

January 21–23, 2022

ROMP & REPOSE

OSO
OKANAGAN SYMPHONY
ORCHESTRA
ROSEMARY THOMSON, MUSIC DIRECTOR

A Change on the Podium

MESSAGE FROM MUSIC DIRECTOR ROSEMARY THOMSON

“Over the past few days I have fallen quite ill and for the first time in my career, I have had to take myself off of a performance. This is within our safety protocols and the best decision to keep our musicians and our audience safe and allow us to continue performing. Needless to say, it is a very disappointing decision and I will miss making music this weekend with my wonderful colleagues.

“I am very grateful and delighted to share with you that Rolf Bertsch has generously agreed to step in for me and conduct this weekend. Rolf has a wonderful connection to the OSO. His father, Willem Bertsch was the OSO’s very first conductor more than sixty years ago. He is a fantastic musician and I know that the performances will be spectacular. I look forward to join many of you in watching the

Livestream and I wish all of my OSO colleagues, and especially our three soloists this weekend all the best for three great performances.”

Rosemary

HAILED FOR HIS PASSION and natural musicianship by critics, audiences, and musicians alike, Rolf Bertsch was appointed Assistant Conductor of the Orchestre symphonique de Montréal by Charles Dutoit in January 2000 and named Conductor in Residence for the 2002-2005 seasons. He has had



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an impressive reputation as conductor, pianist, communicator, teacher and adjudicator. His career has spanned a wide spectrum of musical experience and styles and has taken him to Europe, Asia, and throughout North and South America.

Rolf Bertsch’s career took an important turn when in September 1997 he was named Resident Conductor of the Calgary Philharmonic Orchestra, his highly successful tenure in this position spanning from 1998-2001.

In June 2000, Mr. Bertsch was invited to conduct the National Arts Centre Orchestra in Ottawa in its “Great Composers” series in Beethoven’s Triple Concerto with Pinchas Zukerman, Amanda Forsyth and Andrew Burashko as soloists. This collaboration was repeated with the OSM in September 2001, this time with Louis Lortie as pianist, and again in 2004 at the NAC with Janina Fialkowska at the piano. Rolf Bertsch has worked with such renowned artists as Jon Kimura Parker, Stewart Goodyear, Yo-Yo Ma, Marc Hervieux, Alessandra Marc, Daniel Binelli, André Laplante, Janina Fialkowska, Nicolaj Znaider, Marc-André Hamelin, Richard Raymond, Chantal Juillet, James Ehnes, Marie-Nicole Lemieux, Tracy Dahl, Aline Kutan, Renaud Capuçon, Benjamin Schmid, Neil Cockburn, Diana Cohen, and Los Romeros.

Mr. Bertsch began his musical studies on the violin and went on to study piano, cello, composition, jazz, and conducting with such teachers as Leon Fleisher, Dorothy Morton, Armas Maiste, James Dick, Helena Costa, Uri Mayer, Raffi Armenian, and Gustav Meier. In his years in Montreal and Calgary he worked extensively with Charles Dutoit and Hans Graf as well as with many visiting artists. He holds diplomas from a number of prestigious institutions including McGill University, the Mozarteum (Salzburg), the Conservatoire de musique du Québec (Montréal), the Folkwang Hochschule (Essen, Germany), and Phillips Academy (Andover, Massachusetts).

Rolf Bertsch has conducted most of the orchestras in Canada including those of Montreal, Toronto, Calgary, Edmonton, Québec, Kitchener-Waterloo, Windsor, Nova Scotia, and the Okanagan.

Despite his demanding schedule as a teacher, producer, consultant, and adjudicator, he continues to be an active performer. He is in his fourteenth season as Artistic Director and Conductor of the Calgary Civic Symphony. He appears frequently as soloist, in recital and chamber music.