

Nick Palmer

Conductor



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NICK PALMER | BIOGRAPHY

Nick Palmer has been widely recognized for his compelling performances, visionary leadership and emotional connection to audiences and is regarded as one of the most talented symphonic and Pops conductors on the scene today.

Maestro Palmer — Music Director of North Charleston POPS! in South Carolina, the Lafayette Symphony in Indiana, the Evening Under the Stars Music Festival in Massachusetts, the Seasong Music Festival in Florida, and the Dubuque Festival Orchestra in Iowa — has been called a “brilliant young music director” by Leonard Slatkin of the Detroit Symphony Orchestra. Nick was a recipient of the Helen M. Thompson Award from the League of American Orchestras as the nation’s most outstanding young music director. Nick also just completed his 18th and final season as Music Director of the Owensboro Symphony Orchestra in Kentucky.

Maestro Palmer has won rave reviews with the Detroit Symphony, Nashville Symphony, Santa Barbara Symphony, Tucson Symphony, Boulder Philharmonic, Virginia Symphony, Chicago Sinfonietta, Louisville Orchestra, Naples Philharmonic, Salt Lake Symphony, Huntsville Symphony, Springfield (MA) Symphony, Greenville Symphony and other orchestras across the nation. He has also conducted over a dozen performances with the Jacksonville Symphony during the last several seasons, including regional concerts in St. Augustine, Orange Park and Daytona Beach. He is also the founder and Music Director of the Seasong Music Festival which will debut in 2017 featuring performances by the Beaches Pops Orchestra at the Seaside Pavilion in Jacksonville Beach.

Since 2007 – when Nick began as Music Director-the Lafayette Symphony has experienced increased ticket sales, dynamic and creative programming, a marked development in educational programs and regional concerts, and dramatic artistic growth. Dick Jaeger commented in the Lafayette Journal & Courier: “without trepidation this reviewer is ready to state that the Lafayette Symphony Orchestra and conductor are setting the bar higher and higher for other regional orchestras around the state and Midwest”.

In his first season as Music Director of the North Charleston POPS! the orchestra's season ticket and single ticket sales increased dramatically. During 2016-2017 season the number of concerts increased, including expanded outreach and educational programs.

Nick has also worked with many top Pops performers including Smokey Robinson, Neil Sedaka, Art Garfunkel, Clay Aiken, Al Hirt, Shirley Jones, Jeans and Classics, Ballroom with a Twist, Tony Desare, Mary Wilson, Cirque de la Symphonie and many others. The Boulder Daily Camera noted: "(Palmer) is intensely musical, communicates well and easily with the orchestra and manages to share the entire musical experience with the audience in a meaningful way."

Under Nick Palmer's leadership the Owensboro Symphony Orchestra (OSO) developed one of the nation's leading education programs with over 20 different series for young people and adults. The OSO's remarkably high artistic level was widely praised: "The OSO, under the direction of Nicholas Palmer, showed why they have been getting rave reviews" (Cincinnati Post). The extensive tours and outreach of the OSO, with artists such as LeAnne Rimes, Dionne Warwick, Anne Murray, Mannheim Steamroller, Celtic Woman and Amy Grant as well as its many recordings have also brought orchestral music to countless numbers of first time listeners. The OSO was also profiled in Symphony Magazine and the Huffington Post and won awards from both the League of American Orchestras and the Kennedy Center.

A favorite guest conductor in Europe, Mexico and South America, Palmer recently conducted the Europa Philharmonie at the Hardinsburg Castle near Berlin, toured with the Orchestra di San Remo for two weeks in Italy and led concerts with the Czech Radio Orchestra at the Prague and Nelahozeves Castles celebrating the music of George Gershwin. The German press hailed Palmer's conducting as "a musical high point with world class flair" and Radio Suisse Romande in Switzerland noted Palmer's: "great professionalism with unity and verve". Palmer has also led the West Bohemia Symphony, National Orchestra of Bolivia, Sophia Symphony, Sinaloa (OSSLA) and Monterrey (UANL) Symphony in Mexico, Milano Classico Orchestra, Medellin (EAFIT) Symphony and Lausanne Symphony.

