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NEWS RELEASE

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SOA WELCOMES NEW PRINCIPAL MUSICIANS

Augusta, GA – Symphony Orchestra Augusta held auditions on October 2 and 3. Musicians from across the Southeast prepared solo pieces and excerpts from the orchestral repertoire. They performed two rounds of auditions – the first a “blind audition” with the panel of judges behind a screen and the second round where the judges could see and interact with the candidates. The Board of Directors and staff are pleased to welcome the following musicians who won principal positions with SOA:



Anastasia Petrunina, Concertmaster – Anastasia Petrunina has been heard around the globe playing in such prestigious halls as Carnegie Hall and Great Hall of Moscow Conservatory and extensively touring Russia, United States, Croatia, Hungary, Italy, Spain, Sweden, and China. As a soloist she has appeared with the Novaya Rossiya Symphony Orchestra, Saint Petersburg State Symphony Orchestra, Yale Chamber Orchestra, and others. Anastasia has participated in festivals including Berwaldhallen, Music Academy of the West, Bowdoin Festival, and Elba Music Festival. She is a guest artist of the Saint-Petersburg Music House and a frequent performer with the Moscow Philharmonic. Her interests cover a wide repertoire from early music to contemporary pieces and she has commissioned several works which take a special place in her concert repertoire. She enjoys playing in the ViMaDeAn Duo, established in 2010, with her husband Denis Petrunin, who is principal timpanist for SOA. Anastasia earned her Master of Music degree at the Yale University School of Music. She also holds degrees from the Moscow Conservatory Music College and Petropavlovsk – Kamchatskiy Regional Music College. Now Anastasia is pursuing her DMA degree at the University of Georgia under the guidance of Professor Levon Ambartsumian.



Pawel Kozak, Principal 2nd Violin – Pawel Kozak is on faculty at the Augusta University, where he directs the AU Orchestra, and at Lander University, where he teaches violin, viola, and directs the string orchestra. He received his DMA from The University of Georgia, where he studied violin with Professor Levon Ambartsumian and viola with Dr. Mark Neumann. His dissertation, “Pedagogical Examination of Henryk Wieniawski’s L’École Moderne Opus 10,” presents specific challenges found in these caprices and demonstrates how each difficulty can be resolved through proper practice techniques. In addition to being the principal second violin, Pawel serves as the Personnel Manager and Librarian for SOA. Pawel frequently performs as a member of Lyra Vivace Chamber Orchestra, Charleston Symphony, and South Carolina Philharmonic. He can be heard as a section violinist in ARCO (UGA) Chamber Orchestra’s numerous recordings and as a soloist in Vivaldi’s concerto for four violins.



Dan Urbanowicz, Principal Viola – Dan Urbanowicz holds a master’s degree from the New England Conservatory of Music and a bachelor’s degree from the Cleveland Institute of Music. Dan performs regularly with the Charleston Symphony Orchestra in addition to Symphony Orchestra Augusta. Dan has played with the New World Symphony at Carnegie Hall, the Boston Philharmonic Orchestra, the Atlantic Symphony, the Canton Symphony Orchestra, the Firelands Orchestra, and the Plymouth Philharmonic. He has served as principal violist of the Schleswig-Holstein Festival Orchestra in Germany, the Pacific Music Festival in Japan, and the Chautauqua Music School Festival Orchestra. Apart from playing the viola, Dan also enjoys playing the viola d’amore and has been featured at the Spoleto Festival USA and the College of Charleston’s Second Monday Series. His principal teachers include Martha Katz, Jeffrey Irvine, Lynne-Ramsey, and Marylene Gingras-Roy. Dan’s viola was made in 2008 by Robert Clemens.



Prentiss Hobbs, Principal Trombone – In addition to SOA, Prentiss is the principal trombone of the Huntsville Symphony Orchestra, a position he has held for 17 years. Prentiss also performs as second trombone with the Chattanooga Symphony Orchestra and frequently plays with the Nashville Symphony, Louisville Symphony, and Grant Park Summer Symphony in Chicago. He is one of the top call session musicians in Nashville and has recorded with Garth Brooks, Faith Hill, Vince Gill, Wynonna Judd, the Nashville Symphony, and many others. Prentiss currently lives in Murfreesboro TN with his four dogs Harry, Rosie, Mini, and Bently.



Dennis Petrunin, Principal Timpani - Dennis Petrunin has appeared at Carnegie, Avery Fisher, and other prestigious concert halls in the United States, Russia, Bulgaria, China, Croatia, England, Holland, and Spain. He received his Bachelor degree from The Curtis Institute of Music under the guidance of Don Liuzzi and Michael Bookspan and completed his Artist Diploma and Master of Music degree at the Yale University School of Music under the instruction of Robert van Sice. As an Adams and Zildjian artist, Dennis is frequently invited to teach masterclasses in different cities of Russia. He has appeared as a soloist with the Gnessins Virtuosos Orchestra, the Moscow State Symphony Orchestra, and the Curtis Chamber Ensemble. The primary goal of his music career is the popularization of percussion instruments and expansion of contemporary percussive repertoire. Dennis and his wife, violinist Anastasia Petrunina, founded a concert duo named ViMaDeAn. Dennis has held the position of position of Co-Principal Timpanist of the State Academic Symphony Orchestra in Moscow and Principal Timpanist/Percussionist of The Moscow Chamber Opera Theatre.

The new principal musicians will be joining Symphony Orchestra Augusta this season for the Symphony Series, University Health Care System Pops! Series, and education and outreach performances. Information about upcoming concerts can be found at SOAugusta.org.

Now in its sixty-third season, Symphony Orchestra Augusta is the primary professional orchestra for the 768,000 residents of the Central Savannah River Area and pursues its mission “to share the joy of great musical performance with our audience – together we are music” through annual symphonic, Pops, and chamber concerts that reach approximately 15,000 people each year. Via its education and community outreach programs, SOA further strives to foster broad accessibility to live classical music performance and a lifelong appreciation of the art form among people of all ages, backgrounds, and means. SOA’s outreach programs currently serve approximately 27,000 youth and adults in communities within a seventy-five mile radius of Augusta.

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*Our mission is to share the joy of great musical performance with our audience.
Together, we are music.*

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