

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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## **Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra extends JoAnn Falletta's contract as Music Director through 2029**

**Falletta to lead BPO in 30th concert season as Music Director**



*Photo by David Adam Beloff*

The Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra Society Inc. Board of Trustees is thrilled to announce a three-year contract extension for Music Director JoAnn Falletta, unanimously approved at their March meeting. This extension takes effect when Falletta's current term concludes at the end of the 2025-26 concert season, ensuring her leadership through the 2028-29 season. With this extension, Falletta will mark her 30th anniversary at the helm of the BPO in 2029.

Since becoming Music Director in 1999 as the first woman to lead a major American orchestra, Falletta has elevated the orchestra's national and international stature, steered it through periods of growth and challenge, and helped define Buffalo as a cultural destination. Reflecting on Falletta's visionary leadership, Board Chair Scott Stenlik remarked, "JoAnn is a treasure not only of the BPO,

but of all of Buffalo Niagara. Her stewardship since joining the BPO has been stellar, and her continued association positions the orchestra for greater artistic achievement and community impact."

Falletta shared her perspective: "It is amazing how one step forward in 1999 developed into a musical journey that is so deeply fascinating, enriching and beautiful. My time with the BPO is the most artistically satisfying period of my life, and living in this city and region is a joy. The musicians, the Board, my brilliant colleague Dan Hart and the staff have been a dream team, continuously raising our standard of excellence and celebrating the incredible community we love."

Pointing to the foundation that has made this journey possible, Falletta added, "The sustaining fabric of our work in Buffalo is the love of the people of this region, and the devotion of the extraordinary musicians who have come from all over the world to join our Buffalo Philharmonic and to work together to share great music for all people, in our city and beyond. It is truly an honor and the greatest joy to see the development and growth of an orchestra whose artistic level, imagination and character shine as a beacon of excellence in our country."

Throughout her tenure, Falletta has established herself and the BPO as cultural pillars of Western New York, forging a powerful legacy of musical excellence, innovation, and collaboration for the orchestra and the region through countless accomplishments and initiatives:

### **Artistic Excellence and Innovation**

- Premiering over 20 new orchestral works with the BPO, including numerous world premieres, and advancing the musical canon through commissioning over 10 new works for orchestra by notable composers such as Daron Hagen, Adolphus Hailstork, Wang Jie, and many others.
- Bringing the world's most renowned solo musicians—including Itzhak Perlman, Yo-Yo Ma, Lang Lang, and Renée Fleming—to perform with the BPO, allowing audiences to experience international talent and building connections between the artists and Buffalo.

### **Recording Achievements**

- Initiating the BPO's relationship with the Naxos record label, elevating its profile as a leading recording orchestra with 31 albums released internationally, resulting in two GRAMMY Awards and consecutive GRAMMY nominations in 2024 and 2025 for Best Orchestral Performance.
- Establishing Beau Fleuve Records with the orchestra in 1999, through which the BPO has independently produced an additional 31 albums, internationally available via digital streaming services in partnership with Naxos.

### **Touring and National Visibility**

- Leading the BPO in its first international tour in three decades (Poland), five successful tours of Florida, and three performances at Carnegie Hall.
- Expanding the orchestra's national reach through appearances on programs such as *Performance Today*, *SymphonyCast*, *From the Top*, and nationally broadcast specials on PBS and Sirius XM.

### **Community and Regional Engagement**

- Cultivating a robust partnership with Buffalo Toronto Public Media, resulting in local and national radio broadcasts of BPO performances, the popular "JoAnn's Classical Corner" program on BTPM Classical 94.5 FM, PBS' *Intimate Portrait* series, and the JoAnn Falletta International

Guitar Concerto Competition—the world's first classical guitar concerto competition performed with a full orchestra, leading to many premieres of new concertos for the instrument.

- Collaborating regularly with regional arts and educational institutions, including the Buffalo Philharmonic Chorus and the students, faculty, and alumni of SUNY Fredonia's School of Music and Canisius University, enriching local artistic and educational ecosystems.
- Heading benefit concerts and performances with regional arts and community organizations to raise awareness around social issues and provide aid to those in need.

### **Advocacy and Recognition**

- Actively championing, programming, mentoring, and advocating for underrepresented conductors, composers, and musicians.
- Receiving numerous honors, including ASCAP Awards, the MOLA Award for Outstanding Service to Music, the Dallas Symphony's Award of Excellence, and the International Conductor's Guild Max Rudolf Award for outstanding achievement as both a conductor and pedagogue.

BPO President and Executive Director Daniel Hart emphasized Falletta's enduring influence on the organization: "We all benefit from JoAnn's mission to consistently enhance the artistry of the orchestra and have a meaningful impact on our greater community. She has created an enviable and unique profile for the BPO amongst American orchestras, and her dedication to recording and releasing albums of important orchestral works makes our impact global."

Looking ahead, Falletta expressed her commitment to building a sustainable future for the orchestra: "I personally will be dedicating myself with our team to strengthening our Buffalo Philharmonic artistically, and to creating a legacy of support that will ensure that our beloved BPO will be here to bring beauty and inspiration to many generations to come. Together, we are the stewards of an incomparable treasure: our Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra."

Visit [joannfalletta.com](http://joannfalletta.com) for Falletta's full biography. Images are available at [joannfalletta.com/press](http://joannfalletta.com/press) and [bpo.org/image-archive](http://bpo.org/image-archive). For interviews, additional images, or video, contact [sviola@bpo.org](mailto:sviola@bpo.org).



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