

NEWS RELEASE:

Yannick Nézet-Séguin and The Philadelphia Orchestra Appoint Three Assistant Conductors

*Conducting Fellows Austin Chanu and Tristan Rais-Sherman
promoted to assistant conductors, effective immediately*

*Naomi Woo to serve as assistant conductor
beginning in the 2024–25 season*

(Philadelphia, July 18, 2023)—Music and Artistic Director Yannick Nézet-Séguin and The Philadelphia Orchestra are pleased to announce that current Conducting Fellows Austin Chanu and Tristan Rais-Sherman will continue to work with the Orchestra throughout the 2023–24 season, and have been promoted to assistant conductors, effective immediately. Following an extensive audition process, Naomi Woo has been named assistant conductor beginning in the 2024–25 season.

These talented individuals will serve as cover conductors and provide valuable assistance to Yannick Nézet-Séguin and guest conductors. Chanu, Rais-Sherman, and Woo will actively participate in residency programs, concert tours, and educational activities. They will also lead the Orchestra in various community programs, fostering a deeper connection between the Orchestra and the public.

“Mentoring young conductors is one of the most rewarding aspects of my work, and I have enjoyed watching Austin and Tristan develop their skills over the past year,” said Music and Artistic Director Yannick Nézet-Séguin. “We are thrilled to recognize their artistry on stage and their contributions off stage with these well-deserved promotions and look forward to seeing what they accomplish next season. In addition, we are excited to welcome Naomi Woo to the Philadelphia Orchestra family. After working with her closely at the Orchestre Métropolitain, I know she will bring great insight and talent to our 2024–25 season.”

Austin Chanu is a conductor, composer, and woodwind performer originally from the San Francisco Bay area. He is a recipient of the 2023 Career Assistance Award from the Solti Foundation US. He made his Philadelphia Orchestra subscription debut in April 2023 conducting Igor Stravinsky’s *The Rite of Spring*. Previously, he has appeared as a guest conductor with the Omaha Symphony, the Rochester Philharmonic Orchestra, and the St. Louis Symphony Orchestra. He was also music director for the Los Angeles Music and Art School. During his tenure at LAMusArt, Chanu conducted the youth orchestra, choirs, and jazz band, while overseeing the development of curriculum and artistic direction of the ensembles. During this time, he also conducted for the LA Chamber Orchestra’s New Music Salon, served as a teaching artist and conductor for the Los Angeles Philharmonic Association’s Associate Composer Program, and was a high-call woodwind performer for musical pit orchestras in the greater Los Angeles area. Chanu received a bachelor’s degree in music composition from the USC Thornton School

of Music. He also holds a master's degree in orchestral conducting from the Eastman School of Music, where he studied under Neil Varon.

Creating electrifying performances that connect with modern audiences, **Tristan Rais-Sherman** is an American conductor devoted to revitalizing classical music's place in modern culture. Establishing his presence on the global music scene, he recently competed in the 2023 Gustav Mahler Conducting Competition with the Bamberg Symphony. Further solidifying his international standing, he made successful debuts with The Philadelphia Orchestra and the San Diego Symphony. Looking ahead to the 2023–24 season, he is scheduled to debut with the Baltimore Symphony, in addition to maintaining ongoing engagements with The Philadelphia Orchestra. In recognition of his growing impact in the orchestral field, Rais-Sherman has twice received the Career Assistance Award from the Solti Foundation US, in 2022 and 2023. His dedication to nurturing future generations is reflected in his educational work, which includes leading the World Youth Symphony Orchestra at Interlochen, conducting guest master classes at the Philadelphia International Music Festival, and implementing educational programs with The Philadelphia Orchestra, the San Diego Symphony, and the NEC (New England Conservatory) Symphony. Rais-Sherman holds an Artist Diploma from the New England Conservatory, a master's degree in orchestral conducting from the University of Michigan, and a bachelor's degree in cello performance from Ithaca College.

Canadian conductor and pianist **Naomi Woo** is a widely sought-after symphonic and operatic conductor and educator and the 2022 winner of the Canada Council's prestigious Virginia Parker Prize. After a successful four-year tenure as assistant conductor of the Winnipeg Symphony Orchestra, she joins the Orchestre Métropolitain Montréal as artistic partner in the 2023–24 season and The Philadelphia Orchestra as assistant conductor for the 2024–25 season. Highlights of her 2023–24 season include engagements with the Orchestre Métropolitain, the Montreal Symphony, the Toronto Symphony, the Vancouver Symphony, and the National Arts Center Orchestra (Ottawa); two appearances with the Illinois Symphony Orchestra, where she is a music director finalist; and an extensive tour of England leading English Touring Opera's production of Rossini's *Cinderella*. As an assistant/cover conductor, Woo works with the Los Angeles Philharmonic, The Philadelphia Orchestra, the Toronto Symphony, and the Orchestre Métropolitain, and she regularly conducts classical subscription concerts with numerous ensembles throughout Canada. She has conducted the Canadian premiere of Du Yun's Pulitzer Prize-winning opera *Angel's Bone* in Vancouver and the world premiere of Ellis Ludwig-Leone's *The Night Falls* in New York City. In 2022, she assisted the world premiere of Oliver Leith's *Last Days* at Royal Opera House, Covent Garden. Woo is a member of Tapestry Opera's Women in Musical Leadership program and was chosen by her mentor Yannick Nézet-Séguin as a member of the Orchestre Métropolitain's inaugural orchestral conducting academy. She holds a Ph.D. from the University of Cambridge, where she was a Gates Cambridge Scholar. She has also studied mathematics, philosophy, and music at Yale College, the Yale School of Music, and the University of Montreal.

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CONTACTS:

Ashley Berke
267.250.5148
aberke@philorch.org

Stephanie Williams
610.952.6836
swilliams@philorch.org

Jake Rogan
215.790.5870
jrogan@philorch.org