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ASSOCIATION OF CALIFORNIA SYMPHONY ORCHESTRAS BRINGS MUSIC COMMUNITY TOGETHER AT 2026 ANNUAL CONFERENCE

Los Angeles, CA (May 4, 2026) – At a time when arts organizations are navigating financial pressure and shifting audiences, hundreds of orchestra leaders will gather in California wine country this summer to forge a path forward.

The Association of California Symphony Orchestras (ACSO) will host its 57th Annual Conference, August 6–8, 2026, in Santa Rosa, bringing together 300 arts leaders, musicians, and administrators from across the Western United States. Hosted by the Santa Rosa Symphony, the conference blends candid conversation, practical strategy, and peer connection at a moment of significant change for the field.

Through keynote conversations, pre-conference workshops, breakout sessions, peer forums, and networking events, the conference will explore timely issues facing orchestras today, including leadership in times of change, financial sustainability, musician health, governance, and building community.

Cultural strategist **Emil J. Kang** will open the conference in a keynote conversation examining how arts organizations function and what structural changes may be needed to better serve communities. The closing keynote features acclaimed composer **Gabriela Lena Frank** in conversation with Santa Rosa Symphony Music Director **Francesco Lecce-Chong**, exploring artistic leadership and cultural identity in today’s orchestral landscape. **Conference highlights:**

Beyond sessions, the conference emphasizes relationship-building and shared experience. Attendees will gather at the Charles M. Schulz Museum for an opening-night event, attend a Santa Rosa Symphony concert, and participate in peer forums designed for candid, small-group exchange. The event also includes ACSO’s Annual Meeting and Awards Presentation, recognizing leadership across the field.

While rooted in California, the conference draws participants and speakers from across the country and reflects broader national conversations about the future of the arts.

Sarah Weber, ACSO Executive Director, said, "We’re excited to gather in Santa Rosa for three days of connection, reflection, and forward-looking conversation. Orchestras are being asked to do more than ever, to be artistically excellent, financially resilient, and deeply connected to their communities. This conference is about supporting the people doing that work."

ACSO is a nonprofit arts service organization representing a membership of over 120 orchestras and music organizations and 3,000 board and administrative leaders throughout California and the Western United States.

For more information and to register, visit www.acso.org/conference or contact ACSO at (800) 495-2276 or office@acso.org.