In addition to his appointments in Lafayette and North Charleston, Palmer has been the Music Director of the Altoona Symphony and the Dubuque Symphony as well as the Nashville Ballet and Heartland Ballet. As an Opera Conductor he has led productions with the Boston Summer Opera, Harvard University Opera, Goldovsky Opera Company, University of Kentucky Opera Theater, Chicago Light Opera Works, Jacksonville Opera, KY Opera/Owensboro Symphony and was Assistant Conductor of the American Opera Center at the Juilliard School.

A native of Hingham, Massachusetts, Palmer graduated *cum laude* from Harvard University and received his Master's and Doctoral degrees in Orchestral Conducting from the New England Conservatory of Music and the University of Iowa, respectively. He also has studied at the Juilliard School, Pierre Monteux Domaine School, Aspen Music School, the Festival at Sandpoint, and the Academia Chigiana in Italy, where he was a student of Franco Ferrara and Carlo Maria Giulini. Dr. Palmer is also Distinguished Conductor in Residence at Kentucky Wesleyan College. Nick and Dorothy Palmer have four sons: Nicholas, Daniel, Alexander and Oliver and live on a farm outside of Owensboro, Kentucky.

NICK PALMER | ORCHESTRAS

Seasong Music Festival, (FL)

Founder and Music Director, 2016-Current

Music festival in residence at the Seaside Pavilion at Jacksonville Beach

Pops and educational performances by the Beaches Pops Orchestra

Family-friendly series sponsored by the city of Jacksonville Beach

North Charleston POPS!, (SC)

Music Director, 2015-Current

Lafayette Symphony Orchestra, (IN)

Music Director, 2007-Current

Assisted in increasing Endowment balance to 4X orchestra budget

Increased orchestra members pay

Quadrupled number of education programs

Initiated NPR broadcasts of each concert

Initiated Composer-in-Residence program

Owensboro Symphony Orchestra, (KY)

Music Director, 1998-2016

Increased concerts from 10 to 20

Initiated and assisted in \$1.6 million renovation project, including move to the Owensboro Symphony Academy.

Initiated 20 new educational programs

Founded Owensboro Symphony Chorus in 1999

Recognized for innovative educational programs by League of American Orchestras and Kennedy Center

Evening Under the Stars Music Festival Orchestra, (MA)

Conductor, 1996-Current

Founding conductor of multi-concert summer music festival

Increased number of concert venues

Added both classical and Pops concerts to season

Altoona Symphony Orchestra, (PA)

Music Director, 1996-2007, Conductor Laureate, 2007-Current

- Conducted orchestra at Kennedy Center
- Added outdoor Pops Concerts to orchestra schedule
- Initiated Symphony Chorus
- Conducted orchestra's CD recordings in 1997 and 2001
- Founded Altoona Symphony Chorus in 1996
- Initiated many new educational programs
- Selected for ASOL Leadership Seminar in 2004
- Initiated 4 year Composer-in-Residence program
- Commissioned 12 new works during tenure

Dubuque Symphony Orchestra, (IA)

Music Director, 1986-1999 Artistic Advisor, 2000-2002

- Initiated "Arts Trek" program with area cultural organizations Increased budget by 500%
- Increased concerts from 6 to 30
- Added many new education programs Performed as Orchestra-in-Residence for the International Dvorak Festival Conducted orchestra's CD recordings in 1994 and 1999
- Selected as Dubuque "Person of the Year" in 1989, 1994
- Won Helen M. Thompson Award from the ASOL in 1990
- Founded Dubuque Symphony Chorus in 1986
- Founded summer Arboretum Concert series in 1989
- Initiated Composer-in-Residence program in 1989

