



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

January 11, 2023

ASO CONTACT: Ashley Mirakian, ashley.mirakian@atlantasymphony.org

**ATLANTA SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA NAMES INAUGURAL ASO FELLOWSHIP MUSICIANS
Jordan Johnson, Bass Trombone, and Joshua Williams, Tuba Begin Fellowship in 2023**

ATLANTA – The **Atlanta Symphony Orchestra** is pleased to announce the first class of ASO Orchestral Fellows, **Jordan Milek Johnson**, bass trombone, of Acworth, GA, and **Joshua Williams**, tuba, of Atlanta, GA.

“The ASO is committed to helping change the future face of the American orchestra,” said **Jennifer Barlament, ASO Executive Director**. “We are uniquely able to provide experiences that will be invaluable to young musicians as they develop at this stage of their careers. We view this program as the logical extension of our existing programs that are dedicated to supporting a diverse infrastructure of musicians here in Atlanta, so that every individual who wishes to pursue a career as a professional musician has the chance to do so.

“Our vision is that Atlanta will be the US city that has the most equitable access to high-level musical training. The fact that both of our new Fellows, who beat stiff competition from conservatories across the country in blind auditions, are proud Georgia natives shows that we’re on the right track. We are also thrilled to welcome back one of our Talent Development Program alumni, Joshua Williams, back to his home orchestra, sitting side by side with the musicians who mentored him.”

Jordan Milek Johnson started his musical studies in trombone with Hollie Pritchard, and continued his studies at the Schwob School of Music at Columbus State University, studying with Dr. Bradley Palmer. He graduated in May of 2022. While at the Schwob School, Johnson co-founded and served as president of the Black Schwob Society, a Black student union in the school dedicated to advocating and providing understanding for Black musicians and serving the community through music.

“I strive to inspire those around me, those that look like me, and those who are involved in music, but at a different capacity. So I am very excited for the intersection of myself and this amazing opportunity,” said Johnson.

Joshua Williams recently received a bachelor’s degree from the prestigious Juilliard School, which he attended on a full scholarship, studying with Alan Baer, Michael Moore, and Joseph Alessi. He was a 2017 National Young Arts Finalist, and recently performed the Vaughan Williams Tuba Concerto with the Georgia Symphony Orchestra. Williams was also a featured artist with the Jazz at Lincoln Center Orchestra. Joshua performs for the Soulful Symphony and is an Ear Training Teaching Fellow.

Williams is no stranger to the ASO: he is a 2018 graduate of the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra's Talent Development Program (TDP). Now approaching its 30th anniversary, the ASO Talent Development Program provides young Black and Latinx musicians the opportunity to receive the highest level of training and preparation to enter music programs and conservatories and to become professional musicians.

"I am incredibly excited to be joining the Atlanta Symphony, my hometown orchestra, as a part of the orchestra fellowship program," said Williams. "As a former student of the ASO's Talent Development Program, I have grown up dreaming not only of the opportunity to play in this orchestra, but to change the demographic of the orchestra to be more reflective of my community. I hope that my work in the Orchestra will pave the way for both me and other aspiring musicians of color to be onstage well into the future. I am elated about the opportunity to create music alongside the world class musicians of the ASO and inspire the same community that has inspired me."

Johnson and Williams will each serve a two-year term; Williams will begin in September 2023, and Johnson's start date is still being determined. The musicians will rehearse and perform with the ASO during regular season programming, will receive training from ASO musicians, and may serve the Atlanta community through education and community engagement initiatives. They will be compensated for their work with the Orchestra, and we will assist with transportation to up to two orchestra auditions each year of their Fellowship.

Applications opened in September of 2022 and were open to all string, woodwind, brass and percussion instrumentalists who have graduated from a college, university, or conservatory program and are from populations traditionally underrepresented in the American symphony orchestras, including Black and Latinx musicians.

The Fellowship Program is made possible through support from an Anonymous Donor, Accenture, The Thalia & Michael C. Carlos Foundation, Inc., and The Thalia and Michael C. Carlos Advised Fund.



Jordan Johnson, Bass Trombone



Joshua Williams, Tuba

About the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra

The Atlanta Symphony Orchestra (ASO) is in its 78th season with Nathalie Stutzmann as only the fifth Music Director in the history of the Orchestra, and the only woman to ever hold the position. Maestro Stutzmann will continue the ASO's mission of bringing new and exciting composers and guest artists to Atlanta.

The ASO is one of the leading orchestras in the United States, performing more than 150 concerts each year from the Delta Classical, Movies in Concert, Family Concert, and Coca-Cola Holiday series, as well as the Atlanta Symphony Hall LIVE concerts and many community and education concerts.

In addition, the ASO performs with the 200+ voice, all-volunteer ASO Chorus, originally founded in 1970 by Robert Shaw, and currently under the Direction of Norman Mackenzie. The chorus was featured on nine of the ASO's Grammy-award winning recordings.

About the Talent Development Program

As one of the longest-running, year-round musical education diversity programs, the Talent Development Program (TDP) provides 25 young Black and Latinx musicians with the highest level of musical training each school year. More than 100 TDP Fellows have gone on to attend top music schools and conservatories across the country. This strong education foundation has led to careers in orchestra, teaching and performance.

###