

Immediate Release: August 20, 2020
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(Poughkeepsie, NY) The Bardavon/HVP was shocked and saddened today to learn that Randall Craig Fleischer, Maestro of the Hudson Valley Philharmonic, passed away suddenly Wednesday night at his home in Los Angeles. He was much loved by all who knew him and were fortunate enough to create music with him. He was the heart and soul of the HVP and we send deepest condolences to his family and to all those in this community who, like all at the Bardavon/HVP, are devastated by this loss.

Fleischer became music director of the Hudson Valley Philharmonic in 1992 and was a leading force in the classical music scene all over the United States. His charismatic personality and contagious love of music ignited orchestral brilliance in every concert he conducted.

He was an active guest conducting career with many major orchestras in the United States and internationally including repeat engagements with the Israel Philharmonic, Hong Kong Philharmonic, Los Angeles Philharmonic, San Francisco Symphony, Boston Pops, St. Paul Chamber Orchestra, Seattle Symphony, Utah Symphony, San Diego Symphony, Chamber Orchestra of Philadelphia, Houston Symphony and others.

Additionally, he was also music director of the Anchorage Symphony and Youngstown Symphony Orchestra.

Active as a composer, Mr. Fleischer was also a national leader in the area of symphonic rock and world music fusion. Pioneering these new and growing genres for more than 20 years, he had worked with artists such as John Densmore (The Doors), Natalie Merchant, Blondie, Ani DiFranco, John Cale (Velvet Underground), Garth Hudson (The Band) and Kenny Rogers. Mr. Fleischer's arrangements and orchestral works have been performed by major orchestras worldwide.

He also composed several new works focusing on the interrelationship of Native American music and culture and the symphonic realm. He collaborated with artists R. Carlos Nakai, Burning Sky, The Hawk Project and The Benaly Family. Mr. Fleischer's work "Triumph" premiered in Flagstaff, Arizona in 2005. His work "Echoes" premiered in Washington, D.C. in November of 2008 at the National Museum of the American Indian (Smithsonian). Fleischer's most recent work entitled "Symphony in Step" features the dance ensemble "Step Afrika" and is the first and only orchestral work featuring the African American dance tradition of "stepping."

Mr. Fleischer first came to international attention when, while serving his first of five years as assistant and then associate conductor of the National Symphony Orchestra (NSO), he conducted Dvorak's Cello Concerto with Mstislav Rostropovich as soloist during the NSO's 1990 tour of Japan and the U.S.S.R. Mr. Fleischer again had the honor of being chosen to accompany Maestro Rostropovich, once more conducting the NSO, this time in Lincoln Center's Avery Fisher Hall in a performance of Prokofiev's "Sinfonia Concertante" in celebration of the composer's birth. In December of 1992, he conducted an ensemble of over 70 cellists, including Yo-Yo Ma, and a 190-voice chorus in the Kennedy Center Awards tribute to Rostropovich, televised nationally on CBS, with President and Mrs. Bush presiding.

Mr. Fleischer studied with Leonard Bernstein as a conducting fellow at Tanglewood in 1989. He served as the assistant conductor of the American Symphony Orchestra from 1986 to 1989. While working toward his master of music at the Indiana University School of Music, he served as chorus master of the I.U. Opera Theater program from 1983 - 1985. Fleischer received his bachelor of music education from the Oberlin Conservatory of Music and has studied conducting privately with Otto Werner Mueller and in master class with Seiji Ozawa, Ricardo Muti, Gustav Meier and others.

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