NICHOLAS HERSH

Conductor

American conductor Nicholas Hersh has earned critical acclaim for his innovative programming and natural ability to connect with musicians and audiences alike.

In the 2022-2023 season, Hersh debuts with the Utah, Colorado and Modesto symphonies, and The Florida Orchestra, and returns to the Baltimore, Houston and New Jersey symphony orchestras, and Rochester Philharmonic. Highlights of the prior season include engagements with the National (D.C.), Detroit, Grand Rapids, Portland (ME), and Tucson symphony orchestras, Louisiana Philharmonic, Sarasota Orchestra, and symphonies of Richmond and Winston-Salem, and Peabody Opera. Other recent conducting appearances include the Phoenix Symphony, North Carolina Symphony, and New World Symphony.

Over a remarkable tenure as Associate Conductor of the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra, Hersh created the BSO Pulse series, through which he brought together indie bands and orchestral musicians in unique collaborations; he led the BSO in several subscription weeks, and concerts in and around Baltimore; and he directed the BSO’s educational and family programming, including the celebrated Academy for adult amateur musicians. During the COVID-19 pandemic, Hersh developed and conducted the BSO’s new digital concert series, BSO Sessions. Mixing performance with documentary-style interviews, Hersh introduced the BSO and online audiences to a wide variety of new repertoire, including numerous living composers as well as seldom-performed historical composers. “His commitment to performing works by composers of color,” described BSO leadership, “will continue to inform the BSO’s programming long into the future.”

Hersh also maintains a close relationship with the National Symphony Orchestra, leading concerts throughout Washington, D.C. He stepped in to replace an indisposed Yan Pascal Tortelier, on subscription, to great acclaim.

Hersh is frequently in demand as an arranger and orchestrator, with commissions from orchestras around the globe for adaptations of everything from classical solo and chamber music to popular songs. His orchestration of Beethoven’s Cello Sonata Op. 69 was premiered by the Philharmonie Zuidnederland in January 2022, while his symphonic arrangement of Queen’s [Bohemian Rhapsody](https://www.nicholashersh.com/projects/#bohrhap) continues to see worldwide success as a viral YouTube hit. He also serves as arranger and editor for the James P. Johnson Orchestra Edition.

An avid educator, Hersh has embraced the Young Persons Concert format as a crucial method for orchestras to serve their communities. From 2016-2020, he served as Artistic Director of the Baltimore Symphony Youth Orchestras, and he continues to be a frequent collaborator and guest faculty at the Peabody Institute of Johns Hopkins University.

Hersh grew up in Evanston, Illinois and started his musical training as a cellist. He earned a Bachelor’s Degree in Music from Stanford University and a Master’s Degree in Conducting from the Indiana University Jacobs School of Music, studying with David Effron and Arthur Fagen. In 2011 and 2012, he was a Conducting Fellow with the prestigious American Academy of Conducting at Aspen, studying with mentors Robert Spano, Hugh Wolff, and Larry Rachleff, and has participated in masterclasses with Bernard Haitink and Michael Tilson Thomas. Hersh is also a two-time recipient of the Solti Foundation Career Assistance Award.

Nicholas lives in Philadelphia with his wife Caitlin and their two cats, and in his free time enjoys baking (and eating) sourdough bread.

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OFFICIAL BIO FOR THE 2022-2023 SEASON. LAST UPDATED JULY 2022.

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