

Vladimir Kulenovic Joins Brushwood Center at Ryerson Woods as Director of Music and Wellness



Vladimir Kulenovic.

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RIVERWOODS, IL -- Brushwood Center at Ryerson Woods welcomes Vladimir Kulenovic as Director of Music and Wellness. Kulenovic has served as Music Director of the Lake Forest Symphony and his previous accolades include "Conductor of the Year" by The Illinois Council of Orchestras, "Chicagoan of the Year in Classical Music" by The Chicago Tribune, and winner of The Sir Georg Solti Conducting Award.

Kulenovic will lead the Brushwood Center's new Music and Nature initiative, opening the power of music as an artistic outlet, a means of connecting to the natural world, and a pathway to healing amidst the Covid-19 pandemic.

"The source of music is to be found in nature, and therefore all of our work as musicians is an inseparable extension of nature. To work at Brushwood is to work closest to this source, and to share a purposeful journey with admirable colleagues who inspire creativity and joy!

Together, we bring music and nature together to those who need it most," expresses Kulenovic.

Kulenovic will be featured in a special virtual musical performance with Multi Grammy Award nominee and violinist Philippe Quint at Brushwood Center's culminating Smith Nature Symposium Awards Ceremony on October 9th. These two artists will perform a rendition of Jules Massenet's soulful "Meditation" from the opera *Thaïs*, a beautifully passionate piece in which a solo violin takes the main stage. It will be performed directly from Brushwood Center at the heart of Ryerson Woods as a calming tribute to nature in the midst of COVID-19.

"Vladimir is an internationally-renowned musician and conductor, and we are beyond thrilled that he will be leading Brushwood's music and nature initiative. It is a gift to work in concert with such extraordinary talent, and together, we can merge the restorative experiences of music and nature for the public," says Catherine Game, Executive Director of Brushwood Center at Ryerson Woods.

Kulenovic, a Serbian native who came to the U.S. when he was 12 years old, has developed into one of the finest and most imaginative conductors of his generation. In his fifth season as the Music Director of the Lake Forest Symphony (LFS), Kulenovic energized unprecedented growth in the symphony's 60-year history, earning the orchestra a Grammy Nomination for their first-ever commercial CD recording "Liquid Melancholy" (2018 Cedille Records). Before his highly successful leadership at the LFS, Kulenovic was the Associate Conductor of the Utah Symphony at the Utah Opera and Assistant Conductor of the Chicago Lyric Opera. Kulenovic has been featured as a guest conductor across the United States and for dozens of symphonies in Europe and Asia. Notably, he served as principal conductor of the Kyoto International Music Festival in Japan. Kulenovic earned his graduate

diploma in conducting from both The Juilliard School and the Peabody Institute.

Kawai Pianos and Family Pianos Co. are Brushwood Center's featured sponsors for the new music and nature program, and they have generously underwritten the Center's new pianos, which will be housed at Brushwood and used for live-streamed music programs like the Smith Nature Symposium. Brushwood Center is thrilled to be partnering with such charitable sponsors that share the center's enthusiasm for bringing music to the community.

To register for the Smith Nature Symposium visit www.smithnaturesymposium.org (<http://www.smithnaturesymposium.org>).

All funds raised from the Symposium will directly support Thrive Together, Brushwood Center's COVID-19 crisis response for a more just and sustainable future. All presentations will be available in English and Spanish.

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