Strauss’s *Ein Heldenleben*, were repeated at Carnegie Hall, April 15-17.

Click here for a complete biography and photos of Andris Nelsons.

Click here for a brief history of the Boston Symphony Orchestra.

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