**PRESS RELEASE**

San Bernardino Symphony Association

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**Lacerda to be new SBSO Assistant Conductor**

Raphaela Lacerda has joined the growing staff of the San Bernardino Symphony Orchestra as Assistant Conductor. In this role, she will assist Maestro Anthony Parnther and Principal Guest Conductor Lesley Leighton by supervising stage management, coordinating with the Musician’s Librarian, providing support to guest artists, assisting at rehearsals and educational concerts, collaborating with Maestro Parnther on the planning and selection of themes, repertoire, and soloists, and acting as cover conductor for rehearsals, concerts, and other programs. She will also assist Executive Director Dr. Anne Viricel by managing the Symphony’s social media, researching and developing new projects, and assisting with mission advancement especially as it relates to education and outreach.

Explained Maestro Parnther, "The moment I became aware of Raphaela through her professor Christopher Russell, I immediately shared the footage with our Principal Guest Conductor, Lesley Leighton. We agreed that opening an opportunity for this young conductor to showcase her talent with the SBSO was the logical next step. From the moment Lacerda stepped onto the SBSO podium at the California Theatre, she demonstrated a command and professionalism rare for a musician her age. It was at this moment that I made the rare decision to take on an Assistant Conductor to mentor, and learn the ropes of what it really takes to run and grow a regional orchestra."

Shared Lacerda, "When I first heard the SBSO perform, I was blown away by the artistry and passion of the musicians. But it wasn't until I learned about the incredible work the SBSO has been doing over the last few years that I knew I had to be a part of it. The SBSO has continually grown in excellence under the direction of Maestro Anthony Parnther, and I am excited to bring my skills and experience to bear on its continued success.”

Born in São Paulo, Brazil, Lacerda has conducted prominent orchestras in Brazil and the United States, including the Minas Gerais Philharmonic Orchestra (OFMG), São Paulo State Symphony Orchestra (OSESP), São Paulo State Youth Orchestra (OJESP), Santo André Symphony Orchestra (OSSA), and San Bernardino Symphony Orchestra. She is the Assistant Conductor of the Diamond Youth Symphony Orchestra, and Musicians at Play Foundation. She also serves as Orchestra Director of the World Music Symphony Orchestra at Azusa Conservatory of Music.

In December of 2022, she conducted Bizet’s Farandole from L’Arlesienne Suite No. 2 to significant acclaim. But the experience, and those that have followed, have meant a great deal to her on a personal level.

“As someone who has witnessed the transformative power of music, I am honored to be part of an organization that significantly impacts the lives of the community members,” explained Lacerda. “Through outstanding performances, educational programs, outreach initiatives, and partnerships, the SBSO has become a vital cultural institution for the region, deeply committed to bringing music to people of all ages and backgrounds. One particular memory that stands out is last February's SBSO performance for over 2,500 students from the City of San Bernardino and the Upland unified school districts. As a former music student, I know firsthand the difference that exposure to professional orchestras can make in the lives of young people. The joy on the students' faces as they listened to the SBSO perform was truly heartwarming and reinforced my belief in the power of music to connect and inspire.”

In 2022, Lacerda worked closely with the three-time Grammy-nominated American composer Miguel Del Aguila, conducting his work "Toccata." In Del Aguila's words: "The performance was very energetic as she managed to keep the rhythmic and dramatic tension of the work forward. Her interpretation was personal and showed an unusual awareness of the overall architecture of the work. (...) She has that rare quality among conductors of getting a big sound and a dramatic response from the orchestra with spare but accurate and effective movements and directions."

Lacerda has refined her skills through a rigorous course of study and masterclasses with some of the most renowned conductors in the world. Her mentors have included Marin Alsop, Stefan Blunier, Cristian Macelaru, Giancarlo Guerrero, Robert Treviño, Neil Thomson, Jean-Marie Zeitouni, Sarah Ioannides, and Daisuke Soga, among others. Marin Alsop was particularly impressed with Lacerda's talent and invited her to join the Conducting Class of the São Paulo State Symphony Orchestra's Academy of Music.

Apart from her training, Lacerda has also achieved notable accomplishments in her career. In 2019, she was a finalist in the competition for Assistant Conductor of the Experimental Orchestra of Repertoire (OER) in São Paulo, Brazil. In addition, she has experience conducting ensembles of all sizes and styles, including orchestra, choral, wind ensemble, opera, film scores, chamber music, concertos, and contemporary music. Lacerda earned her Master's degree in Instrumental Conducting from Azusa Pacific University in 2023, where she studied under Professor Christopher Russell.

Shared Maestro Parnther, "Raphaela has an exciting future ahead of her as a conductor. It is my hope that her work with our orchestra will motivate young aspiring musicians, especially girls and Latin-Americans throughout our region, that they have a place in this kind of music making if they choose to pursue it."

Concluded Lacerda, “I am thrilled to join an organization that shares my passion for music and community impact. With my skills and experience, I am eager to contribute to the SBSO's continued success and growth. Maestro Parnther's leadership has set the stage for even greater achievements, and I look forward to being a part of the SBSO's journey towards musical excellence and community enrichment."

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**Cutline:**  Raphaela Lacerda has joined the staff of the San Bernardino Symphony Orchestra as Assistant Conductor.

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