

ROBERT KAHN - conductor

Dutch-American conductor **Robert Kahn** is establishing a growing international career across both the symphonic and operatic repertoire. In the 2026/27 season, he takes up two significant new positions in the United States: **Assistant Conductor of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra** and **Music Director of the Great Falls Symphony in Montana**.

Kahn was appointed Assistant Conductor of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra by a majority decision of the CSO musicians. During the 2026/27 season, he works closely with the orchestra across selected subscription weeks, including weeks with music director designate **Klaus Mäkelä**. Kahn conducts the Civic Orchestra of Chicago, leads CSO youth concerts and conducts the finals of the Crain-Maling Foundation CSO Young Artists Competition.

His relationship with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra builds on previous work with the ensemble, including serving as cover conductor and assisting **Jaap van Zweden** during the orchestra's 2025 European tour. Kahn has also developed close working relationships with several of North America's leading orchestras. He has served as cover conductor for the **New York Philharmonic** and **The Philadelphia Orchestra** for multiple seasons, and in 2024 joined the New York Philharmonic on tours to Vail and Asia.

A formative artistic influence has been **Yannick Nézet-Séguin**, with whom Kahn studied as a Conducting Fellow at the **Curtis Institute of Music** in Philadelphia. In 2024, Kahn assisted Nézet-Séguin and the Rotterdam Philharmonic Orchestra on their major European tour of Wagner's *Die Walküre*.

Alongside his symphonic work, opera forms an important part of Kahn's artistic profile. In March 2026 he made his debut with **Dutch National Opera**, conducting Hannah Kendall's *The Knife of Dawn* as part of the Opera Forward Festival in Amsterdam. **OperaWire** praised the performance for its "*vibrant and dramatically urgent rendition*". Kahn was on the musical staff with the **Academy of Vocal Arts in Philadelphia**, where he conducted performances of Mozart's *Così fan tutte* and worked closely with singers and creative teams on a wide range of repertoire. Other operatic work includes *Don Giovanni* with Music On Site and projects with Opera Philadelphia.

Kahn's repertoire and experience span a broad range of styles, from the central symphonic and operatic repertoire to contemporary music. His work is characterised by a combination of musical clarity, stylistic versatility and a strong collaborative approach to working with orchestras, singers and creative teams. He is a recipient of the **Solti Foundation U.S. Career Assistance Award**.

In May 2026, following an extensive two-year international search, Kahn was appointed Music Director of the Great Falls Symphony. More than 230 conductors applied for the position, from whom six finalists were invited to spend a week with the orchestra, culminating in a subscription concert. Kahn was subsequently selected to lead the orchestra and begins his tenure in the 2026/27 season.

Born and raised in the Netherlands, Kahn began his musical training as a clarinetist. He holds bachelor's degrees in Physics from Johns Hopkins University and Clarinet from the Peabody Conservatory, an unusual combination that continues to inform his analytical approach to music and conducting. He subsequently studied orchestral conducting at the Mannes School of Music in New York before completing the prestigious Conducting Fellowship at the Curtis Institute of Music in 2022 under the mentorship of Yannick Nézet-Séguin.

The 2026/27 season also marks an increasing presence in Kahn's native Netherlands. At the end of August, he returns to Amsterdam as cover conductor to Jaap van Zweden and the **Seoul Philharmonic Orchestra** for two concerts at the Concertgebouw. In September, Kahn leads **Philzuid** in a series of four *PhilSurround* performances, conducting music by Verdi, Beethoven, Rimsky-Korsakov and Tchaikovsky. The concerts place conductor, orchestra and audience together in an immersive configuration, with the audience seated among the musicians.

Robert Kahn is represented by Domselaer Artist Management in the Benelux.