



**For immediate release  
Tues., Sept. 8 at 12 p.m.**

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**The Boston Symphony Orchestra (BSO) Names Jean-Sébastien Vallée BSO Director of Choruses and Conductor of the Tanglewood Festival Chorus (TFC)**

**Vallée to direct the TFC for three major programs during the BSO's 2026-27 season as well as programs at Tanglewood in 2027**

**Photo and bio are in the [press kit](#)**



Jean-Sébastien Vallée acknowledges TFC and piano four-hands artists at Tanglewood

The Boston Symphony Orchestra (BSO) has appointed **Jean-Sébastien Vallée** as BSO Director of Choruses and Conductor of the **Tanglewood Festival Chorus** with the start of the 2026-27 season. Vallée becomes the all-volunteer group's third director since its founding in 1970 by inaugural director John Oliver. He succeeds James Burton who led the TFC from 2017 to 2025.

Vallée, who served as one of several guest choral directors in 2025-26, was at Tanglewood on the final weekend of the BSO's summer season to lead the TFC in a Prelude concert in Ozawa Hall featuring Martín Palmeri's *Misa a Buenos Aires* and in two BSO performances in the Shed that offered Bernstein's *Chichester Psalms*, Brahms's "Selig sind, die da Leid tragen" from *Ein deutsches Requiem*, and Beethoven's Symphony No. 9. He also directed the TFC's performances with the BSO in the same Beethoven and Bernstein works at Symphony Hall last spring.

During the BSO's 2026-27 season, Vallée prepares the TFC's performances of Haydn's *The Creation* and the world premiere of Osvaldo Golijov's *Creation* over two weeks in November with Philippe Jordan and Eric Jacobsen conducting, respectively. In January 2027 he prepares the chorus for the BSO's concert-opera performance of Tchaikovsky's *The Queen of Spades* with Andris Nelsons on the podium. Next April he leads the TFC in Mahler's Symphony No. 3, which marks Nelsons' final Symphony Hall performance as BSO music director. The TFC's 2027 Tanglewood programs will be announced in late January. Future seasons will also include collaborations with the Boston Pops.

### Statement from Jean-Sébastien Vallée

"I am deeply honored to join the Boston Symphony Orchestra as Director of Choruses and to become part of the extraordinary legacy of the Tanglewood Festival Chorus. My experiences making music with the BSO and TFC have already shown me what is possible when exceptional musicians come together with curiosity, generosity, and a shared sense of purpose. I look forward to building on the remarkable tradition created by generations of TFC singers while imagining together what comes next—deepening the connection between chorus and orchestra, exploring the extraordinary breadth of the choral-symphonic repertoire, and further strengthening the chorus's role within the community. I am especially excited about the opportunities for education and civic engagement, and for the TFC and BSO to help foster the development of singers, conductors, and the choral art for generations to come."

## About Jean-Sébastien Vallée

Vallée is a Canadian-American conductor whose career bridges the orchestral and choral worlds. Recognized for the breadth of his musicianship, compelling performances, and dynamic artistic leadership, he brings to the podium a distinctive combination of symphonic vision, vocal expertise, and a deep understanding of the relationship between music, text, and dramatic expression.

Along with his new role leading the Tanglewood Festival Chorus, he continues as Artistic Director and Principal Conductor of the Toronto Mendelssohn Choir and its professional chamber ensemble, the Toronto Mendelssohn Singers. He is also Full Professor of Music and Director of Choral Studies at McGill University's Schulich School of Music.

His international career has brought him into collaboration with many of North America's leading orchestras, including the Chicago, Toronto, and National Arts Centre orchestras, Orchestre symphonique de Montréal, Orchestre symphonique de Québec, and the BSO. Equally at home leading orchestral, choral-orchestral, and vocal repertoire, Vallée has conducted works ranging from the central symphonic and sacred repertoire to contemporary music and world premieres.

At the heart of Vallée's work is a belief in music as an act of communication. Whether leading an orchestra, chorus, or combined forces, his approach is grounded in the architecture and rhetoric of the score and the expressive possibilities of sound and text. His performances are distinguished by clarity, immediacy, and a strong sense of musical narrative, while his programming creates connections across periods, traditions, and artistic disciplines.

An active recording artist, Vallée records for ATMA Classique, and his performances have been broadcast internationally. His discography includes *Remember* (2024), *Distance* (2021), *Requiem – Fauré & Duruflé* (2018), and *Lux* (2017). His newest recording, *Lo, How a Rose*, with the Toronto Mendelssohn Choir, is scheduled for release in fall 2026.

