

2020 Fort Wayne Philharmonic – Conductors Guild International Conducting Workshop Participants

Rachel L. Waddell is known for her infectious energy and adventurous programming, American conductor Rachel Waddell proves an unabashedly passionate ambassador for classical music. Waddell prides herself on curating relevant programs with stunning collaborations that invite and inspire. This, coupled with her engaging presence on and off the podium, have contributed to remarkable growth in audience attendance each season. In addition, Waddell takes an active role in the orchestras she leads and their communities, serving as an advocate for development, education, and outreach.

Waddell maintains a busy profile as a conductor. Waddell will conduct the Fort Wayne Philharmonic this January as one of eight conductors selected for the orchestra's international conducting workshop. In November she attended the Dallas Opera's prestigious Hart Institute for Women Conductors. She has conducted orchestras throughout the country including the Rochester and Las Vegas Philharmonics, and Cleveland's Suburban Symphony. While serving as the Associate Conductor of the Canton Symphony Orchestra in Ohio, Waddell conducted over 80 performances. Waddell is Music Director of the University of Rochester Orchestras in New York. Lauded as, "a conductor of creativity and courage," she won second place in the American Prize's Vyautas Marijosius Memorial Award in Orchestral Programming for her 2017-18 season with the UR Orchestras.

Originally from Connecticut, Waddell has lived throughout the country. She draws her inspiration from her diverse life experiences in history and culture, museum studies, literature, and traveling. She holds a Doctor of Musical Arts in Orchestral Conducting from the University of Nevada, Las Vegas.

Dominik Steklasa is a young conductor coming from Slovenia. He got his master's degrees in *Orchestral Conducting* and in *Composition and Music Theory* at Ljubljana Academy of Music. After finishing his studies at the academy, he took various masterclasses. But the most important moment in his conducting career was, when he started studying *Ilya Musin conducting technique* with world-renowned conducting teacher Maestro Ennio Nicotra.

In his two seasons as Assistant Conductor at Ljubljana SNG Opera & Ballet he has assisted at world premieres of Slovenian contemporary operas and the premiere performances of standard repertoire – the last one was G. Donizetti: Lucia di Lammermoor. He also conducted a concert on the ISCM World Music Days 2015 in a contemporary programme that included his own composition *576 MP (thy)*. Later he conducted the recording session of this composition with members of RTV Slovenia Symphony Orchestra for the International Rostrum of Composers 2016. He has conducted various orchestras, among them *Symphony Orchestra Nevsky* (Russia), *Opera in Rome Symphony Orchestra* (Italy), *Orchestra Magna Grecia* (Italy), *Dubrovnik Symphony Orchestra* (Croatia), *Berlin Sinfonietta* (Germany), *Slovenian Philharmonic Orchestra* (Slovenia) and *Symphony Orchestra of Ljubljana Academy of Music* (Slovenia).

His mindset is: "Conductor is a director of sound. And his stage is the Orchestra."

Alonzo Barrett is currently a student at the Jacobs School of Music working toward a degree in saxophone performance with the classical saxophonist, Dr. Otis Murphy. In addition, he also studies privately with Maestro Arthur Fagen, chair of the orchestral conducting department at Jacobs, and Music Director of the Atlanta Opera.

Born in Los Angeles and raised in Houston, Alonzo grew up a member of the Texas Band Life participating all 4 years of high school. Under the tutelage of East Texas Band Directors, Bethann Adams and Dr. Mike Barnes, he climbed to the #2 spot in the tenor saxophone section of the Texas State Symphonic Band under the direction of Marine Band Director Col. Jason K. Fettig, in 2018, performing a program of Bernstein, Persichetti, and more.

At the very early age of 9, Alonzo saw Maestro Andrés-Orozco Estrada conduct a children's concert with the Houston Symphony and fell in love with the magical world of orchestral music. It wasn't until age 15 that he knew he had to become a conductor and joined his school's orchestra first on double bass, and then cello, occasionally conducting the orchestra in short programs of Copland, Henry Watts, and his own compositions.

