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## PEOPLE IN THE NEWS

### Savannah Phil Names New Music Director

July 24, 2019 | By [Taylor Grant](#), *Musical America*



Keitaro Harada is to be the new music and artistic director for the Savannah Philharmonic Orchestra (SPO). He will serve as director designate for the 2019-2020 season, and assume his responsibilities full-time beginning with the 2020-2021 season. Although a native of Tokyo, Harada graduated from Mercer University in Macon, GA.

He succeeds SPO founding artistic director Peter Shannon, who announced his resignation in 2018 and was to complete the 2018-2019 season, but [left suddenly last February](#). Although Harada was not on the search committee's original list of candidates, he was added after filling in for one of the concerts that Shannon was to have conducted.

"It was really just a love at first sight moment," Harada told *The Savannah Morning News*. "The rehearsal process was great and the concert itself was well received and

very exciting." Harada is finishing his fourth season as associate conductor of the Cincinnati Symphony and Cincinnati Pops, and has upcoming engagements with, among others, the Houston, NHK, Indianapolis, and Tokyo symphonies, as well as the Sofia National Opera & Ballet and New Japan Philharmonic.

Harada has won three Solti Foundation U.S. Career Assistance awards and the Seiji Ozawa conducting fellowship at Tanglewood; teachers include Lorin Maazel and Fabio Luisi.

"My professional career started 14 years ago in Georgia [with the Macon Symphony]," Harada said in a statement. "I couldn't be more excited that fate has brought me back to Georgia."



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