

Carl St. Clair

Conductor



The 2021–22 season marks Music Director **Carl St. Clair's** 32nd year leading Pacific Symphony; he is one of the longest-tenured conductors among the major American orchestras. **St. Clair's** lengthy history solidifies the strong relationship he has forged with the musicians and the community. His continuing role also lends stability to the organization and continuity to his vision for the Symphony's future. Few orchestras can claim such rapid artistic development as Pacific Symphony—the largest-budgeted orchestra formed in the United States in the last 50 years, which was recently elevated to the status of a Tier 1 orchestra by the League of American Orchestras -- due in large part to **St. Clair's** leadership.

During his tenure, he has become widely recognized for his musically distinguished performances, his commitment to building outstanding educational programs and his innovative approaches to programming. In April 2018, **St. Clair** led Pacific Symphony in its sold-out Carnegie Hall debut, as the finale to the Carnegie's yearlong celebration of pre-eminent composer Philip Glass' 80th birthday, ending in a standing ovation, with The New York Times calling the Symphony "a major ensemble!" He led Pacific Symphony on its first tour to China in May 2018, the orchestra's first international tour since touring Europe in 2006. The orchestra made its national PBS debut in June 2018 on Great Performances with Peter Boyer's "Ellis Island: The Dream of America," conducted by **St. Clair**. Among his many creative endeavors are the highly acclaimed American Composers Festival, which began in 2000; and the opera initiative, "Symphonic Voices," which has included concert-opera productions of *Madama Butterfly*, *The Magic Flute*, *Aida*, *Turandot*, *Carmen*, *La Traviata*, *Tosca* and *La Bohème* in previous seasons.

Carl St. Clair's commitment to the development and performance of new works by composers is evident in the wealth of commissions and recordings by the Symphony. The 2016-17 season featured commissions by pianist/composer Conrad Tao and composer-in-residence Narong Prangcharoen, a follow-up to the recent slate of recordings of works commissioned and performed by the Symphony in recent years. These include William Bolcom's *Songs of Lorca* and *Prometheus*, Elliot Goldenthal's *Symphony in G-sharp Minor*, Richard Danielpour's *Toward a Season of Peace*, Philip Glass's *The Passion of Ramakrishna*, John Wineglass's *Alone Together*, and Michael Daugherty's *Mount Rushmore* and *The Gospel According to Sister Aimee*. **St. Clair** has led the orchestra in other critically acclaimed albums including two piano concertos of Lukas Foss; Danielpour's *An American Requiem* and Goldenthal's *Fire Water Paper: A Vietnam Oratorio* with cellist Yo-Yo Ma. Other commissioned composers include James Newton Howard, Zhou Long, Tobias Picker, Frank Ticheli, Chen Yi, Curt Cacioppo, Stephen Scott, Jim Self (Pacific Symphony's principal tubist) and Christopher Theofanidis.

In 2006-07, **St. Clair** led the orchestra's historic move into its home in the Renee and Henry Segerstrom Concert Hall at Segerstrom Center for the Arts. The move came on the heels of the landmark 2005-06 season that included **St. Clair's** leading the Symphony on its first European tour—nine cities in three countries playing before capacity houses and receiving extraordinary responses and reviews.

From 2008-10, **Carl St. Clair** was general music director for the Komische Oper in Berlin. He also served as general music director and chief conductor of the German National Theater and Staatskapelle (GNTS) in Weimar, Germany, where he led Wagner's Ring Cycle to critical acclaim. He was the first non-European to hold his position at the GNTS; the role also gave him the distinction of simultaneously leading one of the newest orchestras in America and one of the oldest in Europe.



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In 2014, **St. Clair** became the music director of the National Symphony Orchestra in Costa Rica. His international career also has him conducting abroad several months a year, and he has appeared with orchestras throughout the world. He was the principal guest conductor of the Radio Sinfonieorchester Stuttgart from 1998-2004, where he completed a three-year recording project of the Villa-Lobos symphonies. He has also appeared with orchestras in Israel, Hong Kong, Japan, Australia, New Zealand and South America, China, Thailand, Malaysia, and summer festivals worldwide. In North America, **St. Clair** has led the Boston Symphony Orchestra, New York Philharmonic, Philadelphia Orchestra, Los Angeles Philharmonic and the San Francisco, Seattle, Detroit, Atlanta, Houston, Indianapolis, Montreal, Toronto and Vancouver symphonies, among many others.

Carl St. Clair is a strong advocate of music education for all ages and is internationally recognized for his distinguished career as a master teacher. He has been essential to the creation and implementation of the Symphony's education and community engagement programs including Pacific Symphony Youth Ensembles, Heartstrings, Sunday Matinees, OC Can You Play With Us?, arts-X-press and Class Act. In addition to his professional conducting career, **St. Clair** has worked with most major music schools across the country. In 2018, Chapman University President Danielle Struppa appointed **St. Clair** as a Presidential Fellow, working closely with the students of the College of the Performing Arts at Chapman University. **St. Clair** has been named "Distinguished Alumni in Residence" at the University of Texas Butler School of Music beginning 2019. And, for over 25 years, he has had a continuing relationship with the USC Thornton School where he is artistic leader and principal conductor of the orchestral program.

A native of Texas, **Mr. St. Clair** has made Southern California his home. His path as a conductor was set when he was named a Conducting Fellow at the Tanglewood Music Center in 1985. The Boston Symphony (in residence there) recognized his prodigious talent and named **St. Clair** their Assistant Conductor in 1986. Having met Leonard Bernstein at Tanglewood, Bernstein continued to mentor **St. Clair** and has remained a life-long influence.

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"The Pacific Symphony, making its Carnegie debut [under music director, Carl St. Clair], had the good fortune to be presented by the hall itself, as part of a season-long series of concerts centering on Philip Glass ... The performance was excellent, with the orchestra sounding like a major ensemble."

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