While only 18, he does not plan on letting his comparatively young age keep him from beginning his conducting career as soon as possible, and he would like to make very clear that he owes the opportunity to debut with the Fort Wayne Philharmonic to Maestro Arthur Fagen, who has been extremely supportive and helpful and encouraged him to apply for the workshop. In addition, his thanks go to Jan Wilson of the Conductors Guild, Maestro Nicotra, and Maestro Constantine for giving him the chance to demonstrate his abilities in his first conducting masterclass.

Eun Cho was born and raised in South Korea and moved to the USA with her family when she was 14 years old. She has pursued flute performance and has earned her Bachelor of Music degree from DePaul university where she studied with Mary Stopler. In addition to her work as a high school orchestra director and church choral director, Ms Cho is also pursuing a conducting career and has participated in numerous conductor workshops with eminent conducting teachers including Markand Thakar, Neil Thomson, and David Itkin. Ms. Cho is currently Director of Orchestras at King's High School, a private, interdenominational Christian school, located in Shoreline, Washington, just north of Seattle, WA and Choral Director of the Women's Choir at Korean United Presbyterian Church. She is also an active flutist, private flute teacher and pianist. Eun Cho's ultimate goal is to conduct professional orchestras in multiple genres, including major symphonic works, operas and ballets around the globe and to be a trendsetter who is able to know and understand the interests of the public.

Verena Lucía Anders is the founder and director of Symphonic Revolution, an Atlanta based chamber orchestra dedicated to accessible concerts in alternative venues. Verena has conducted orchestras including the Chattanooga Symphony Orchestra, Holy Trinity Orchestra (Decatur, GA) and St Thomas Aquinas Orchestra (Phoenix, AZ).

Verena currently serves as Music Department Chair and Executive Board member of the Atlanta School for the Arts, Director of Music at Philadelphia Presbyterian Church, and Co-Director of Voices Found, a social justice-based ensemble. Mrs. Anders has also performed with the Atlanta Symphony Chorus and Chamber Chorus and has served as Choral Teaching Artist with the Atlanta Music Project, an El Sistema based music education program. A conductor, pianist, composer, vocalist, and music educator, Verena was born in Berlin, Germany, of Chilean and Peruvian parents.

After immigrating to the U.S., Verena began her training in music and dance at the age of four at the Peabody Institute in Baltimore, MD. Mrs. Anders completed her Bachelor of Music degree in Piano Performance under the tutelage of Santiago Rodriguez at the University of Maryland. Upon completion of her undergraduate studies, Mrs. Anders studied at the Alvin Ailey School for Dance in New York, while maintaining an active as a performing musician. During her time in New York, Verena sang in the Grammy-award winning performance of John Adam's *On the Transmigration of Souls*. In 2010, Verena received her Conducting Master's Degree from the Catholic University of America, Washington D.C., under the tutelage of Dr. Leo Nestor. Mrs. Anders currently lives with her husband, Will Buthod, in Atlanta, Georgia.

Jeffrey Kowalkowski is a Chicago composer, music theorist, keyboardist, and educator. He has been involved with the experimental music scene in Chicago for over 30 years. He teaches at DePaul University School of Music, and Northeastern Illinois University. His works have been performed internationally. This past fall he helped create a sound installation for the Chicago Architectural Biennial with South African artist Malose Malahela, and he recently recorded the piano music of Israeli composer Amnon Wolman.

Jeff released a Trio album on New Atlantis Records (Yellow Springs, Ohio), with Harrison Bankhead (bass) and Avreeayl Ra (drums). He also conducted the North American Zither Gathering (2016 and 2018) and he directed the Chicago Scratch Orchestra (2009-2014). He has participated in the Gaudeamus Festival (Netherlands) and also the Darmstadt Fereinkurse (Germany).

As a film composer, he has completed a feature documentary "Compass Cabaret 55" (2014), for Mark Siska Films. In 2016 he scored anthropologist Heinrich Hauser's film "Chicago" (1930), to be performed with live musicians, for producer Hans Ulrich Werner (Offenbürg), and a piano solo score to be played with Charlie Chaplin's "The Immigrant" (1917).

