Acclaimed Pianist and Conductor Jeffrey Kahane Named a Professor at the USC Thornton School of Music

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Jeffrey Kahane, the acclaimed pianist and music director of the Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra (LACO), will join the USC Thornton School of Music faculty part time in fall 2015 during his final two years with LACO, becoming a full-time professor after he steps down from his LACO post in 2017. He will be transitioning to music director laureate at LACO after a 20-year run, the longest of any music director in the ensemble’s history. This appointment ensures he will remain a musical force in Los Angeles for years to come.

Officials from USC Thornton and LACO made the joint announcement today that Kahane will join the keyboard studies department to teach piano as well as other classes.

“Jeffrey is an important addition to the USC Thornton faculty as we continue to assemble what we believe to be the strongest music faculty in the world,” said Robert Cutietta, dean of USC Thornton. “He has such a strong humanities background that he will be a diverse and strong addition to our school. The sky is the limit on what might evolve.”

Kahane said he was “deeply honored to join the immensely distinguished faculty” of USC Thornton and said he is “profoundly grateful for their warm and enthusiastic welcome and support.”

Kahane said that a commitment to education has been a central part of his musical life for more than two decades. “I am thrilled to have an opportunity to expand and deepen that commitment at this great institution with its extraordinarily rich history,” he said. “I look forward especially to being able
to share with young musicians as well as students from other disciplines my passion for the pursuit of the study of music in the broadest possible intellectual, ethical and spiritual context.”

LACO executive director Rachel Fine, who also serves as an adjunct instructor in USC’s Arts Leadership program, said: “The Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra is delighted that Jeffrey has been appointed to the USC Thornton School of Music faculty and is pleased that his appointment will further expand the orchestra’s partnerships with this great music school.”

Kahane’s appointment grew out of the increasingly active partnership between LACO and USC Thornton. Many LACO musicians, including concertmaster Margaret Batjer, principal cellist Andrew Shulman and principal oboe Allan Vogel, among others, are professors at USC Thornton. The school’s premier choral ensemble, the USC Thornton Chamber Singers, regularly partners with LACO to perform works for the orchestra’s regular subscription series.

LACO is also a close collaborator in producing the Piatigorsky International Cello Festival every four years and together with USC Thornton has created The Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra - Thornton Strings Mentorship Program, a mock orchestral audition that provides the hands-on experience of a professional orchestra audition. The program has provided USC Thornton students the opportunity to perform in the string section of the orchestra for a LACO concert set.

[Image of Jeffrey Kahane. Credit: Colorado Symphony Orchestra]

About Jeffrey Kahane

Equally at home at the keyboard or on the podium, Los Angeles native Jeffrey Kahane has established an international reputation as a truly versatile artist, recognized around the world for his mastery of diverse repertoire ranging from Bach, Mozart and Beethoven to Gershwin, Golijov and John Adams. Now in his 18th season as music director of the Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra, he previously served as music director of the Colorado and Santa Rosa symphonies. He has garnered tremendous critical acclaim for his innovative programming and commitment to education and community involvement and received multiple ASCAP Awards for Adventurous Programming for his work in both Los Angeles and Denver.

About Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra

The Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra is considered one of the world’s premier chamber orchestras as well as a leader in presenting wide-ranging repertoire and adventurous commissions. Its 2014-15 season, the orchestra’s 46th, features a compelling mix of beloved masterpieces and genre-defying premieres from firmly established and notable up-and-coming composers programmed by music director Kahane.

About the USC Thornton School of Music

For more than 125 years, the USC Thornton School of Music has prepared students to excel as performers, composers, industry leaders and educators on stages and in studios around the world. Founded in 1884 and today the oldest continually operating cultural institution in Los Angeles, USC Thornton is internationally recognized as one of the finest conservatories and music schools in the U.S. By blending the rigors of a traditional conservatory-style education with the benefits of a leading research university, USC Thornton offers a curriculum designed to prepare students for successful careers in the 21st century.