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## **SUNRIVER MUSIC FESTIVAL ARTISTIC DIRECTOR PLANS TO LEAD FESTIVAL ORCHESTRA THROUGH 2020 SEASON**

SUNRIVER, ORE – Sunriver Music Festival’s popular Artistic Director and Conductor George Hanson will lead the Central Oregon festival for two more seasons. Hanson, who is now the Executive Director of Virginia’s Alexandria Symphony Orchestra outside of Washington D.C. recently told the Festival staff and Board that he plans to stay with the festival through the end of next year’s season.

“Next summer (2020) will mark my tenth year of my deeply gratifying relationship with the Festival,” said Hanson. “It has been an honor and a privilege to work with the outstanding musicians, dedicated staff, the very devoted board of trustees, the generous supporters and the enthusiastic audience members of this extraordinary organization.”

George Hanson was initially contracted as Sunriver’s Guest Conductor for two concerts in 2011, when long-time Artistic Director and Conductor Lawrence Leighton Smith announced that he would be concluding his 24-year tenure with the Festival.

“When Larry Smith was suddenly unable to come to Sunriver during the 2011 season, due to his declining health, George graciously stepped up and conducted all six orchestral concerts,” said Pam Beezley, the Festival’s Executive Director. “He did an incredible job under these tough circumstances and the audience loved him.”

Even as he continues to lead the Sunriver Music Festival through the 2020 season, exciting conducting opportunities continue to come his way. This summer on July 14<sup>th</sup> Hanson will conduct the Chicago Symphony at Ravinia, with renowned vocalist Jennifer Hudson. As he looks ahead, Hanson sees a broader role for himself in the orchestra world.

“I believe strong arts administrators, with deep understanding of the music making process, are vital to the future success of the American symphony orchestra. In Alexandria, with a wonderfully creative team including music director James Ross, I have an opportunity to have a lasting impact on a community and our industry.”

“I had the pleasure of working directly with George Hanson during my four years as the Festival’s Board President,” said Mal Murphy, the Festival’s Past President. “George brought exciting programming to our Central Oregon audiences and elevated the quality of our orchestra.”

“George has demonstrated over the years strong musical leadership with our orchestra and outstanding podium presence with our audience,” said current Festival Board President Phillip Ruder. Ruder also served as the Festival’s Concertmaster for 26 years.

Mal Murphy adds, “We are looking forward to successful and enjoyable 2019 and 2020 seasons under George’s leadership and we wish him the very best in his new endeavors.”

The 42<sup>nd</sup> Season of the Sunriver Music Festival is August 9 – 22, 2019. For more information or to purchase tickets, visit [www.sunrivermusic.org](http://www.sunrivermusic.org) or call the Festival Ticket Office at 541-593-9310, or email [information@sunrivermusic.org](mailto:information@sunrivermusic.org).

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