

With energy, imagination, and a passion for people, American conductor Rachel Waddell proves an unabashed advocate for the 21st century orchestra. Her leadership across the country demonstrates her innate ability to transform vision into action. Rachel believes by uplifting, celebrating, and reflecting the artistry of our neighbors, orchestras become the creative heartbeat of our communities. Through breathtaking collaborations and an untiring dedication to education, mentorship, and community, Rachel inspires transformative experiences and ensembles.

Rachel is honored to be a Music Director Finalist for the Mid-Columbia Symphony and looks forward to working with them in curating an unforgettable experience for the Tri-Cities. She serves as the Director of Orchestras at Colorado State University and the Music Director of the Longmont Youth Symphony. She is a popular clinician and guest conductor throughout the country; her contributions to music education were recognized when she was named a Quarterfinalist for the 2025 Music Educator Award through the Grammys. She conducted the Texas Music Educators Association All State Sinfonietta Orchestra in 2025, and the AA Montana Festival Orchestra in Helena in 2024. Previously she was the Director of Orchestral Activities with the Arthur Satz Department of Music at the University of Rochester in New York. Her work with the UR Orchestras gained recognition as a two-time national winner for the American Prize's Vytautas Marijosius Memorial Award in Orchestral Programming in 2019 and 2020. As a highlight of Rachel's interdisciplinary and multimedia concerts, the UR Orchestras achieved international acclaim in collaboration with conductor Tiffany Chang and Oberlin Conservatory through a digital performance of Beethoven's Choral Fantasy, named Best Instrumental Performance of 2021 by the LIT Talent Awards.

Rachel maintains a busy profile in the professional and academic worlds. She has conducted orchestras around the world including the Orchestre Métropolitain, the Rochester, Las Vegas, Fort Wayne, and Denver Philharmonics, the Greater Bridgeport Symphony, the Southwest Michigan Symphony Orchestra, and Cleveland's Suburban Symphony. While serving as the Associate Conductor of the Canton Symphony Orchestra in Ohio, Rachel conducted over 80 performances of classical, pops, and education concerts. She has attended numerous conducting programs including the Dallas Opera's prestigious Hart Institute for Women Conductors, and Mark Shapiro's Conducting Intensive at Juilliard. In August 2022 she made her Vienna debut conducting *Così fan tutte* as part of the Vienna Opera Academy. In July 2023 she made her Canadian debut with the Orchestre Métropolitain, after being selected to conduct by Yannick Nézet-Séguin at Le Domaine Forget de Charlevoix.

Rachel's interest in the constantly evolving role and responsibility of orchestras within their communities led her to co-found Conductors for Change, Inc., a 501(c)(3) for anyone reimagining the future of the American orchestra. Rachel holds a Bachelor of Music in Composition from the Hartt School of Music and a Doctor of Musical Arts in Orchestra Conducting from the University of Nevada, Las Vegas.

To learn more about Rachel Waddell please visit www.rachelwaddellconductor.com or follow her on Instagram @rachel_waddell_conductor .