

Joel Smirnoff

Conductor



Conductor, violinist and eminent pedagogue, *Joel Smirnoff* served as President of the Cleveland Institute of Music from 2008 until 2016, holding the Mary Elizabeth Callahan President's Chair. Encouraged by Seiji Ozawa to "take up the baton," Mr. Smirnoff has developed into a highly acclaimed conductor with an impressive and wide-ranging repertoire. He is consistently cited for his high energy and special attention to the stylistic demands of each work.

In 2000, *Mr. Smirnoff* made his official American conducting debut with the San Francisco Symphony, conducting an all-Tchaikovsky program. Guest conducting engagements in the U.S. have included the Amarillo Symphony, Chicago Philharmonic, Columbus Symphony, Hartford Symphony, Juilliard Orchestra, Louisiana Philharmonic, Napa Valley Symphony, New World Symphony, Phoenix Symphony, Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra, Tanglewood Music Center Orchestra, Texas Music Festival Orchestra, and others. In Europe, he has led the Norwegian Chamber Orchestra and the Basel Sinfonietta; in Japan, the Saito Kinen Festival (Matsumoto); and in China, the Beijing Symphony Orchestra

Former member of the Juilliard String Quartet, *Joel Smirnoff* was featured violin soloist in 1997 at the Tanglewood Music Festival in a concert dedicated to the memory of violinist Louis Krasner, performing the Berg Violin Concerto under the direction of Bernard Haitink. In 1983, as second-prize winner of the International American Music Competition for Violin, he was awarded debuts at Carnegie Hall on its *Emerging Artists* series and at Town Hall on its *Midtown Masters* series.

In 2011, *Mr. Smirnoff* received both the Lifetime Grammy Award for his recorded work with the Juilliard String Quartet and an Alumni Professional Achievement Award from the University of Chicago, his Alma Mater. He has served on the juries of the Naumburg and Indianapolis International violin competitions. Mr. Smirnoff returned in 2014 to conduct the Indianapolis Symphony in the finals of the Indianapolis competition.

As a music educator, *Joel Smirnoff* has been a member of the chamber music faculty of The Juilliard School since 1986, and the violin faculty since 1989, serving as its chair from 1992- 2008. He was conducting assistant to Maestro Seiji Ozawa and Head of String Studies at the Tanglewood Music Center from 1995-2000.

A native of New York City, *Mr. Smirnoff* also plays jazz, performing frequently as accompanying artist with Tony Bennett. His improvised solos can be heard on the Grammy Award-winning CD *Tony Bennett Sings Ellington Hot and Cool*.

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