



For immediate release
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Boston Symphony Orchestra Announces New Assistant Conductor Anna Handler

**Handler, a German-Colombian conductor and pianist, will make her
BSO debut at Tanglewood in 2025**

[Click here to download a photo and bio of Anna Handler](#)



The Boston Symphony Orchestra (BSO) is pleased to announce that **Anna Handler** has been appointed as assistant conductor for a two-year term commencing in

September 2024. BSO Music Director **Andris Nelsons** appointed Handler to the position, where she will join [Samy Rachid](#), appointed in 2023, as one of the BSO's two assistant conductors. Handler will assume her position following the departure of assistant conductor [Earl Lee](#), whose appointment will conclude at the end of the 2024 Tanglewood season; Lee will make his final scheduled appearance conducting the BSO with soloist Yo-Yo Ma on Sunday, August 18. The young German-Colombian conductor will make her scheduled debut with the orchestra during the 2025 Tanglewood season, followed by concerts at Symphony Hall during the BSO's 2025–26 season.

Quote from Anna Handler, newly named assistant conductor:

“It is an immense honor to be joining the Boston Symphony Orchestra as assistant conductor. The storied history and unique sound of this orchestra fascinate me, and I cannot wait to dive deep into the orchestra's approach to music. I greatly look forward to working with Music Director Andris Nelsons and the musicians and connecting with the community of Boston.”

Quote from Andris Nelsons, Ray and Maria Stata BSO Music Director and Head of Conducting at Tanglewood:

“The assistant conductors are an important part of our musical community here, and I'm very pleased to welcome Anna to our BSO family. We were very impressed with Anna's maturity and ability to communicate with the orchestra, and I look forward to working with her in the coming years.”

About Anna Handler

Anna Handler is a German-Colombian conductor and pianist who was raised in Munich. She is a Dudamel Fellow with the Los Angeles Philharmonic for the 2023–2024 season.

Handler graduated from the Juilliard School in May 2023 where she received mentorship from David Robertson and was the proud recipient of the Juilliard Kovner Fellowship for outstanding students of classical music, which she was the first conductor ever to receive.

Following her debut at the Salzburg Festival in 2022 as musical director of the *Káťa Kabanová* opera camp, Handler was immediately re-engaged to conduct new productions of *L'enfant et les sortilèges* (2023) and *Die Kluge* (2024). Further 2023–2024 highlights include her debuts with the Los Angeles Philharmonic, Minnesota Orchestra and North Carolina Symphony; BBC Philharmonic Orchestra, Grazer

Philharmoniker and Münchner Rundfunkorchester. The 2022–2023 season saw her debut with Deutsches Symphonie-Orchester Berlin, Sinfonieorchester Liechtenstein, OFUNAM Orchestra in Mexico, and Mecklenburgische Staatskapelle Schwerin.

Handler has assisted distinguished conductors such as Kirill Petrenko, including conducting the banda for the concert opera production *Mazeppa* with the Berliner Philharmoniker; Daniel Harding (Symphonieorchester des Bayerischen Rundfunk); Barbara Hannigan (London Symphony Orchestra, Münchner Philharmoniker); as well as Manfred Honeck and Simone Young. At the Bayerische Staatsoper, she assisted Oksana Lyniv and took over musical direction of the production *Eve and Adam*, premiered as part of the 2019 Munich Opera Festival.

As founder and director of the ensemble Enigma Classica, Handler has collaborated with notable soloists including Arabella Steinbacher, Daniel Müller-Schott and Sabine Meyer. Together with her team at Enigma Classica, Handler presented an interdisciplinary project on music education, featuring real-time generative video animation at the Young Artist Festival Bayreuth in August 2022. She was awarded the Maria Ladenburger Förderpreis in cooperation with WDR, the Cusanuswerk Foundation and Deutsche Grammophon. She has also received the Rising Star Award from the European Cultural Foundation Europamusicale.

Handler studied piano and conducting at the Hochschule für Musik und Theater München, the Accademia Pianistica di Imola, the Folkwang University of the Arts and the Hochschule für Musik "Franz Liszt" Weimar. Her mentors include Ingrid Fliter, Pavel Gililov and Henri Sigfridsson, Ekhart Wycik, Johannes Schlaefli and Piero Lombardi Iglesias. Conducting from the piano as well as performing chamber music with violinist Laura Handler is an important part of her musical identity.

About the BSO Assistant Conductor Program

The **Boston Symphony Orchestra Assistant Conductor Program** offers emerging conductors hands-on experience leading one of the world's finest symphony orchestras in concert. Assistant conductors also work with the BSO Music Director and guest conductors to prepare the orchestra for performances at Symphony Hall, Tanglewood, Carnegie Hall, and on national and international tours.

The BSO's longest-serving assistant or associate conductors were concertmasters **Richard Burgin** and **Joseph Silverstein**. **Michael Tilson Thomas** earned instant fame when he replaced an ailing **William Steinberg** (BSO Music Director, 1969– 72) mid-concert and, following his BSO tenure, has earned international acclaim for his

artistic leadership of the San Francisco Symphony, New World Symphony, and London Symphony Orchestra. Many of the BSO's former assistant conductors have gone on to careers with major symphony orchestras, including **Shi-Yeon Sung**—the BSO's first female assistant conductor—who is formerly the Artistic Director and Chief Conductor of the Gyeonggi Philharmonic Orchestra and currently the Auckland Philharmonia's Principal Guest Conductor, and **Ken-David Masur**, who now holds the position of Music Director of the Milwaukee Symphony Orchestra. Masur, Rachid, Lee, and **Anna Rakitina**, assistant conductor from 2019-23, will all conduct at Tanglewood this summer.

BSO Assistant Conductors

Richard Burgin 1934–1943 (Associate Conductor, 1943–1966)

Charles Wilson 1966–1969

Michael Tilson Thomas 1969–1970 (Associate Conductor, 1970–1972; Principal Guest Conductor, 1972–1974)

Joseph Silverstein 1971–1984

Carl St. Clair 1986–1990

Pascal Verrot 1986–1990

Grant Llewellyn 1990–1993

Robert Spano 1990–1993

Thomas Dausgaard 1993–1995

David Wroe 1993–1995

Richard Westerfield 1995–1997 (Associate Conductor, 1997–1998)

Federico Cortese 1998–2002

Ilan Volkov 1998–2001

Jens Georg Bachman 2004–2007

Ludovic Morlot 2004–2007

Julian Kuerti 2007–2010

Shi-Yeon Sung 2007–2010

Marcelo Lehninger 2010–2013 (Associate Conductor, 2013–2015)

Sean Newhouse 2010–2012

Andris Poga 2012–2014

Ken-David Masur 2014–2018 (Associate Conductor, 2018)

Moritz Gnann 2015–2017

Yu-An Chang 2018–2020

Anna Rakitina 2019–2023

Earl Lee 2021–2024

Samy Rachid 2023–

Anna Handler 2024–

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Symphony Hall | 301 Massachusetts Avenue | Boston, MA 02115 | [Box Office Hours](#)

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