



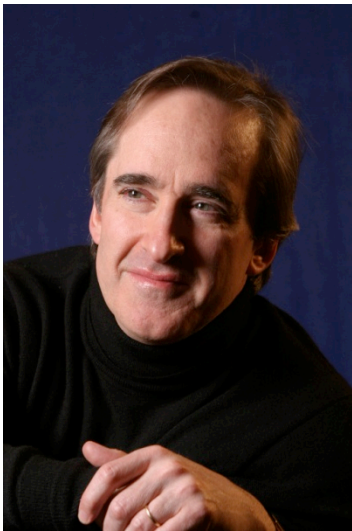
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JAMES CONLON RENEWS CONTRACT WITH THE CINCINNATI MAY FESTIVAL THROUGH 2013

Mr. Conlon's tenure will be the longest in the May Festival's distinguished history, exceeding that of its founder, Theodore Thomas

CINCINNATI, OH- May 18, 2010--The Board of Trustees of the Cincinnati Musical Festival Association announced today that Maestro James Conlon has renewed his contract as Music Director of the Cincinnati May Festival for three more years (through 2013), thereby exceeding the tenure of the Festival's founder, the renowned Theodore Thomas.



During his 31-year tenure, Mr. Conlon has provided the artistic leadership for more May Festivals than any other Music Director in the Festival's 137-year history. He also holds a place among the longest-tenured music directors of any major classical music institution in the country: James Levine, Music Director of the Metropolitan Opera (33 years), Boston Symphony conductor Seiji Ozawa (29 years) and finally, Philadelphia Orchestra conductors Leopold Stokowski (28 years) and Eugene Ormandy (at 44 years the longest tenure in American orchestral history).

Of his affiliation with May Festival, Mr. Conlon said, "As I enter my fourth decade of artistic leadership, I continue to be inspired by the traditions of the Festival's past, and look forward to its bright future. For me, spring is unthinkable without the May Festival."

During his distinguished tenure, Mr. Conlon has provided the artistic leadership for more May Festivals than any other Music Director in the Festival's 137-year history. In addition to his directorship of May Festival, he manages several roles as Music Director at LA Opera, as Music Director at Ravinia Festival, and as an internationally celebrated guest conductor at opera houses throughout the world. He has cultivated a vast symphonic, operatic and choral repertoire, and developed enduring relationships with the world's most prestigious symphony orchestras and opera houses.

Cincinnatians feel fortunate indeed to have someone of his international reputation committing so much of his life to a single institution, and are grateful for this exceptional relationship, which has given Cincinnati some of its greatest musical moments. In 2002, James Conlon received France's highest distinction from the President of the French Republic, Jacques Chirac—the *Légion d'Honneur*. He also was made a Commander of the Order of Arts and Letters of France in 2004. His other numerous awards include induction on May 14 into the American Classical Music Hall of Fame, adding to other recent citations: the Lifetime Achievement Award from the Istituto Italiano di Cultura of Los Angeles; two 2009 Grammy Awards; the Music Institute of Chicago's Dushkin Award, the Medal of the American Liszt Society; Italy's Premio Galileo 2000 Award. He was an early recipient of the Opera News Award. He has been honored with the Crystal Globe Award from the Anti-Defamation League (ADL) for his efforts in championing the works of composers silenced by the Third Reich, and the Zemlinsky Prize for his efforts in bringing the composer's music to international attention. He holds honorary doctorates from The Juilliard School and Brandeis University.

May Festival Board President Thomas L. Neyer, Jr. said, "The entire May Festival community joins me in thanking Maestro Conlon for his brilliant artistry, extraordinary tenure and personal commitment to the organization about which we care so deeply. We are proud to be America's premier choral festival, and the ongoing leadership of Maestro Conlon's caliber ensures our ability to continue growing our service to the community and the music that we love."

About the May Festival

Established in 1873, the May Festival is directly responsible for the development of Cincinnati's modern music life. Music Hall, the city's primary concert venue, was built specifically to house the Festival's performance. The prestigious roster of Festival Music Directors has included, among others, Theodore Thomas, Max Rudolf, James Levine, and currently, James Conlon. For more information on the 2010 Season, visit www.mayfestival.com.

The May Festival gratefully acknowledges support from the following:

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