

The Cleveland Orchestra, under the leadership of **Franz Welser-Möst** since 2002, is widely recognized as one of the world's leading ensembles. Praised by *The New York Times* as "America's Finest," the Orchestra is renowned for its virtuosity, elegance of sound, and chamber-like musical flexibility. In his 25th and final season as Music Director, Welser-Möst concludes a transformative partnership that has been marked by exceptional artistic ambition, growing international recognition, and deep community connection.

During his tenure, the Orchestra has achieved major institutional milestones, including groundbreaking residencies at the Musikverein in Vienna — the first by an American orchestra — and at the Adrienne Arsht Center in Miami. In 2023, The Cleveland Orchestra launched the annual Jack, Joseph and Morton Mandel Opera & Humanities Festival, presenting acclaimed opera productions alongside art exhibits, community events, and civic conversations.

Through concerts, broadcasts, recordings, tours, and digital initiatives, The Cleveland Orchestra reaches an ever-growing audience around the world. Its in-house recording label and streaming platform, **Adella.live**, capture and share performances from the Welser-Möst era while introducing new generations of fans to the Orchestra's artistry.

Founded by **Adella Prentiss Hughes**, The Cleveland Orchestra gave its inaugural concert in December 1918. Over more than a century, it has grown into a treasured community institution, enriching lives through music, education, and a deep commitment to Northeast Ohio. Today, more than 400,000 people attend Cleveland Orchestra concerts each year. From its year-round home at Severance Music Center to its summer season at Blossom Music Center in Cuyahoga Valley National Park, the Orchestra continues to serve audiences across the region.

Seven Music Directors — **Nikolai Sokoloff**, **Artur Rodziński**, **Erich Leinsdorf**, **George Szell**, **Lorin Maazel**, **Christoph von Dohnányi**, and **Franz Welser-Möst** — have shaped the ensemble's distinctive musical identity and celebrated "Cleveland sound." Welser-Möst's tenure as the longest-serving Music Director in Cleveland Orchestra history stands as a defining chapter in that evolution.