

Joshua Shepherd, DMA

Conductor • Director of Operations • Educator

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Conductor and arts administrator with experience leading professional, youth, and community-based orchestras across symphonic, pops, opera, musical theatre, ballet, and film repertoire. Currently serving as Director of Operations for Symphony of the Mountains, overseeing orchestra personnel, music library operations, and concert production logistics. Active as a cover and guest conductor, with experience leading education and community engagement initiatives that connect diverse audiences through live performance. Three-time National Finalist for *The American Prize in Conducting* and *The American Prize in Orchestral Performance*.

CONDUCTING EXPERIENCE

Music Director and Principal Conducting Roles

The People's Orchestra of Nashville (Nashville, TN) 2020-Present
(formerly the Nashville Reading Orchestra)

Founder and Music Director

- Founded ensemble during COVID to provide performance opportunities and engage to engage both in-person and livestreamed audiences
- Conduct programs spanning standard repertoire, pops, film, musical theatre, and underrepresented composers
- Recruit and manage musicians across professional, student, and community levels
- Oversee programming, auditions, seating, bowings, and music distribution
- Lead public-facing initiatives including concerts, media appearances, and community partnerships
- Led ensemble to three-time national recognition (*The American Prize*)

Emporia Symphony Orchestra at Emporia State University (Emporia, KS) 2024-2025

Interim Music Director

- Conducted full orchestral programs within a college-community ensemble
- Designed and conducted education concert for 400+ elementary school students
- Managed auditions, seating, repertoire selection, and coordination with faculty, staff and board
- Oversaw concerto competition and collaborated on artistic planning and logistics
- Partnered with SOS, Inc. on community concert raising \$1,300 for 24-hour crisis hotline

Cover and Guest Conducting Experience 2018-Present

Cover and guest conductor with Cave Run Symphony Orchestra (KY), Signature Symphony (OK), The Jackson Symphony (TN), Florida Lakes Symphony Orchestra (FL), Orchestra Kentucky (KY), Huntsville Symphony Orchestra (AL), Butler Philharmonic Orchestra (OH), Tennessee Philharmonic Orchestra (TN), Northwest Florida Symphony Orchestra (FL), Light Opera Theatre of Sacramento (CA).

- Prepared and covered subscription, pops, education, and special event programs
- Served as cover conductor across multiple seasons with professional orchestras
- Supported rehearsals with attention to balance, ensemble clarity, and stage coordination
- Entrusted to lead rehearsals and performances as needed
- Stepped in on short notice to conduct Orchestra Kentucky's *Christmas Spectacular*, featuring orchestra, vocal soloists, adult and children's choirs for an audience of approximately 1,800 patrons

EDUCATION & COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

- Design and leadership of education concerts and youth engagement programs

- Teaching experience including applied instruction, classroom teaching, and ensemble leadership
- Experience with pre-concert lectures and in giving remarks during concerts
- Radio and television interviews promoting concerts and audience development
- Creation and management of social media content supporting concert promotion, audience growth, and community engagement initiatives
- Experience with livestreamed performances and recording environments

PROGRAMMING AND REPERTOIRE EXPERIENCE

- Standard symphonic repertoire from Classical and Romantic traditions through early twenty-first-century works
- Programming of lesser-known and underrepresented composers within balanced seasons
- Pops, film music, Broadway, and holiday programming
- Orchestral repertoire with vocal soloists and choirs

ADMINISTRATIVE AND PRODUCTION EXPERIENCE

Symphony of the Mountains (Kingsport, TN)

2026-Present

Director of Operations

- Oversee orchestra personnel, music library operations, and concert production logistics
- Manage music library preparation, bowing coordination, and distribution of materials
- Coordinate stage, equipment, and technical needs for rehearsals and performances
- Support concerts across Masterworks, Pops, and community series
- Collaborate with Music Director, musicians, and staff to ensure artistic and operational alignment
- Facilitate communication across artistic leadership, musicians, and production teams
- Coordinate rehearsal scheduling, venue logistics, and technical requirements
- Assist in budgeting processes and production expense tracking

EDUCATION

University of Miami (FL)

Doctor of Musical Arts in Viola Performance

University of South Florida

Master of Music in Instrumental Conducting

Graduate Certificate in Viola Performance

Florida Atlantic University

Bachelor of Music Education (Violin/Viola/Voice)

MEMBERSHIPS

International Conductors Guild

League of American Orchestras

American String Teachers Association

HONORS

Finalist: *The American Prize in Conducting* (2022, 2023 & 2025)

Finalist: *The American Prize in Orchestral Performance* (2022, 2023 & 2025)