Nashville Ballet, (TN)

Music Director, 2000-2004

Oshkosh Symphony, (WI)

Artistic Advisor, 2000-2002

Heartland Ballet, (IA)

Music Director, 1988-1999

Clinton Symphony Orchestra, (IA)

Music Director, 1988-1997

Jacksonville Symphony Orchestra

Assistant Conductor

Brunswick Civic Orchestra (GA)

Music Director



NICK PALMER | *GUEST CONDUCTING*

Springfield Symphony, (MA), 2016, 2014
Altoona Symphony, (PA), 2016
North Charleston POPS!, 2015
Monterrey Symphony (UANL), Mexico, 2014
Fort Collins Symphony, 2014
Salt Lake Symphony, 2013
Louisville Orchestra, 2012, 2013 (10 performances)
Medellin Symphony (EAFIT), Columbia, 2013
Sinaloa Symphony Orchestra Mexico, 2012
National Orchestra of Bolivia, 2012
Detroit Symphony, 2011, 2012
Jacksonville Symphony, 2006, 2009, 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014
Tucson Symphony, 2007 (3 concerts)
National Orchestra of Moldova, 2007
Glacier Symphony, 2007
Lafayette Symphony, 2007
Milano Classico Orchestra, 2006
Virginia Symphony, 2005
Europa Philharmonie, 2005
Northwest Symphony, 2004
Great Falls Symphony, 2003
Orchestra Sinfonica di San Remo, 2002
Santa Barbara Symphony, 2001
Billings Symphony, 2001
Nashville Symphony, (Music Director of Nashville Ballet), 2000-2004
Louisville Orchestra, 2000
Mesa Symphony, 2000
Czech Radio Orchestra, Czech Republic, 1998
Owensboro Symphony, (KY), 1998
Waterloo-Cedar Falls Symphony, (IA), 1998
Quad Cities Symphony, (IA), 1997
Pensacola Symphony Orchestra, 1996
Boulder Philharmonic, 1996
Idaho Falls Symphony and Ballet, 1995
West Bohemia Symphony, Czech Republic, 1995
Springfield Symphony Orchestra, (MO), 1995
New Hampshire Philharmonic, (NH), 1993
Penns Woods Festival Orchestra, (PA), 1992
Naples Philharmonic, (FL), 1991
Sterling Festival Orchestra, (IL), 1990, 1991
ORM (Lausanne Symphony Orchestra), Switzerland, 1990

OPERA

Kentucky Opera/Owensboro Symphony,
Louisville, KY; Marriage of Figaro, La Traviata
La Boheme, Tosca, Carmen Barber of Seville,
Madam Butterfly

University of Kentucky Opera Theater,
Lexington, KY; La Boheme, Opera Gala
Chicago Light Opera Works, Evanston, IL;
The Grand Duke

Jacksonville Opera, Jacksonville, FL; Tosca
Cavaleria Rusticana, Jumping Frog of
Calaveras County Goldovsky Opera
Workshop;

Amelia al Ballo, La Boheme

Harvard University Opera, Lowell House; La
Perichole, L'Elisir d'Amore, Die Fledermaus
Boston Summer Opera Theater, Barber of
Seville

Harvard Summer Opera/Theater, Don
Giovanni

Hasty Pudding Theatricals, Cambridge, MA;
A Little Knife Music American Opera Center,
Julliard School; La Rondine,
Harvard Gilbert and Sullivan Society; H.M.S
Pinafore

EDUCATION

University of Iowa; D.M.A. degree in
Orchestral Conducting

New England Conservatory of Music; M.M.
degree in Orchestral Conducting

Longy School; solfege and ear training
Julliard School; ear training, opera coaching
and conducting

Harvard University; A.B. degree, *cum laude*,
in Musical Composition and Theory, minor in
Italian

AWARDS

Helen Thompson Award from the League of
American Orchestras: Outstanding Young
Music Director

