

THE NATIONAL CONDUCTING INSTITUTE 2008

LEONARD SLATKIN, DIRECTOR

with the
National Symphony Orchestra
Leonard Slatkin, Music Director

The John F. Kennedy Center
for the Performing Arts

“The amount of artistic growth transformed my musicmaking in a profound way. I am a different conductor and musician because of the NCI.”

— **LEANNA PRIMIANI**, 2006 debut conductor

“Conducting an orchestra is the most mysterious of musical vocations, demanding that a practitioner combine the attributes of coach, shaman, psychologist and traffic cop, all in quest of an elusive harmony. It is an exceedingly difficult talent to develop, and it is especially challenging to make the transition from student to...maestro.”

— **TIM PAGE**, *The Washington Post*



Cover photo by Carol Pratt
Back photo by Chris Lee
This page: photo by Carol Pratt

ABOUT THE PROGRAM:

Created and directed by Leonard Slatkin, the National Symphony Orchestra, and the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, in cooperation with the American Symphony Orchestra League's Orchestra Leadership Academy, the National Conducting Institute provides a unique opportunity for the development of highly gifted, emerging professional conductors. Designed to assist with the crucial transition from leading academic, community, or part-time ensembles to directing major, full-time, professional orchestras, the three-week program is in its ninth year.

The position of music director with a major American orchestra requires strong leadership abilities and mastery of a range of complex skills that cannot be learned in the classroom or with youth or semi-professional orchestras. The National Conducting Institute offers its participants unprecedented exposure to all aspects of a full-time, professional orchestra, including conducting opportunities

and direct interaction with its music director, members, and administrators. Participants attend workshops and receive feedback from musicians, staff, members of the Board of Directors, and consultants from the American Symphony Orchestra League. Participants observe Leonard Slatkin as he rehearses and performs with the NSO, and then engage in discussions with Leonard Slatkin, Elizabeth Schulze (Music Director, Maryland Symphony Orchestra), and members of the orchestra about their own work. Five musicians from the orchestra serve as mentors, working closely with the participants throughout the Institute. By the end of the program, participants have gained valuable insights into the varied responsibilities of the American music director, as well as an increased familiarity with the general workings of a major U.S. orchestra. The Institute culminates with a special performance by the National Symphony Orchestra conducted by participants selected as “debut conductors.”

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ELIGIBILITY:

Conductors who demonstrate unusually high levels of skill, talent, and musicianship and who consider themselves at a professional level, but who have not yet had substantial experience conducting a major, full-time, professional orchestra, are eligible to apply. Preference will be given to applicants who have completed a significant portion of their training or experience in the United States.

DEBUT CONDUCTORS:

Debut conductors perform with the National Symphony Orchestra in the final concert. Tuition and lodging for the three-week program is \$1,750. In addition to tuition, debut conductors are expected to cover the cost of travel, scores, some meals, and incidentals. Several meals are included in the scheduled activities, and are covered in the tuition fees.

SEMINAR CONDUCTORS:

A limited number of applicants will be selected to participate in the program as seminar conductors. Seminar conductors participate in all aspects of the Institute, and have the opportunity to rehearse the National Symphony Orchestra; however, they do not perform in the final concert. Tuition and lodging is \$1,000 for the three-week program. In addition to tuition, seminar conductors are expected to cover the cost of travel, scores, some meals, and incidentals. Several meals are included in the scheduled activities, and are covered in the tuition fees.

SELECTION PROCESS:

Complete applications must be received at the Kennedy Center by 5:00 p.m. on September 14, 2007. Up to four debut conductors and up to six seminar conductors will be selected and notified by November 30, 2007.

HOW TO APPLY:

Fill out this application form and submit with: A current résumé. Three (3) recent letters of reference from professionals familiar with your work as a conductor. A brief essay (1 page, typed, double-spaced) describing why you would like to participate in the National Conducting Institute, and why you feel NCI would be of value to you. A conducting videotape or DVD, showing your best recent work (see guidelines below). A \$35 U.S. non-refundable application fee (please make checks or money orders payable to **The Kennedy Center**).

CONDUCTOR VIDEOTAPE OR DVD SUBMISSION GUIDELINES:

While we understand that applicants may not have complete control over all elements involved in producing your video, we urge you to fulfill as many of these guidelines as possible.

- **Format:** Use a new videotape (standard VHS in NTSC format) or new DVD.
- **Label:** Include your name and printed log of excerpts with timings on both the video/DVD and the video/DVD cover.
- **Total length:** At least 12, not more than 30 minutes.
- **Excerpts:** 3 or 4 excerpts—complete movements are preferred—of contrasting standard repertoire demonstrating a variety of styles and tempi.
- **Camera placement:** From the back of the orchestra with the focus on the front of the conductor. Avoid excerpts that include publicity footage and/or those that do not focus exclusively on you as the conductor.
- **Microphone placement:** Place the microphone so as to record the best sound. Whenever possible, avoid placing the microphone behind the horn section or adjacent to the percussion section.
- **Orchestra:** Ensure enough musicians to adequately cover all orchestral parts.
- **Performance:** Send a video of a performance, not a rehearsal. If it must be a rehearsal, include sustained passages that do not include frequent interruptions.
- **Lead:** Keep the tape lead as short as possible; no audiovisual displays before the performance, including promotional segments. The panel wants to see you conduct immediately!
- **Dress:** Dress appropriately for a professional conductor.

Send all the materials listed above to the following address, to be received by **September 14, 2007**:

National Conducting Institute
Attn: Erin Ozment
The Kennedy Center
National Symphony Orchestra
P.O. Box 101510
Arlington, VA 22210

IMPORTANT NOTE:

If you are sending materials via FedEx or express mail, please use the following address instead:

National Conducting Institute, Attn: Erin Ozment, John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, 2700 F Street, NW, Washington, DC 20566, (202) 416-8100.

