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**Lakeland Symphony Orchestra Announces Jason Thomas Aylward as Interim Music Director**

Lakeland, FL — The Lakeland Symphony Orchestra (LSO) is pleased to announce the appointment of Jason Thomas Aylward as Interim Music Director.

Aylward has been an integral part of the LSO's artistic leadership in recent months, providing musical continuity, insight, and expertise during a transitional period. He appeared on the podium this past October conducting the 5<sup>th</sup> grade School Day Enrichment concerts and returns in March to lead the Cookie Concert, additional School Day performances, and the next Masterworks concert—*Rhapsody and Radiance*, featuring internationally-acclaimed pianist and guest artist, Young-Ah Tak. Aylward will then help close out the LSO's season with the April 4th performance, *Defying Gravity: Bewitching Broadway*.

Aylward will serve in the Interim Music Director role for an 18-month term. During this time, artistic planning for the LSO's 61st season is actively underway.

"I am deeply honored and excited to step into this role as Interim Music Director of such a storied and meaningful ensemble and organization as the Lakeland Symphony Orchestra," said Aylward. "In my career, I've had the privilege of conducting deeply powerful and musically moving orchestras across the country, and the LSO ranks amongst the very best of them. The talent and expertise of the musicians is impressive and inspiring, and the mission reach of the orchestra is part of the very fabric of this community. Mostly, I am humbled to play a part in guiding the landmark Floridian institution that is the LSO into its next 60 years and well beyond."

"We are thrilled that Jason has accepted this role," said Ashley Miller, Executive Director of the Lakeland Symphony Orchestra. "We look forward to having his expertise and passion for community as we continue to build on the artistic excellence of the LSO and plan for the future."

**About Jason Thomas Aylward**

Jason Thomas Aylward is a dynamic conductor, trumpet soloist, composer, and educator whose career spans orchestral, chamber, educational, and community-based music making. Described by *Patron Magazine* as "a musician for all seasons," Aylward is known for his versatility, collaborative leadership, and commitment to audience engagement.

He has performed with professional ensembles across the country and has appeared as a conductor with numerous orchestras and festivals nationwide. In addition to his performance career, Aylward is

deeply committed to music education and currently serves as Director of Bands and Orchestra and trumpet professor at Southeastern University in Lakeland, Florida.

For more information about the Lakeland Symphony Orchestra and upcoming performances, visit [LkldSymphony.org](http://LkldSymphony.org) or call the box office at 863-688-3743.

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