

WASO announces Principal Conductor and Artistic Adviser

The Board of the West Australian Symphony Orchestra today announced that Asher Fisch has been appointed to the position of Principal Conductor and Artistic Adviser for a period of three years, commencing with the Orchestra's 2014 season. The position will continue to be supported by Wesfarmers Arts, WASO's Principal Partner. Asher is currently the Principal Guest Conductor of the Seattle Opera and has formerly served as Music Director of the Israeli Opera and the Vienna Opera.

Israeli-born conductor Asher Fisch was mentored and championed early by Daniel Barenboim and he began his conducting career as Maestro Barenboim's assistant during the 1990s. He has appeared with many of the world's most renowned opera companies and symphony orchestras. With a vast repertoire that spans three centuries from Gluck to Adams, Asher is particularly known and appreciated for his interpretive command of core German Romantic and post-Romantic repertoire, from Beethoven through Berg, including virtually the entire canon of Wagner and Strauss.

Asher first conducted WASO in 1999 and has since returned four times, most recently in September 2011 when he conducted the Orchestra in three concerts featuring Dvorak, Saint-Saëns and Franck. He has conducted WASO in a range of repertoire including Verdi, Wagner and Strauss.

"The Board is absolutely delighted Asher Fisch has agreed to join WASO as our next Principal Conductor and Artistic Adviser, and to continue the excellent work of WASO's current Principal Conductor Paul Daniel," said Janet Holmes à Court AC, Chairman of the WASO Board. "This appointment was made after consultation with the musicians who identified Asher as a great conductor and exceptional leader. The Board is confident that the Orchestra will continue to thrive under his direction."

"I am excited about beginning this new journey with the West Australian Symphony Orchestra," said Asher Fisch. "During the time I have worked with WASO I have been particularly impressed with the calibre of the musicians. To me, this orchestra is a wonderful blend of British professionalism, American work ethic and German precision and with the support of a wonderful management and administration staff we can work together to take this orchestra to a new level of artistic excellence."

"We have seen Asher develop a strong affinity with the Orchestra each time he has visited as guest conductor and we look forward to seeing the relationship strengthen when he steps into his new role in 2014," Craig Whitehead WASO Chief Executive said.

Asher's appointment will see him conduct the Orchestra for nine weeks each year with the exception of 2014, when he will conduct seven weeks, with two weeks scheduled in 2013. He will work closely with the artistic team at WASO on programming and artistic issues and he will assist the Orchestra in developing its guest conductor and soloist portfolio.

Wesfarmers Limited Managing Director Richard Goyder said, "As WASO's Principal Partner and Principal Conductor partner, we thank Paul Daniel for his significant contribution to our state Orchestra and for continuing to establish a strong foundation for the next stage in WASO's history. We are sure that Asher Fisch, with his exceptional experience, talent and leadership will continue to take the Orchestra from strength to strength. This is an exciting announcement for arts in Western Australia and we are delighted to be supporting WASO as it continues to grow and develop."

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