



## **ROBERT FRANZ**

### **Associate Conductor**

Recognized as “an outstanding musician with profound intelligence,” Robert Franz currently serves as associate conductor of the Houston Symphony, music director of the Windsor Symphony Orchestra and Fairbanks Summer Arts Festival Orchestra, and newly appointed artistic advisor of the Boise Baroque Orchestra. Throughout his career, he has striven for the highest artistic standards, built bridges in many communities, and maintained the strongest commitment to music education.

This season, Robert celebrates his 12<sup>th</sup> year as associate conductor of the Houston Symphony. He recently became the first member of the orchestra’s conducting staff to be honored with the Raphael Fliegel Award for Visionary Leadership, which recognizes his success in advancing the organization’s education and community engagement activities. He has positively impacted student concert attendance during his tenure and has led a broad range of creative, educational, and engaging family concerts, including the Houston Symphony’s Summer Neighborhood Concert Series.

Composer Bright Sheng has praised Franz for his “extremely musical and passionate approach towards music making,” and Robert is in increasing demand as a guest conductor. Upcoming and recent engagements include appearances with the Austin Symphony Orchestra, Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra, Winston-Salem Symphony, Reno Chamber Orchestra, and Opera Idaho. Additional recent guest conducting appearances include The Cleveland Orchestra, Baltimore Symphony Orchestra, St. Louis Symphony, and Italy’s Orchestra da Camera Fiorentina, among others. His versatility has led to collaborations with a wide array of artists, including James Galway, Joshua Bell, Rachel Barton Pine, Chris Botti, Idina Menzel, and Judy Collins.

Robert is equally comfortable and effective coaching more than 50 student orchestras each season. An eloquent speaker, he recently presented a TEDx Talk titled *Active Listening and Our Perception of Time*. His work with the acclaimed Bolton Research Project led the way to his commitment to the art of active listening. Under his direction, both the Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra, where he received the BPO/ECMEA Music Award for Excellence, and the Louisville Orchestra were awarded ASCAP’s Leonard Bernstein Award for Educational Programming. The Louisville Orchestra’s award led to the creation of an education program for Kentucky Educational Television entitled *Creating Music and Stories*.

When he’s not on the podium, Robert can be found skiing slowly and carefully on the slopes, stretching in yoga class, and playing card games with his family.