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GOLDEN STATE YOUTH ORCHESTRA ANNOUNCES NEW MUSIC DIRECTOR STARTING IN 2019-2020 SEASON

(Palo Alto, CA - March 18, 2019) Maestro Jindong Cai will be stepping down from the role of Music Director at the beginning of the 2019/20 season. John Eells, Conductor of the Sinfonietta, will assume the role of Music Director beginning in July 2019, while Maestro Cai will move into the role of Artistic Advisor. Maestro Cai will lead the 2019 Symphony's Baltic Tour this summer to Sweden, Finland and Russia. The Maestros will share conducting duties at Symphony for the 2019/20 season.

Cai, the ninth music director of Golden State Youth Orchestra since its founding in 1963, has been recently tapped to direct the newly formed US-China Music Institute of the Bard College Conservatory of Music, in New York, in addition to being named Professor of Music and Arts. A noted expert in Western and Chinese classical music, Cai is a leading advocate of music from across Asia. The Institute is the first of its kind in the US, and was created in partnership with the Central Conservatory of Music in Beijing.

Maestro Cai passed this along to our students: "It has indeed been a great honor to work with such hard-working young musicians over the past six years, from ECYS to GSYO. I am deeply grateful and I could not be more proud of what we have achieved. Music has brought us together and music has taken us to the world. Always remember what Beethoven said: 'Music is a higher revelation than all wisdom and philosophy. Music is the electrical soil in which the spirit lives, thinks and invents.'"

John Eells, the Conductor of the GSYO Sinfonietta, received his undergraduate degree from York University in England and completed his graduate work in Conducting and French horn at the Royal Academy of Music in London.

Before moving to the Bay area in 2013, Mr. Eells was the founding Music Director of Connecticut's Farmington Valley Symphony Orchestra, which he directed from 1981 until 2013, and the Rhode Island Philharmonic Community Orchestra, which he led from 2006 - 2013. In 2006 the FVSO celebrated its 25th anniversary with a performance at New York's Carnegie Hall.

"I am thrilled and honored to be chosen to lead the GSYO as its tenth Music Director," enthused Mr. Eells. "I look forward to working with our talented students in the Senior Symphony and Sinfonietta orchestras, as well as working alongside our conductors, coaches,



faculty and staff across all ensembles to ensure we offer a challenging, educating and enjoyable experience for all of our young musicians.”

A passionate music educator, Mr. Eells began his long tenure as Music Director at Miss Porter’s School in 1981 where he directed their three choruses, two instrumental ensembles and an annual musical and taught classes in music theory, music appreciation, and music history. He was a frequent high school and middle school festival conductor for the Connecticut Music Educator Association and was selected to conduct the New England High School Festival Orchestra in 2003, 2011 and 2017. He also was a regular judge of high school and college concerto and vocal competitions including the Hartford Symphony Orchestra’s Young Artists Competition and the University of Connecticut’s annual Concerto Competition.

“I would like to thank and acknowledge the great work Jindong has achieved in transforming the performance standard of ECYS/GSYO to highest national acclaim, and the inspiration he has created for so many of our students. We wish him good fortune with his expanding international career going forwards,” said Richard Cliff, GSYO Board President. “I am delighted that John has agreed to take on the Music Director role. Over the last four years he has elevated the Sinfonietta orchestra to the highest standards, and I look forward to his leadership across the entire organization for next chapter of GSYO’s exciting future.”

“Maestro Cai and I have been working on an exciting program for next year’s Senior Symphony and I am close to finalizing plans for Sinfonietta,” stated Eells. “I look forward to continued growth for all of our ensembles as we work together to solidify our place as one of the country’s premiere youth orchestra programs.”