

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## **A Landmark Appointment: Edmonton Symphony Orchestra Welcomes Jean-Marie Zeitouni as Music Director**

**Edmonton, AB (February 19, 2025)** – The Edmonton Symphony Orchestra (ESO) is thrilled to announce the appointment of **acclaimed Canadian conductor Jean-Marie Zeitouni as its next Music Director**. Zeitouni is only the third Canadian—and ninth overall—to lead the ESO since 1952, marking a significant milestone in the orchestra's history.

Following a highly competitive international search, the ESO is proud to welcome Zeitouni, a conductor of exceptional artistry and vision, a longtime friend and colleague of the ESO, and a perennial audience favourite. An expressive and meticulous musician, he has led orchestras across five continents, including performances in Paris, New York, Tokyo, Rio de Janeiro, Brussels, Detroit, Toronto, Ottawa, Montreal, Vancouver, and Calgary. His extensive career features collaborations with the Handel and Haydn Society of Boston, the National Symphony of Mexico, and the Hong Kong Philharmonic, along with appearances at renowned festivals such as Lanaudière, Domaine Forget, Grant Park, and Mostly Mozart Festival in NYC. **He has been nominated for several JUNO Awards (most recently in 2023) and won the 2007 JUNO for Classical Album of the Year for Piazzolla on ATMA Classics.**

**No stranger to Edmonton audiences, Zeitouni made his ESO debut in 2006 and has since conducted over 35 performances with the ESO and Edmonton Opera.** His constancy and deep connection with the musicians and audiences evolved into an Artistic Partnership in the 2019/2020 season. Over the years, his concerts have been distinguished by profound musical insights, colourful and genuine interpretations, and the joy of making and sharing music with Edmonton audiences, culminating in this exciting new chapter.

"This appointment is a tremendous honour and the fulfillment of a long-held dream," says Zeitouni. "This orchestra welcomed me early in my career, and over the years, it has become a true artistic home. I have the greatest respect for the musicians as well as for the entire organization. Edmonton is home to one of the finest orchestras in North America and to an acoustic gem, the Winspear Centre. To help shape its future is both a joy and a responsibility—one I embrace with energy and passion. Edmonton is a vibrant city with a passionate, engaged audience that knows how to support its artists. I'm excited to grow my connection with this wonderful community that champions bold ideas and artistic creativity."

Zeitouni's appointment follows a distinguished legacy of artistic leadership, including Alexander Prior, Bill Eddins, Grzegorz Nowak, Uri Mayer, Pierre Hétu, Lawrence Leonard, Brian Priestman, and Lee Hepner. Under their direction, the ESO has grown into one of Canada's premier orchestras.

"Jean-Marie Zeitouni's appointment is a defining moment for the Edmonton Symphony Orchestra," says Annemarie Leenhouts-Petrov, President and CEO of the Winspear Centre and Edmonton Symphony Orchestra. "As a distinguished Canadian conductor, and a deeply gifted musician and collaborator, I look forward to our work together. His warmth and generosity touched our musicians and audiences since his first performances with the ESO twenty years

ago - who could ask for a better foundation for this exciting new relationship to start? With his vision, musical leadership and keen intelligence, we have the opportunity to become the most relevant orchestra of the 21st Century, to be cherished in our home city and recognized well beyond our province and country.”

“Jean-Marie Zeitouni is an extraordinary musician and a deeply inspiring leader. His passion, energy, and artistic vision bring out the very best in our orchestra, and we are thrilled to embark on this new chapter with him as our Music Director. His deep connection with the ESO has already created so many memorable moments, and we can't wait to share what's next with our audiences,” adds Robert Uchida, ESO Concertmaster.

Zeitouni will officially assume his role as Music Director in the 2025/2026 season, bringing his artistic vision to Edmonton audiences with an exciting new season of music. He will make his debut in this role on September 27 and 28, 2025, conducting a program that includes Dvořák's *Violin Concerto* featuring violinist Jacques Forestier, Prokofiev's *Symphony No. 5*, and *Avé* by Canadian composer John Estacio.

**More about Zeitouni** <https://jmzeitouni.com/>

**Media Assets:** [Download high-resolution photos here](#)

-30-

#### **About the Winspear | Edmonton Symphony Orchestra | Tommy Banks Centre**

In its 73rd year, the Edmonton Symphony Orchestra is one of Canada's foremost orchestral ensembles. Its current roster includes musicians from Canada and around the world performing a wide-ranging repertoire from great classical masterworks to Hollywood scores to new works by living composers. The orchestra is the resident artistic ensemble, the “home team,” of the Winspear Centre, among the best acoustic concert halls in North America. Located in the heart of Edmonton, the Centre itself is undergoing a transformation into a state-of-the-art community hub for music, and home to the Tommy Banks Centre for Musical Creativity.

**Media Contact:** Konstantine Kurelias Winspear | Edmonton Symphony Orchestra  
e: [kkurelias@winspearcentre.com](mailto:kkurelias@winspearcentre.com) c: 780-554-9868