



# MEMPHIS SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

MEI-ANN CHEN, MUSIC DIRECTOR

**For Immediate Release**

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## **Three young winners chosen in MSO conducting competition**

*Contestants will share podium at October concert*

**MEMPHIS, TN** — Young conductors from Hong Kong, Boston and New York took top honors in the first Memphis International Conducting Competition, which ended today. The three will share \$11,500 in cash prizes as well as the opportunity to conduct the Memphis Symphony Orchestra once more in a concert next October.

First-place prize went to Ken Lam, who set aside a law career to pursue his love of music and conducting. He is assistant conductor of the Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra.

Roger Kalia, a native of New York and music director of the Columbus (Indiana) Symphony, took the second prize, and Aram Demijrian, a conducting student at the New England Conservatory, won third place. The three will conduct pieces by Dvorak, Hindemith and Ravel respectively in October.

The winners also won cash awards: \$7,500 for first place, \$3,000 for second and \$1,000 for third. Ten contestants were selected from 236 applications representing 35 countries and 30 states in the U.S. The competition included three rounds over two days.

“We want to thank all the contestants, who did a fine job, and we congratulate the three finalists,” said Ryan Fleur, President and CEO of the Memphis Symphony. “We wanted to discover new conducting talent and we were tremendously successful in doing so.”

Since 1952, the Memphis Symphony Orchestra has created meaningful experiences through music in the Mid-South. More than 400 musicians, staff and volunteers comprise the Memphis Symphony Orchestra, Memphis Symphony Chorus and the Memphis Symphony League, conducting educational programs, community engagement events and concerts.

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