Alongside his performing career, Vallée is an influential educator and mentor to a new generation of conductors. At McGill University, he leads one of Canada's foremost university choral and conducting programs, with former students holding professional and academic appointments in Canada and abroad. A sought-after clinician and pedagogue, he has led masterclasses, workshops, and residencies

throughout North America, Europe, and Asia. He serves on the Board of Directors of Chorus America.

Vallée's contributions to music have been recognized with major honors, including Université Laval's Distinguished Alumnus Award and the Order of Choral Merit from the Alliance chorale du Québec. An active conductor on the international stage, his 2026–27 season includes engagements across Canada and the United States, including three programs with the Orchestre symphonique de Québec and conducting debuts with the Seattle Symphony and Pacific Symphony.

### **About The Tanglewood Festival Chorus**

Originally formed under the joint sponsorship of Boston University and the Boston Symphony Orchestra, the all-volunteer Tanglewood Festival Chorus (TFC) was established in 1970 by its founding conductor, the late John Oliver, who stepped down from his leadership position with the TFC at the end of the 2015 Tanglewood season. His successor, James Burton, was appointed to the newly created position of BSO Choral Director in 2017 and concluded his tenure with the TFC in August 2025. In the 2025-26 season, the TFC performed with the BSO and Andris Nelsons in Beethoven's *Missa Solemnis* to celebrate the 125th anniversary of Symphony Hall, Samuel Barber's opera *Vanessa*, Bernstein's *Chichester Psalms*, and in music from John Adams's opera *Nixon in China*; under Herbert Blomstedt in Brahms's *Nänie* and *Schicksalslied*, and with Dima Slobodeniouk in John Adams's *Harmonium* and Beethoven's Ninth Symphony. The chorus also joined Keith Lockhart and the Boston Pops for the Holiday Pops season. At Tanglewood, they reprised both *Chichester Psalms* and the Beethoven's Ninth with the BSO to close out the 2026 season, also performing Martín Palmeri's *Misa a Buenos Aires* for their annual Ozawa Hall Prelude Concert.

First established for performances at the BSO's summer home, the Tanglewood Festival Chorus plays a major role in the BSO's subscription season as well as in BSO concerts at Carnegie Hall. Considered one of the world's leading symphonic choruses, the Tanglewood Festival Chorus is made up of volunteer singers who share their time and talents, performing year-round with the Boston Symphony and Boston Pops. The TFC also records frequently with the BSO and the Boston Pops. Its most recent BSO recordings were Dmitri Shostakovich's symphonies 2, 3, and 13 conducted by BSO Music Director Andris Nelsons, released in October 2023, and the composer's opera *Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk*, included in orchestra's box set of Shostakovich's orchestral music released in spring 2025. The chorus has also recorded with the Boston Symphony Orchestra under

conductors Seiji Ozawa, Bernard Haitink, James Levine, Leonard Bernstein, and Sir Colin Davis and with the Boston Pops under Keith Lockhart and John Williams. The TFC can be heard on several film soundtracks, including Steven Spielberg's *Saving Private Ryan*. The chorus has sung with the Boston Pops for Boston Red Sox and Celtics games and the National Anthem prior to an American League Championship Series game at Fenway Park in October 2021. The TFC has sung the world and American premieres of many BSO-commissioned works for chorus and orchestra, including John Harbison's Requiem and *Koussevitzky Said:*, William Bolcom's Eighth Symphony, Eriks Ešenvalds' *Lakes Awake at Dawn*, Elena Langer's *The Dong with a Luminous Nose*, and Aleksandra Vrebalov's *Love Canticles*.

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## How to Obtain Tickets

Single tickets and subscriptions (both fixed and flexible "[choose your own](#)" packages) to the 2026–27 BSO season are available to purchase by calling 888-266-1200 or visiting [bso.org](https://www.bso.org). Group tickets are now on sale at [groupsales@bso.org](mailto:groupsales@bso.org) or 617-638-9345.

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## Titles for BSO Artistic and Executive Leadership

**Andris Nelsons**, Ray and Maria Stata BSO Music Director and Head of Conducting at Tanglewood

**Chad Smith**, Eunice and Julian Cohen BSO President and CEO

**Keith Lockhart**, Julian and Eunice Cohen Boston Pops Conductor

**Thomas Wilkins**, Artistic Partner for Education and Community Engagement / Germeshausen Youth and Family Concerts Conductor

**Carlos Simon**, Deborah and Philip Edmundson Composer Chair

**John Williams**, George and Roberta Berry Boston Pops Conductor Laureate

**Jean-Sébastien Vallée**, Alan J. and Suzanne W. Dworsky Chair, BSO Director of Choruses and Conductor of the Tanglewood Festival Chorus

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We are also delighted that **Bank of America** has focused their longtime season support as the BSO Youth and Family Programs Sponsor, providing access to the arts with family-friendly programming throughout the BSO season.

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## More BSO News

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