



## Civic Orchestra of Tucson

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### Baton Passes at Civic Orchestra of Tucson after 38 Years

TUCSON, AZ (April 5, 2018) — The Board of Directors of the Civic Orchestra of Tucson (COT) announces the appointment of Charles Bontrager as its next Music Director.

Mr. Bontrager becomes just the third Music Director of the Civic Orchestra of Tucson in its forty-two year history. Dr. Herschel Kreloff, Music Director since 1980, resigns at the end of this concert season after leading the orchestra for thirty-eight years. He will turn 87 years old in May.

In early December, Dr. Kreloff invited Mr. Bontrager to be the Guest Conductor of its next four concerts with Chris Tackett conducting two Pops concerts in the spring. After rehearsing and performing under Bontrager for several months, the orchestra members whole-heartedly supported his appointment and are honored to have him as our next Music Director.

Mr. Bontrager comes to the podium with nearly thirty years of experience as a conductor of symphony and opera throughout the world. After moving to Tucson in 2001, he led the orchestra at Flowing Wells High School, then took on the post of Assistant Director of Orchestral Activities at the University of Arizona.

Both Kreloff and Bontrager share a passion for music education, having both taught in Arizona public schools. When asked what he would miss most after stepping down from the podium, Kreloff immediately mentioned the orchestra's Young Artist's Competition, now in its 34<sup>th</sup> season. Kreloff's favorite composer is Mozart, although he has conducted works, some world premieres, by 160 composers during his long tenure.

Mr. Bontrager is pleased to join the COT family, praising its members for their commitment and willingness to work hard. He looks forward to beginning the next chapter of the Civic Orchestra of Tucson.

The orchestra will dedicate its May 6 "Pops in the Park" concert to Dr. Kreloff.

The Civic Orchestra of Tucson is a 65-member, all-volunteer community orchestra dedicated to performing free concerts throughout the greater Tucson area since 1975. For more information about the orchestra, Dr. Herschel, and Mr. Bontrager, visit [www.COTmusic.org](http://www.COTmusic.org).

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The Civic Orchestra of Tucson's 2017–2018 season is supported in part by the Arizona Commission on the Arts, which receives support from the State of Arizona and the National Endowment for the Arts.