Only the requested materials will be reviewed. Please do not bind the application materials in any way (including staples). Applications that are submitted after the deadline, or are incomplete by the deadline, will not be considered. Inquiries may be directed to Erin Ozment, Artistic Administrator, at eko2ment@kennedy-center.org. **Please do not submit any application materials via e-mail.**



PHOTO BY SCOTT SUCHMAN

PROGRAM ACTIVITIES:

The National Conducting Institute is held in Washington, D.C., at the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts.

The Institute is divided into three parts. *Participants must be available for each day in all three weeks.*

Week 1: March 9-14, 2008

The Orchestra: Artistic Vision and Organizational Understanding

The National Conducting Institute begins with an introduction to the leadership roles of the American music director and staff conductor. Designed by the American Symphony Orchestra League in collaboration with the National Symphony Orchestra, Week 1 covers personal and institutional artistic vision, season planning, orchestra personnel, programming, education, budgeting, fundraising, governance, marketing, and community and public relations. Working with specialists in leadership education and organizational behavior, participants also receive training in the personal skills necessary to function in the complex organizational structures within an orchestra.

Week 2: May 6-9, 2008

Mentoring: Working with Leonard Slatkin and the National Symphony Orchestra

Participants observe the activities of Leonard Slatkin, Music Director of the National Symphony Orchestra, during a subscription concert week. Participants attend rehearsals, performances, and meetings relevant to the effective leadership of a professional orchestra. Leonard Slatkin, joined by five musician mentors from the National Symphony Orchestra, reviews repertoire, rehearsals, and performances with the participants in preparation for the conducting week.

Week 3: June 18-21, 2008

Conducting the National Symphony Orchestra

Debut conductors and seminar conductors receive extensive, personalized coaching from Leonard Slatkin, guest faculty conductor Elizabeth Schulze, and the musicians of the National Symphony Orchestra as they rehearse the orchestra, practice accompanying skills, and prepare for the final concert in the Kennedy Center Concert Hall.

“The Institute...is that rare program that offers more than its name might promise. At a time when many on the American musical scene are lamenting the relative paucity of rising American music directors and major orchestras, the Institute is geared to help train... Americans assume just such posts.”

—JAMES R. OESTREICH, *The New York Times*

PLEASE PRINT OR TYPE CLEARLY

NAME (MR./MRS./MS./DR.) _____
 MAILING ADDRESS _____
 CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____
 DAY PHONE _____ EVENING PHONE _____
 MOBILE PHONE _____ FAX _____
 E-MAIL _____ PRINCIPAL PERFORMANCE INSTRUMENT _____

I. PRINCIPAL CONDUCTING POSITION

ORCHESTRA _____
 TITLE _____ SINCE (MO/YR) _____

II. OTHER CURRENT CONDUCTING POSITION(S)

1. ORCHESTRA _____
 TITLE _____ SINCE (MO/YR) _____
 2. ORCHESTRA _____
 TITLE _____ SINCE (MO/YR) _____

III. PREVIOUS CONDUCTING POSITION(S)

1. ORCHESTRA _____
 TITLE _____ FROM (MO/YR) TO (MO/YR) _____
 2. ORCHESTRA _____
 TITLE _____ FROM (MO/YR) TO (MO/YR) _____
 3. ORCHESTRA _____
 TITLE _____ FROM (MO/YR) TO (MO/YR) _____

IV. EDUCATION

List any colleges, universities, and conservatories you have attended. Please include degrees earned and majors.

1. INSTITUTION _____ DEGREE/MAJOR _____
 2. INSTITUTION _____ DEGREE/MAJOR _____
 3. INSTITUTION _____ DEGREE/MAJOR _____
 4. INSTITUTION _____ DEGREE/MAJOR _____

V. CONDUCTING TEACHERS

1. NAME _____
 AFFILIATION _____ FROM (MO/YR) TO (MO/YR) _____
 2. NAME _____
 AFFILIATION _____ FROM (MO/YR) TO (MO/YR) _____

VI. GUEST CONDUCTING

List the orchestras with whom you have appeared as guest conductor:

1. ORCHESTRA _____ DATES _____
 2. ORCHESTRA _____ DATES _____
 3. ORCHESTRA _____ DATES _____
 4. ORCHESTRA _____ DATES _____

VII. TRAINING

List (with dates) any conducting workshops, seminars, or other training activities you have attended:

1. ACTIVITY _____ DATE _____
 2. ACTIVITY _____ DATE _____
 3. ACTIVITY _____ DATE _____

VIII. AWARDS

List (with dates) any conducting awards you have received:

1. AWARD _____ DATE _____
 2. AWARD _____ DATE _____
 3. AWARD _____ DATE _____

IX. LETTERS OF REFERENCE FROM:

1. NAME, AFFILIATION _____
 2. NAME, AFFILIATION _____
 3. NAME, AFFILIATION _____

X. CHECK OFF WHEN COMPLETE:

- APPLICATION FORM
- CURRENT RÉSUMÉ ENCLOSED
- THREE LETTERS OF REFERENCE ENCLOSED
- PERSONAL STATEMENT ENCLOSED
- VIDEOTAPE OR DVD ENCLOSED
- \$35 US APPLICATION FEE ENCLOSED

I hereby certify that my 2008 National Conducting Institute application is complete.

SIGNED _____ DATE _____

“It was like receiving a map to an uncharted orchestral cosmos.”

—MARK MANDARANO,
 2005 Debut Conductor, in *The Baltimore Sun*