

George Hanson, TSO Music Director and Conductor

Now in his 14th season as TSO's multi-talented music director and passionate spokesman, George Hanson has helped establish the profile of the Tucson Symphony Orchestra as the flagship organization in Tucson's cultural life.

Since his arrival in 1996, Mr. Hanson has led the TSO to international recognition. TSO's first recording, released in 2008, reached No. 2 on U.S. Classical charts, and was lauded by critics around the globe. *Stereophile Magazine* praised the orchestra's "chamber-music-like interaction" with pianist Alain Lefevre in Andre Mattheu's Piano Concerto No. 4, "a work demanding-- and here receiving- utmost virtuosity and musicality." In an editorial, the *Arizona Daily Star* proclaimed, "TSO recording proves Tucson has a gem."

This season in Tucson Mr. Hanson adds incomparable cellist Yo-Yo Ma to an extraordinary range of artists with whom he has shared the stage--from Joshua Bell, Peter Serkin, Nadja Salerno-Sonnenberg, Alicia De Larrocha, Andre Watts and Emmanuel Ax, to Tony Bennett, Dizzy Gillespie, and Roberta Flack.

In seven years as General Music Director of the Wuppertal Symphony and Opera in Germany, Mr. Hanson oversaw nearly 50 opera productions and made six recordings with the orchestra. He has joined TSO's musicians as solo pianist, conducting concertos from the keyboard. The *Arizona Daily Star* called his performance of Mozart "an impressive display."

Mr. Hanson burst onto the international scene at age 28 when he won first prizes at the Budapest International Conducting Competition and the Stokowski Competition in New York. He has led nearly 100 symphony orchestras and opera companies, including the New York Philharmonic, the radio orchestras of Berlin and Hamburg, Berlin's Komische Opera and Vienna's Kammeroper, the Warsaw Philharmonic, Mexico's National Symphony, and the orchestras of Osaka and Seoul. Recent American debuts include the Phoenix, Indianapolis and Charlotte Symphony Orchestras. Highlights for 2009-10 include return visits to Hungary, and to the orchestra where Mr. Hanson held his first music directorship, the Anchorage Symphony.

Mr. Hanson served as an assistant to Leonard Bernstein. He was Resident Conductor of the Atlanta Symphony from 1988 to 1993, and assisted Kurt Masur at the New York Philharmonic from 1993 to 2000. He received his formal training at the Vienna Academy of Music, the Curtis Institute, Indiana University and Concordia College. He and his wife, Petra Boehm, reside in Tucson with their three sons.