



**KNOXVILLE  
SYMPHONY  
ORCHESTRA**

**Aram Demirjian, Music Director**

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## **KSO MUSIC DIRECTOR ARAM DEMIRJIAN RECEIVES THE 2020 SIR GEORG SOLTİ CONDUCTING AWARD**

**April 20, 2020, Knoxville TN**— The Knoxville Symphony Orchestra’s Music Director [Aram Demirjian](#) has just been announced as the 2020 recipient of The Sir Georg Solti Conducting Award, the major grant of the Solti Foundation U.S. The largest grant currently given to American conductors in the formative years of their careers, the prestigious \$30,000 grant is given annually to a single promising American conductor 38 years of age or younger.

A recipient of The Sir Georg Solti Conducting Award may use the financial portion of the grant in various ways to specifically advance his/her career, whether it be further studies, language study, purchases of scores, or travel. The Foundation's Board of Directors comprises experts from all areas of the classical music industry, and therefore the Award also brings door-opening introductions within the industry and valuable access to professional mentors.

In addition to the 2020 Solti Fellow, Aram Demirjian is the recipient of 2017 and 2019 Solti Foundation U.S. Career Assistance Awards, a 2018 Solti Foundation U.S. Opera Residency with Lyric Opera of Chicago (for Massenet's *Cendrillon*, assisting Sir Andrew Davis), and the 2011 Robert J. Harth Conducting Prize from the Aspen Music Festival, where he was a three-time Conducting Fellow in the Aspen Conducting Academy.

Knoxville Symphony Board of Directors President Bill Riley said, “The Knoxville Symphony family is incredibly proud of Aram and we know this award is further confirmation of what we have witnessed since his arrival at the KSO. Aram is an extremely talented individual, leading an incredible group of musicians. His innovative programming and leadership have been instrumental in the growth of our organization, and a key factor in the national attention our Orchestra has received in the last several years.”

### **About The Solti Foundation U.S.**

Entering its twentieth year of assisting outstanding young U.S. conductors to further develop their talent and careers, The Solti Foundation U.S. is the foremost organization in the United States dedicated exclusively to helping young conductors.

Established in 2000 to honor the memory of the legendary conductor Sir Georg Solti by lending significant support to career-ready young American musicians, in 2004, the Foundation concentrated the focus of its award program to solely assist talented young American conductors early in their professional careers (its original mission was of a more general arts nature). Since then, it has awarded over \$900,000 through grants and residencies to American conductors.

[More information can be found here.](#)

### **About Aram Demirjian**

Aram Demirjian is the 8th Music Director of the Knoxville Symphony Orchestra, internationally sought after for his dynamic performances, innovative programming concepts and distinctive ability to forge connections with both audiences and performers.

Under Demirjian's galvanizing leadership, the KSO's audiences have continued to grow and the KSO has routinely found itself in the regional and national spotlight. His charismatic rapport with audiences has brought East Tennesseans of all ages, backgrounds and circumstances to the concert hall, and his warm collaboration with the musicians has brought about meaningful artistic growth. Demirjian's programming has earned praise for turning the KSO's concerts into "the exhibition hall of living music" (Knox TN Today), featuring creative partnerships with local organizations including Appalachian Ballet, Cirrus Aircraft, Go! Contemporary Dance Works, Knox Brew Tours, the University of Tennessee, national ensembles like PROJECTTrio and American Modern Opera Company, plus two appearances in the Big Ears Music Festival. A landmark collaboration with the Clarence Brown Theater, presenting Bernstein's *Candide* as part of the Bernstein Centenary celebration, headlines the 2018-19 season, and in 2020, the KSO was one of four North American to be featured in SHIFT: A Festival of American Orchestras.

[Full bio found here.](#)

### **About the Knoxville Symphony Orchestra**

Led by Music Director Aram Demirjian, the Knoxville Symphony Orchestra consists of 80 professional musicians and performs 300 programs throughout the region each season, reaching audiences of more than 200,000 people. The KSO performs in traditional venues such as the Tennessee Theatre, Bijou Theatre, and Civic Auditorium, as well as non-traditional places like hospitals, schools, city parks, and churches. For more information regarding the KSO, please visit [www.knoxvillesymphony.com](http://www.knoxvillesymphony.com) or call 865-291-3310.

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