

# Santa Cruz/Monterey

## — SJM 1/10/92 B-1 CABRILLO MUSIC FESTIVAL — Cabrillo festival picks new director

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The nationally lauded Cabrillo Music Festival has named a new music director, who will take the podium facing record cutbacks and deficits for the 1992 summer season.

Marin Alsop, a 35-year-old New Yorker with strong new-music tastes who led concerts of the San Jose Symphony a year ago, was named Thursday to replace charismatic fixture Dennis Russell Davies, who had led the festival since 1974. Alsop is the first woman to lead the Santa Cruz festival.

She is undaunted by the challenge, despite the festival's 50 percent cutback to just six concerts this year.

"This belt-tightening that everybody is experiencing around the country is forcing arts organizations to refocus their mission and get back in touch with their audience," she said.

Alsop ranks among the American conductors of her generation who are most in demand. Currently guest-conducting the Buffalo (N.Y.) Philharmonic just prior to engagements at the Eugene (Ore.) Symphony and the Colorado Symphony, she occupies multiple posts. She is music director of both the Long Island Philharmonic and the Eugene Symphony, and is founder and artistic director of the 50-piece new-music group Concordia, which gives four subscription concerts annually at Lincoln Center in New York City.

At the San Jose Symphony, she had made one of the strongest musical impressions among the 10 finalists for the vacant podium post. She finally lost out to Leonid Grin.

She was invited to be Cabrillo's leader by the board of directors, with Davies extending the invitation to Alsop in New York City a month ago. She has a two-year contract.

She said she was thrilled over the invitation. "Cabrillo is well-known everywhere," she says, emphasizing the East Coast resonance of this small but ambitious symphony-and-chamber festival, which is marking its 30th season in August. "It's truly recognized for the new and unusual. It has a history and tradition, yet is on the cutting edge."

She will have a free hand in programming this season, which runs Aug. 8-15, apart from the opening concert to be led by Davies.

A former student of Leonard Bernstein, Seiji Ozawa and Gustav Meier, Alsop comes from a musical family. She earned degrees from Yale University and the Juilliard School, and she was the first woman ever awarded the Koussevitzky Conducting Prize.

She is also an avid jazz violinist. She formed a swing band called String Fever, with the debut compact disc due out this spring.

The 1992 Cabrillo season will repeat the

novel 1991 format of concerts in the Civic Auditorium preceded by a street fair with food and entertainment. Stage productions, however, will be deleted from the concert slate this time, because they proved too expensive.

"Based on demand, this is not a \$400,000 festival, but a \$300,000 festival," explained Executive Director Tom Fredericks in spelling out the expected 1992 economies.

"We are not in crisis. We have a line of credit secured to assure the new season." The festival has an accumulated deficit of \$80,000 run up on a \$405,000 operating budget last year.

The abrupt resignation of Davies, 47, after 18 years at the helm was attributed partly to his extensive conducting commitments in both Bonn, Germany, and Brooklyn, N.Y., as well as major orchestras around the world. Currently on tour in Leipzig, Germany, he was unavailable to elaborate.



Marin Alsop  
... New-music enthusiast