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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**OAKLAND YOUTH ORCHESTRA NAMES COMPOSER AND EDUCATOR OMIID ZOUFONOUN PRINCIPAL CONDUCTOR**

Oakland, CA, April 28, 2014—Oakland East Bay Symphony Music Director and Oakland Youth Orchestra Artistic Director Michael Morgan has announced the appointment of conductor, composer and educator Omid Zoufonoun as new Principal Conductor of the Oakland Youth Orchestra. Mr. Zoufonoun takes the podium after Maestro Morgan and Bryan Nies have shared conducting duties for the Youth Orchestra's 2013-2014 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary season. For more information about Oakland Youth Orchestra, visit [www.oeps.org](http://www.oeps.org) .

"Omid is so involved in the music scene of Oakland and the Bay Area and has been very engaged with all aspects of the Oakland East Bay Symphony, I am very pleased to welcome him as an official part of the organization," says Michael Morgan. "He is a charismatic conductor, composer and educator who is passionate about teaching and will be a terrific asset to our acclaimed Youth Orchestra."

Omid Zoufonoun is a conductor, guitarist, educator and award-winning composer. His compositions blend his Persian musical heritage, learned under the guidance of his father Ostad Mahmoud Zoufonoun, with western practices of counterpoint, harmony and orchestration. Recent commissions include a Cello Sonata for the duet Martha & Monica, a guitar octet for the Guitar Foundation of America, a choral setting of four Rumi poems for the Pacific Mozart Ensemble, and a four-movement orchestral work for the Oakland Youth Orchestra. Maestro Zoufonoun conducted the premiere of this latter work at the Scottish Rite Temple in Oakland, and a professional premiere followed by the Oakland East Bay Symphony under the direction of Maestro Michael Morgan in 2012 on the Symphony's acclaimed *Notes from Persia* program. As a conductor, his recent recording of Bill Horvitz' suite, *A Long Walk*, was featured as an Editor's Pick in *Downbeat* magazine. A Passionate educator and advocate for public arts education, he teaches orchestral studies, chamber music, guitar, composition and AP music theory at Oakland School for the Arts.

Details about the Oakland Youth Orchestra 2014-2015 season will be announced mid-summer.

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