Mayor's Certificate of Appreciation;
Owensboro, KY

Mayor's Key to the City; Owensboro, KY

Senate Proclamation; State of KY

Senate Appreciation; Commonwealth of PA

House of Representatives Recognition;

Commonwealth of PA

Person of year; (2 times) Dubuque, IA

League of American Orchestras; Innovative
Education Award

Showcase Kennedy Center; Innovative
Education Award



NICK PALMER | REVIEWS

"he is intensely musical, communicates well and easily with the orchestra and manages to share the entire musical experience with the audience in a meaningful way"

Boulder Daily Camera (Colorado)

"the Owensboro Symphony Orchestra under the direction of Nicholas Palmer showed why they have been getting rave reviews"

Cincinnati Post (Ohio)

"By raising artistic standards and forging solid relationships with its community, the Owensboro Symphony Orchestra has made Beethoven king in the land of bluegrass and BBQ"

Andrew Adler, Symphony Magazine, 11/10

"it is worth it, this framework of spontaneity, animation and, at the same time, a great professionalism"

Radio Suisse Romande (Switzerland)

"Nick conducts with clarity, crispness, and energy, coupled with fluid athleticism approaching dance. Without the slightest drudgery, he expresses musical precision so clearly that the most delicate pizzicato notes are plucked from the strings in absolute unison, while great and thundering swells emerge with all the drama they deserve."

Duxbury Clipper (Massachusetts)

"Palmer is in the top echelon of young conductors, whose name, for symphony music lovers will become a household word"

Altoona Mirror (Pennsylvania)

"Palmer and the orchestra moved from rhapsodic accompaniment to moments of virtuosity... (they) were not just good, they were superb"

Huntsville Times (Alabama)

"a nice mixture of aplomb and sensitivity that earned a long standing ovation"

The Sun (Arizona)

"he directed the Europa Philharmonic with craftsmanlike class, joined with American 'coolness.' A musical high point with world class flair"

Magdeburger Volksstimme (Germany)

REVIEWS (cont.)

"highly popular conductor Palmer...has done wonders with the orchestra and its acceptance in the community"

Des Moines Register (Iowa)

"It is good to welcome the gifted conductor Nicholas Palmer to the growing list of Rosner proponents. His performances show...a real understanding of the composer's unusual expressive content. Palmer's recording provides persuasive evidence that orchestras from America's hinterlands... Owensboro, KY, in this case—deserve to be taken seriously as contenders in this new 21st-century classical-music marketplace. One hopes that this pioneering effort will be rewarded and followed by other comparable ventures."

Walter Simmons - FANFARE

"I prefer, for example, Palmer's reading of the "Dirge" movement (prelude to Act II) of the Queen Jane suite to David Amos's on Laurel LR-849CD, and Amos is no slouch. Palmer shapes the movement more lucidly, however. He conveys a clearer sense of the whole. Believe it or not, the Owensboro Symphony outplays the Jerusalem Symphony (surprised the earwax out of me), and the sound is better, besides."

Stephen Schwartz - Classical Net

"the orchestra (Nashville Symphony) kept subtle modulations of tempo and tone under precise control. It was glorious to hear Tchaikovsky's music sparkle as it was intended to"

Nashville Scene (Tennessee)

"another reason lies in the excellent musical accompaniment...the pleasurable balance between instruments and voices was deftly accomplished"

Florida Times Union (Jacksonville)

"Palmer knew just how to elicit long expressive moments of rare profundity"

Gazette de Lausanne (Switzerland)

"Palmer's attention to detail as well as his distinct vision led to an unequivocal change in the way the orchestra sounded...Palmer conducts with a clear neat technique that displays precision...a top notch performance"

Naples Daily News (Florida)

"Conductor Nicholas Palmer brought spirited and precise performances from...the Jacksonville Symphony that perfectly complemented the vocalists in both works"

Opera News