

Franz Welser-Möst has forged one of the most transformative artistic legacies in the history of The Cleveland Orchestra, as its seventh and longest-serving Music Director. Now in his 25th and final season, he has shaped its sound with extraordinary care and imagination, cultivating greater warmth and flexibility, while preserving precision and transparency. Since the start of his tenure in 2002–03, he has led more than 1,200 performances across 15 US states and 26 countries, and has appointed 56 of the Orchestra's 100 current musicians.

Widely admired for his interpretations of Central European and Russian repertoire, Welser-Möst has also been a champion for living composers, specifically through the Orchestra's Daniel R. Lewis Composer Fellowship. His artistic collaborations have resulted in dozens of commissions and co-commissions, and at the close of the 2026–27 season, he will have led The Cleveland Orchestra in 27 world premieres and 21 US premieres. Welser-Möst's tenure also brought about major innovative milestones for the Orchestra, including the creation of its recording label, the launch of its streaming platform, Adella.live, and the inauguration of the Jack, Joseph and Morton Mandel Opera & Humanities Festival.

Opera has become a defining element of Welser-Möst's Cleveland career through acclaimed productions of Dvořák's *Rusalka*, Richard Strauss's *Ariadne auf Naxos*, Janáček's *The Cunning Little Vixen*, Puccini's *La Fanciulla del West* and Mozart's *The Magic Flute*. In May 2027, he leads a fully staged production of Richard Strauss's *Die Frau ohne Schatten*.

Franz Welser-Möst enjoys a particularly close and productive artistic partnership with the Vienna Philharmonic. He regularly conducts the orchestra in subscription concerts at the Vienna Musikverein as well as at the Salzburg Festival and on tour in Europe, Japan, China and the US. Welser-Möst and the Vienna Philharmonic have also performed together at historical memorial concerts in Sarajevo and Versailles. Franz Welser-Möst has appeared three times on the podium for their celebrated New Year's Concert (2011, 2013, 2023).

At the Salzburg Festival Franz Welser-Möst has set new standards in interpretation as an opera conductor with performances including *Rusalka*, *Fidelio*, Aribert Reimann's opera *Lear* and Puccini's *Il Trittico*. There has been a special focus on the operas of Richard Strauss, with Welser-Möst conducting *Der Rosenkavalier*, *Die Liebe der Danae*, and the much-lauded production of *Salome*. In 2020 and 2021 he conducted Strauss' *Elektra* on the 100th Anniversary of the Salzburg Festival.

In the coming season, Franz Welser-Möst returns to the Vienna State Opera with a new production of Richard Strauss's *Ariadne auf Naxos*. From 2010 to 2014, Franz Welser-Möst was General Music Director of the Vienna State Opera, where, in addition to maintaining the broad repertoire of the House, he devoted himself particularly to the operas of the 20th century, including a special artistic focus on the operas of Leoš Janáček.

Franz Welser-Möst has been the recipient of a number of major honours and awards. He is Honorary Member of the Vienna Philharmonic, winner of the Vienna Philharmonic's Honorary Ring, Honorary Member of the Gesellschaft der Musikfreunde in Vienna and has been awarded the Kilenyi Medal of the Bruckner Society of America as well as the Kennedy Center Gold Medal in the Arts. In 2020, Franz Welser-Möst was awarded the Salzburg Festival Pin with Ruby. Franz Welser-Möst has made numerous recordings and many of his recordings have won international awards.

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