

Michael Morgan, Music Director

Currently in his sixteenth year as Music Director of Oakland East Bay Symphony, Michael Morgan was born in Washington, DC, where he attended public schools and began conducting at the age of 12. While a student at Oberlin College Conservatory of Music, he spent a summer at the Berkshire Music Center at Tanglewood. There he was a student of Gunther Schuller and Seiji Ozawa, and it was at that time that he first worked with Leonard Bernstein. For the last two summers, he has taught conducting at Tanglewood.

In 1980, he won first prize in the Hans Swarovsky International Conductors Competition in Vienna, Austria and became Assistant Conductor of the Saint Louis Symphony Orchestra, under Leonard Slatkin. His operatic debut was in 1982 at the Vienna State Opera in Mozart's *The Abduction from the Seraglio*. In 1986, Sir Georg Solti chose him to become the Assistant Conductor of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, a position he held for seven years. His debut conducting a regular subscription concert of the Chicago Symphony came in 1987, when he stepped in to replace the ailing Maestro Solti with no rehearsal and to critical acclaim. During his tenure in Chicago, he was also conductor of the Civic Orchestra of Chicago (training orchestra of the Chicago Symphony) and the Chicago Youth Symphony Orchestra. In 1986 he was also invited by Leonard Bernstein to make his debut with the New York Philharmonic; he has returned to conduct that orchestra several times since.

In addition to his duties with Oakland East Bay Symphony, Maestro Morgan serves as Artistic Director of the Oakland Youth Orchestra, Music Director of the Sacramento Philharmonic, and Artistic Director of Festival Opera in Walnut Creek. He makes frequent appearances as guest conductor with orchestras throughout the United States, and has conducted the San Francisco Symphony and San Francisco Ballet on many occasions. He was honored as one of the ten most influential African Americans in the Bay Area in 2000 at CityFlight Newsmagazine's second annual Awards Gala. In 2005, he received two national awards by major music associations. He was honored by the San Francisco Chapter of The Recording Academy with the 2005 Governors Award for Community Service. On the opposite coast, the American Society of Composers, Authors and Publishers (ASCAP) chose Morgan as one of its five 2005 Concert Music Awards recipients. This fall he returns to the San Francisco Conservatory to teach the graduate conducting course.

He annually makes about 100 appearances in the nation's schools, particularly in the East Bay, and is widely regarded as an expert on the importance of arts education and minority access to the arts. He is on the Board of the ASOL.