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**CHRISTOPHER JAMES LEES NAMED ASSISTANT CONDUCTOR
OF CHARLOTTE SYMPHONY**

JUNE 28, 2016 | CHARLOTTE, NC – Christopher James Lees has been named Assistant Conductor of the Charlotte Symphony. His appointment begins September 1, 2016, as the Charlotte Symphony kicks off its 85th season.

Lees also currently serves as Music Director of the symphony orchestra at the University of North Carolina School of the Arts in Winston-Salem. He will continue in that role during his tenure with the Charlotte Symphony.

Lees will lead the Charlotte Symphony's Lollipops family series beginning in the 2016-2017 season as well as select Pops performances. He will also conduct Charlotte Symphony education and community outreach concerts, including the annual Debbie Phillips education concerts for area middle school students, plus the Charlotte Symphony-Charlotte Ballet annual *Nutcracker* collaboration.



Christopher James Lees joins the Charlotte Symphony as assistant conductor beginning September 1, 2016.

"I am personally very excited to welcome Christopher to the Symphony," says Music Director Christopher Warren-Green. "He brings experience with younger generations, yet a maturity that will be invaluable to us in his new post in Charlotte."

A recipient of a Gustavo Dudamel Conducting Fellowship with the Los Angeles Philharmonic, Lees made his debut with that orchestra in April 2013.

Following two summers of study with Robert Spano at the Aspen Music Festival, Lees was named winner of both the 2011 James Conlon Conducting Prize and the 2012 Aspen Conducting Prize, respectively. In 2013, Lees returned for a third summer as assistant conductor for the Aspen Music Festival and School.

Lees received a prestigious Career Assistance Grant from the Solti Foundation US and was one of six conductors selected for the 2011 Bruno Walter Memorial Foundation National Conductor Preview, hosted by the League of American Orchestras and Louisiana Philharmonic Orchestra.

In the last three seasons, Lees has returned to the Los Angeles Philharmonic, Detroit, Milwaukee, and North Carolina symphonies, and conducted debuts with the Houston, Indianapolis, Kansas City, Toledo, Flint, Winston-Salem, Kalamazoo, and New Bedford symphonies. Additional guest conducting engagements have taken him to Portland (Maine), the National Arts Centre Orchestra, Orchestre de Chambre de Paris, Aspen Philharmonic Orchestra, Cabrillo Festival Orchestra, the Music in the Mountains Festival, and Festival Internacional de Inverno de Campos do Jordão in Brazil.

Lees has commissioned many new contemporary works and collaborated closely with Pulitzer Prize-winning composers including John Adams, William Bolcom, Joseph Schwantner, and Jennifer Higdon, among others.

“Christopher’s diverse and impressive background will be a valuable addition to the Charlotte Symphony family,” says Charlotte Symphony President and CEO Mary Deissler. “We are fortunate to bring on board such a young and accomplished talent.”

A native of Washington, D.C., Lees holds bachelors and master's degrees from the University of Michigan. His primary conducting mentors are Robert Spano and Larry Rachleff.

About the Charlotte Symphony

Founded in 1932 and led by internationally renowned Music Director Christopher Warren-Green, the Charlotte Symphony is a non-profit organization that serves the community through music that educates, entertains, and enriches the human spirit. We are world-class musicians, music teachers, and music lovers. We put violins in the hands of Charlotte's children and actively nurture the next generation with our music education programs. We bring artistic excellence to Charlotte's parks and hospitals, schools and places of worship, stadiums and concert halls. The Charlotte Symphony is a cornerstone of the cultural community, connecting people and adding value to their lives through music. charlottesymphony.org

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