



Sylvia Alimena

Conductor

Sylvia Alimena, a hornist with the National Symphony Orchestra, also has an active conducting schedule throughout the area as music director and conductor of the Eclipse Chamber Orchestra, Brass of Peace, and the McLean Orchestra. A native of Long Island, New York, she began playing the French horn in the Hicksville Public Schools at the age of nine. When she began private lessons at age fifteen, she was awarded a full scholarship to study privately with Arthur E. Goldstein, formerly of the Chicago Symphony. Ms. Alimena continued her musical studies at Boston University and was a pupil of Harry Shapiro of the Boston Symphony. In 1981, she was a first place winner of the Boston University Concerto Aria Competition, and in the summer of that year was awarded a fellowship at the Tanglewood Music Center.

In 1980, Ms. Alimena began her professional career in Boston as a member of the Boston Ballet Orchestra, the Boston Pops Esplanade Orchestra, and the Beacon Brass Quintet, and as Principal horn of the Boston Lyric Opera and the New Hampshire Symphony. She was critically acclaimed for her solo and offstage playing in the Boston Lyric Opera's 1983 New York and Boston productions of Wagner's *Das Ring Des Nibelungen*. In November of that year, the Beacon Brass Quintet made its Carnegie Hall debut as the only brass quintet ever to win the coveted Concert Artists Guild Award.

After spending one year in the Utah Symphony under the baton of Joseph Silverstein, Ms. Alimena arrived in Washington in the fall of 1985 to take the post of second horn of the National Symphony Orchestra. Her conducting career began in January of 1990 when she was asked to take over the helm of Brass of Peace, a scholarship program for talented high school musicians. Among its many concerts, Brass of Peace performs 5-6 free in-school concerts for children of the District of Columbia each year. The 2005-2006 season will mark her sixteenth season as music director of Brass of Peace. Now in her fourteenth season as music director of the critically acclaimed Eclipse Chamber Orchestra, a chamber orchestra composed of 22 National Symphony Orchestra members, Ms. Alimena has conducted several world premiere performances including the ensemble's commissioned works *Late Victorians* (1995) and *Alcott Portraits* (1999), by Composer-In-Residence Mark Adamo; and *Morning Music* (1996), *Concertino for Horn* (2001), *Fanfare* (2002) and *Concertino for Flute* (2002) by Composer-In-Residence Truman Harris. Ms Alimena has conducted two critically acclaimed Washington premieres: John Adam's *Chamber Symphony No. 1* and *Tango* by Juan Orengo-Salas. Eclipse Chamber Orchestra will be recording music of Mark Adamo, Truman Harris, Domenico Cimarosa and Florian Gassmann on the Naxos of America label.

Aside from her preconcert lecture series with the Eclipse Chamber Orchestra, Sylvia has appeared as a guest lecturer in many settings. She has lectured with her NSO colleagues on The NSO "Meet The Performers" dinner/lecturer series and has lectured in many of our 50 states as part of the American Residency Programs jointly sponsored by the National Symphony Orchestra and Kennedy Center.

Ms. Alimena has appeared as guest conductor of the University of Maryland Symphony Orchestra, the Peabody Symphony and has conducted a series of "National Symphony Orchestra In Your Neighborhood" concerts with the Eclipse Chamber Orchestra on behalf of the National Symphony Orchestra. In 1999, she was the backstage conductor for an Aspen production of the final act of *Die Gotterdammerung* with James Conlon conducting as well as on-stage auxiliary conductor for a production of *Wozzeck* also with James Conlon conducting. Ms. Alimena also recently completed nine years as music director and conductor of the Friday Morning Music Club Orchestra with a performance of music from Wagner's *Das Ring des Nibelungen* as part of the Wagner Society/Smithsonian Institute "Epic Ring" seminar.

Her conducting teachers include Franz Welser-Moest, Music Director of The Cleveland Orchestra, Murry Sidlin and David Zinman at the Aspen Music Festival, Gunther Schuller at the Sandpoint Music Festival and Marin Alsop and Gustav Meier at the Cabrillo Festival.

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