

MEDIA RELEASE



SYDNEY SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA APPOINTS EMMA E. DUNCH AS NEW CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

16 August 2017: Today the Board of the SSO has announced the appointment of Australian expatriate and New York-based performing arts executive Emma E. Dunch as CEO of the Sydney Symphony Orchestra.

Ms. Dunch was raised on Sydney's North Shore and will return to Australia to assume this role. She has lived and worked in New York City since 1999.

Emma graduated from the League of American Orchestras' prestigious Orchestral Management Fellowship Program in 2004 and has worked with leading international orchestras including the London Philharmonic Orchestra, Houston Symphony, San Francisco Symphony, New York Pops, Orpheus Chamber Orchestra and American Composers Orchestra. She returned to the League of American Orchestras in 2012 to serve as its chief fundraiser and help launch the League's centre for best practices in symphonic orchestra governance.



Emma Dunch is currently President of DUNCH, a New York-based cultural management firm she founded in 2008 that has advised more than 125 creative organisations across the United States, the United Kingdom and Australia on fundraising, financial management, strategic planning and leadership development. To date, Emma has worked with 38 leading classical music organizations internationally and has helped raise more than \$250 million for cultural causes. In 2016, she curated a U.S. Fundraising Best Practices Tour for the Australia Council for the Arts and was a featured keynote speaker at the Culture Business Sydney Conference.

According to Terrey Arcus, Chairman of the SSO, Ms. Dunch will bring intensity and energy to the leadership of Australia's flagship orchestra and capitalise on a wealth of experience developed over her 20-year cultural management career with creative organisations across the U.S., U.K. and Australia.

"Emma has a great breadth of orchestral management experience which equips her well to guide the SSO through one of the biggest projects in its 85-year history – the renewal of our home at the Sydney Opera House Concert Hall. This includes capitalising on all the opportunities presented by a period outside the Sydney Opera House, as well as relaunching the SSO when it returns to its iconic home with acoustics to match its design.

"Emma is analytical and strategic in outlook and has a strong network in the global arts community. She also has great strengths in generating income from multiple sources, with a deep background in development and marketing. Emma stood out against a range of highly talented and experienced arts professionals who applied to our global search.



“I am so incredibly proud that we are welcoming home a Sydney-sider to lead one of Australia’s most important arts organisations and I am confident that, in partnership with the excellent senior management team of the SSO, Emma will take the orchestra to even greater heights,” said Arcus.

SSO Chief Conductor and Artistic Director David Robertson said of the appointment: “A great orchestra not only requires excellent musicians – of which we have 100 at the SSO – but also a leader who can ably pull together all facets of an extremely complex organisation. I believe Emma has both the professional track record and the required skills to do this successfully for the SSO well into our future.

“I am thrilled to be working alongside Emma in realising the ambitions and immense talent of this great orchestra,” said Robertson.

Incoming Chief Executive Officer Emma Dunch said: “I’m truly inspired by this opportunity to come full circle, returning to my home city and to the organization that first fostered my love of symphonic music and inspired my pursuit of an international career in this arena.

“The Sydney Symphony Orchestra is a world-class ensemble and I look forward to partnering with the Board, David Robertson, the musicians, staff and community to ensure a vibrant future for one of our nation’s most cherished arts organizations.”

Prior to founding DUNCH, Emma worked in senior U.S. arts and media roles for WNYC/New York Public Radio (America’s largest public media company) and Glimmerglass Opera (a leading U.S. summer opera festival). She began her arts management career at the Sydney Symphony Orchestra in marketing and communications in 1996.

Emma holds a Bachelor of Music Performance in Opera from the Victorian College of the Arts and a Bachelor of Arts in Journalism from Charles Sturt University. She is a graduate of the League of American Orchestra’s Orchestral Management Fellowship Program and she undertook advanced studies at New York University’s Heymann Center for Philanthropy, the American Management Association, and the Support Center for Non-Profit Management. In 2010, she was competitively selected for the Kauffman Foundation’s FastTrac Growth Venture entrepreneurship accelerator; DUNCH is currently ranked in the top 5% of women-owned businesses in the United States.

Emma will begin with the SSO on January 1, 2018.

[View](#) a message to the SSO community from Emma Dunch on the SSO’s YouTube channel

[Read](#) more about Emma’s story on Backstage News+

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