Jeff completed multiple public sound installations at The Shedd Aquarium, the Fern Room at Lincoln Park Conservatory, and the DePaul Art Museum (Faculty Show). Jeff has been involved with the Experimental Sound Studio (ESS) since 1989.

He received an achievement award from the Tim and Helen Meier Arts Foundation for innovation in experimental music and has received commissions from Met Life (Meet the Composer), ACM (Access Contemporary Music), and several composing residencies at Ragdale Artist Colony in Lake Forest. He was a guest professor of music theory at Lake Forest College in Fall 2018.

For over twenty years Jeff has organized the New Music at the Green Mill concerts on the last Sunday of October each year, along with composer George Flynn.

Caleb Wenzel is a conductor, composer, and pianist. He maintains an active and diverse performance profile that spans the gamut of early music, choral ensembles, experimental new music, symphonic repertoire, opera and musical theatre. As the 2019 winner of the Respighi Prize in conducting, Dr. Wenzel made his Carnegie Hall debut conducting Chamber Orchestra of New York last June. This coming summer, he will return to New York to serve as conducting apprentice for CONY's upcoming Naxos recording.

Dr. Wenzel currently serves as Music Director of the Elkhart County Youth Honors Orchestra and Director of Choirs at John Adams High School in South Bend, Indiana. Since 2014, Dr. Wenzel has served on the conducting faculty of the Oregon Bach Festival Composers Symposium. He previously served as associate conductor of the professional new collective, Ensemble CONCEPT/21, where he led the ensemble's education initiative, New Voices of Michiana. He has guest conducted at the Chicago Latino Music Festival, the American Bach Society, the South Bend Youth Symphony Orchestra, and Kammerphilharmonie Graz and has served on the faculties of University of Notre Dame, Indiana University South Bend, Holy Cross College, and Goshen College.

Dr. Wenzel's compositions have been performed throughout the USA, in Poland, England, and Japan. An accomplished pianist, he regularly performs a concerto soloist and recitalist. In late 2020, he will launch a two-year international recital tour of Johann Sebastian Bach's Well-tempered Clavier to mark the 300th anniversary of its composition.

Dr. Wenzel is a graduate of University of Notre Dame where he completed the Doctor of Musical Arts in conducting under the mentorship of renowned Venezuelan conductor Carmen-Helena Téllez. He has also studied conducting with John Farrer, Dir Brossé, Howard Williams, Nancy Menk, Jan Harrington, and Leo Nestor.

Catherine O'Shaughnessy is a rising orchestral and opera conductor in the United States and abroad. Avidly committed to Chicago's dynamic opera scene, she is currently the music director of Chicago Fringe Opera—the city's “alt-opera company” (John von Rhein, Chicago Tribune). Fringe brings to life recent English-language works in immersive, site-specific and experiential settings; featured composers have included Missy Mazzoli, Philip Glass, and William Bolcom. Catherine also conducts with several other area companies, including, the Chicago Vocal Arts Consortium, the Floating Opera Company and Opera On Tap.

In recent years, Catherine has appeared in concert with the Orpheus Kammerorchester Wien and the Orquesta Filarmónica de Gran Canaria. She was assistant conductor at the 7th Varna International Opera Academy in Bulgaria and made her New York debut conducting Antonio Salieri's *La Cifra* with the dell'Arte Opera Ensemble. In Chicago, she conducted North Park University's production of Massenet's *Cendrillon* and the world premiere of Ross Crean's *The Great God Pan* with Chicago Fringe Opera.

Catherine holds a Doctor of Musical Arts degree in orchestral and opera conducting from Arizona State University, where she was a student of William Reber and Timothy Russell. She also earned a Master of Music in orchestral conducting from Bowling Green State University (studying with Emily Freeman Brown) and a Bachelor of Music in music theory from the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor (with Kenneth Kiesler).