

OJAI MUSIC FESTIVAL

THOMAS W. MORRIS
Artistic Director

Thomas W. Morris was appointed artistic director of the Ojai Music Festival starting with the 2004 Festival, a relationship that has been extended through 2017. Mr. Morris is recognized as one of the most innovative leaders in the orchestra industry and served as the long-time chief executive leader of both The Cleveland Orchestra and the Boston Symphony Orchestra. Mr. Morris is currently active nationally and internationally as a consultant, lecturer, teacher, and writer.

As artistic director of the 68-year old Ojai Festival, Mr. Morris is responsible for artistic planning, and each year appoints a music director with whom Mr. Morris collaborates on shaping the festival's programming. Music directors in recent years have included Pierre Boulez, Kent Nagano, Oliver Knussen, Robert Spano, Pierre-Laurent Aimard, David Robertson, eighth blackbird, George Benjamin, Dawn Upshaw and Leif Ove Andsnes. Future music directors include Mark Morris and Jeremy Denk. Under his tenure, audiences have increased, and the scope of the festival expanded, most recently to include an innovative partnership with Cal Performances in Berkeley, Ojai North!

In May 2011, a new innovative orchestra festival, Spring for Music, to be held annually each May, debuted at Carnegie Hall to rapturous critical and audience acclaim. Mr. Morris, along with Mary Lou Falcone, of M. L. Falcone Public Relations, and David Foster, of Opus 3 Artists, are founding directors of the project. Mr. Morris serves as artistic director. Spring for Music consists of seven concerts by North American orchestras and chamber orchestras, with all ticket prices at \$25. The sole criteria for selection of participating orchestras will be creativity in programming.

During his tenure as executive director of The Cleveland orchestra from 1987 to 2004, the artistic success of The Cleveland Orchestra/Christoph von Dohnányi partnership was recognized throughout the world and the inaugural seasons of Franz Welser-Möst's tenure as Music Director were launched to great enthusiasm and acclaim. Over the past seventeen years, Mr. Morris's leadership has helped set many important milestones for the Orchestra, including ten tours to Europe, and four tours to East Asia; an unprecedented recording discography on the London/Decca, Telarc International, and Teldec labels; the Orchestra's 75th anniversary celebration, including an important private release compact disc set of rare archival recordings; the recent renovation, expansion, and restoration of Cleveland's signature concert venue – Severance Hall; the seamless transition of music directors in 2002; and the renovation, upgrading and transformation of the Blossom Music center into a state-of-the-art summer concert venue.

Mr. Morris came to Cleveland from the Boston Symphony Orchestra where he served in a number of capacities from 1969 to 1985. In 1978 he was named to the newly created position of general manager, assuming overall executive responsibility for the Boston Symphony Orchestra, Boston Pops, Boston Symphony Chamber Players, Symphony Hall, and Tanglewood.

Since his retirement from The Cleveland Orchestra, he has pursued active consulting activities and he has served as a consultant to over fifty organizations including the Philadelphia Orchestra and Philadelphia Orchestra. Mr. Morris has frequently served frequently on the faculty of various programs for the League of American Orchestra's Leadership Academy, and led its Institutional Vision Seminar for twelve years. He currently serves as a member of the Board of Trustees of the Curtis Institute of Music and also as chair of its Board of Overseers, and is a member of the Board of Directors of the Interlochen Center for the Arts.

An accomplished percussionist, Mr. Morris has performed frequently with the Boston Symphony Orchestra and Boston Pops, and currently performs in the Blossom Festival Band and Orchestra.

Mr. Morris is a native of Rochester, New York. He studied at the Eastman School of Music and holds a B.A. degree from Princeton University and an MBA from the Wharton School of Finance and Commerce.