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The London Symphony Orchestra (LSO) has announced that François-Xavier Roth will become its principal guest conductor from September 2017.

He will replace Daniel Harding, who is stepping down after ten years in the role, joining the LSO's family of conductors which, from the 2017/18 season, will comprise Sir Simon Rattle as music director; Gianandrea Noseda as a fellow principal guest conductor; Michael Tilson Thomas as conductor laureate; André Previn as conductor emeritus; and assistant conductor Niklas Hoffmann. Kathryn McDowell, the LSO's managing director, said that the appointment was testament 'to a real commitment to the LSO's work from early in François-Xavier's career'.

Roth's relationship with the LSO began in 2000, when he conducted the orchestra in the Donatella Flick Conducting Competition. He won, and as a result became the LSO's assistant conductor. He has worked with the LSO at every Barbican season since, has been closely involved in the Orchestra's Panufnik Composers Scheme since it launched in 2006, and has worked extensively with LSO Discovery.

In 2018 he will lead the LSO in a three-concert series marking the centenary of the death of Claude Debussy. The concerts will explore Debussy's oeuvre in the context of the composers who influenced him, as well as looking at his influence on the those who came after him.

Roth, who founded the period instrument ensemble Les Siècles in 2003, is currently general music director of the City of Cologne, involving duties as the chief conductor of the Gürzenich Orchestra Cologne and the Cologne Opera. Previous roles include principal conductor of the SWR Sinfonieorchester Freiburg & Baden-Baden (2011-16), associate guest conductor of the BBC National Orchestra of Wales (2008-2012) and music director of the Orchestre Philharmonique de Liège

(2009/10)

Expressing his 'immense honour' and 'deep joy' at the invitation, Roth said: 'I have always had the greatest admiration for this Orchestra. It is one of the great orchestras of the world, and their incomparable energy for making music has been an extraordinary source of inspiration for me.

'I am looking forward to the many musical adventures that we will take on together and excited by the dialogue already begun with the musicians themselves and of course with Sir Simon Rattle, alongside whom it is a great privilege to work with this fabulous ensemble.

'17 years after having been their assistant conductor as a result of the Donatella Flick Conducting Competition, and conducting each year since numerous concerts with them, it is a particular thrill to strike up this new phase with the marvellous LSO.'

http://www.rhinegold.co.uk/classical_music/lso-appoints-francois-xavier-roth-principal-guest-conductor/