



BOSTON SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

2022-23 SEASON • ANDRIS NELSONS MUSIC DIRECTOR

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For Immediate Release:

September 22, 2022

BOSTON SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA LAUNCHES THE SUSAN W. AND STEPHEN D. PAINE BSO RESIDENT FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM FOR EARLY-CAREER MUSICIANS

Violist Leonardo Vásquez Chacón and double bassist Andres Vela appointed as inaugural Resident Fellows in yearlong opportunity to study and perform with the Boston Symphony and Boston Pops orchestras

BOSTON, MA — Today, the Boston Symphony Orchestra (BSO) launches the **Susan W. and Stephen D. Paine BSO Resident Fellowship Program**, a yearlong training and mentorship opportunity for early-career musicians from historically underrepresented backgrounds in American orchestras. Violist **Leonardo Vásquez Chacón** and double bassist **Andres Vela** will play their first concert as inaugural BSO Resident Fellows on Thursday, September 22, in the opening night concert of the 2022-23 BSO season at Symphony Hall.

These annual appointments, designed to create more inclusive pathways into the orchestra field, will provide opportunities for talented musicians to perform with the Boston Symphony and Boston Pops orchestras during the 2022–23 Symphony Hall and Tanglewood seasons. Both Mr. Chacón and Mr. Vela are previous Fellows of the BSO's Tanglewood Music Center training program.

"All of us at the BSO are thrilled that Leonardo Vásquez Chacón and Andres Vela will join the ranks of the Boston Symphony Orchestra as our first Resident Fellows," said **Gail Samuel, BSO President and CEO**. "We are deeply grateful to the generous donors who have funded this fellowship program in honor of Susan W. Paine, whose board leadership through the early phase of the pandemic positioned the BSO to sustain and advance its artistic mission. With the launch of the BSO Resident Fellowship Program, along with the orchestra's more expansive programming in the coming seasons, we are expressing our ongoing commitment to creating an environment where all feel welcome to enjoy a rich musical experience reflective of the amazing diversity of the world in which we live."

Andris Nelsons, BSO Music Director, said: "On behalf of all my colleagues in the Boston Symphony Orchestra, I welcome these two talented young musicians who will join us for a year of music-making for our audiences in Boston and at Tanglewood. Leonardo and Andres will find a supportive and nurturing atmosphere where they can grow and prosper, emerging more fully prepared to audition and join the best ensembles all across the world, maybe even the BSO itself. By creating more opportunities for musicians whose backgrounds reflect the beautiful diversity of our city and country and valuing their contributions to our world of classical music, we enrich the lives of everyone associated with the Boston Symphony Orchestra."

[Additional details on the BSO Resident Fellowship Program](#)

In addition to performing with the BSO and Boston Pops during the 2022-23 seasons at Symphony Hall and Tanglewood, the Resident Fellows—each assigned a BSO member mentor—will participate in educational and community engagement assignments, chamber music performances, and audition preparation coaching sessions. BSO Resident Fellows will receive a salary and benefits, stipends for expenses, and periodic performance evaluations, and individual agreements may be renewed, upon mutual agreement of the Resident Fellow and the Corporation, for one additional year. Those with a positive record of performance will advance automatically to the semifinal phase of BSO auditions. As the BSO further develops the program in the context of its comprehensive Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) plans, it will create formal goals, outcomes, and metrics to evaluate its impact. The application and selection process for the BSO Resident Fellowship Program was overseen by a committee of orchestra musicians, members of the BSO's executive team, as well as Samuel and Nelsons.

The BSO Resident Fellowship Program is named in honor of former Board Chair Susan W. Paine and her late husband Stephen. During her tenure, Susan guided the BSO through a period of transformation and growth, most notably preparing the orchestra for a leadership transition with a new CEO. A strong advocate for inclusion, she positioned the BSO to become a more resilient and culturally relevant institution. In tribute to her leadership and values, longtime friends Bob and Happy Doran and Barbara and Amos Hostetter collectively raised more than \$5 million from a small group of donors to name the BSO Resident Fellows Program as an enduring part of her legacy. The contributions will be placed into an endowment fund that supports the Fellowship program and broader Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion initiatives across the organization.

"It is my great pleasure to welcome Mr. Chacón and Mr. Vela to the BSO family," said **Susan Paine, former BSO Board Chair**. "The appointment of these gifted musicians as inaugural BSO Resident Fellows is an important step in the fulfillment of the orchestra's ongoing commitment to a more diverse and inclusive orchestra community. I am deeply grateful to the donors whose philanthropy has made the idea of the Fellowship Program into a reality. Their generosity and vision will have a major impact on the BSO, the field at large, and the careers of future generations of musicians who participate in the Fellows Program."

In addition, Andres Vela will occupy the Volpe Family Chair in the orchestra roster during the inaugural year as a tribute to Mark Volpe, who served as the BSO's President and CEO for 23 years. A broad base of donors made contributions to the Volpe Fund upon Mark's retirement to support the launch and initial costs of the program to honor his tenure with the BSO and for his role in creating the BSO Resident Fellowship Program.

About Andres Vela



A native of Edinburg, Texas, double bassist Andres Vela holds degrees from Rice University and the University of Texas (Rio Grande Valley). He was a Tanglewood Music Center Fellow, the BSO's acclaimed summer music academy, in the summer of 2022. Andres has also participated in such summer festivals as Music Academy of the West, Texas Music Festival, and the Aspen Music Festival. In 2018, he performed J.B. Vanhal's Concerto in D with the Akademisches Orchester Leipzig and the Texas Music Festival Orchestra. He was the First Prize-winner of the 2018 Cynthia Woods Mitchell Young Artist Competition and a semifinalist in the 2021 Sphinx Competition, a national competition offering mentorship and performance opportunities to young Black and Latinx classical string players.

About Leonardo Vásquez Chacón

Violist Leonardo Vásquez Chacón, from Lima, Peru, holds degrees from Bard College and Indiana University. Leonardo's parents introduced him to classical music through CDs and he decided to pursue music during his first year of medical school, realizing he preferred harmony and music history over biology and anatomy. A two-time Tanglewood Music Center Fellow, he has also been a principal of The Orchestra Now (Bard College) and played with the Evansville Philharmonic and Owensboro Symphony. He has participated in the chamber music programs of The Orchestra Now, Jacobs School of Music under the Pacifica Quartet, and Tanglewood Music Center. In his home country, he has been a guest artist in the International Chamber Music Festival and a soloist with both the National Youth Symphony and the National Symphony Orchestra of Peru.



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