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Peninsula Music Festival

Simón Zerpa to Serve as PMF's 2019 Emerging Conductor

Simón Zerpa has been named to serve as the 2019 Karen Smuda Emerging Conductor at the Peninsula Music Festival. The Karen Smuda Emerging Conductor program provides training and exposure for aspiring conductors with a professional symphony orchestra. The program is structured to provide broad experiences with all aspects of orchestra conducting and Festival management to enhance their career goals. Applicants must be enrolled in or recently completed a doctoral program in conducting.

Simón Zerpa is an energetic and charismatic orchestra conductor, trained as a violinist in the National System of Youth Orchestras and Choirs in Venezuela. He currently resides in the United States, and was recently a finalist for the position of Music Director of the Pro Artè Chamber Orchestra of Greater Washington, DC. In recent years, Mr. Zerpa has maintained an active conducting schedule throughout the United States and abroad. In 2015 he co-produced and conducted an orchestral festival in Mérida Venezuela, *Orquesta Jóvenes de Mérida*. The same year, Simón collaborated with American composer and Pulitzer Prize winner David Land, conducting his work "*Pierced*" at the composer's Festival at the University of Shenandoah.

Zerpa made his operatic conducting debut in Mozart's Magic Flute with the opera company of the Shenandoah Conservatory in April 2017. That same year, he toured in Argentina with the Orchestra of the Shenandoah Conservatory as Assistant Director to Venezuelan conductor Jan Wagner where he had the opportunity to conduct in multiple cities throughout the tour.

In 2018, Mr. Zerpa was engaged as assistant conductor at the National Music Festival with Maestro Richard Rosenberg, and also appeared as guest conductor at the Oneworld Symphonic Festival.

Simón Zerpa is currently pursuing his doctorate in orchestral conducting at the University of Iowa under the supervision of Maestro William Jones. In addition to his continuing studies at the University, he also holds a teaching assistant position, and conducts the chamber orchestra and all-university string orchestra. Recently, Zerpa has been commissioned by composer Julian Rave to record his orchestral work *Metéora*, which will take place in the coming months with the Simón Bolívar Symphony Orchestra.

Mr. Zerpa will take the podium at the Peninsula Music Festival on Thursday, August 15, 2019 conducting Dvořák's Carnival Overture, Op. 92.

Karen Smuda's association with the Festival over the years as a member of the Board of Directors, donor, and all around enthusiast led the Board's Executive Committee to name the program in her memory. Though her death was untimely, Karen's love of the Festival and her support of its education programs will live on through this special initiative which is now entering its seventh year.

PMF's *Symphony Series* features the sixty-five member Festival Orchestra whose membership represents leading Symphony and Opera Orchestras from around the world including Toronto, Montreal, Boston, St. Louis, Pittsburgh, Omaha, Milwaukee, Houston Grand Opera, The Dallas Opera, and Lyric Opera of Chicago. This world-class Orchestra can be heard in nine different programs every August at the Door Community Auditorium in Fish Creek. The 67th Season runs August 6-24 with concerts every Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday at 7:30 pm. Tickets start at \$35, and seating is reserved. Student/Children are just \$10. Tickets can be purchased at the Festival's Offices of Administration & Ticketing Services located at 10347 N. Water Street Suite B in North Ephraim; on line at www.musicfestival.com or by calling 920-854-4060.



Simón Zerpa, 2019 *Karen Smuda Emerging Conductor*
Peninsula Music Festival

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