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Svetlanov Orchestra Seals Jurowski Deal

By Raymond Stults

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The Culture Ministry has announced the appointment of Vladimir Jurowski as chief conductor of the Svetlanov State Symphony Orchestra. Jurowski, 39, currently serves in the same capacity with the London Philharmonic Orchestra and as artistic director of Britain's Glyndebourne Festival. He is also a principal guest conductor of the Bolshoi Theater, where next week he is due to lead a new production of Mikhail Glinka's opera "Ruslan and Lyudmila" at the theater's recently reconstructed historic stage.

Jurowski's appointment comes in the wake of the dismissal late last month of the orchestra's previous chief conductor, Mark Gorenstein, who assumed the post nine years ago. Generally considered to be Moscow's finest orchestra during most of its 35 years under the baton of the late Yevgeny Svetlanov, the State Symphony Orchestra has severely declined in prestige over the past decade and a half. Directly leading to Gorenstein's departure were his insulting remarks at last summer's Tchaikovsky Competition directed toward the competition's eventual first-prize winner in cello and a subsequent petition by members of the orchestra demanding his dismissal.

Moscow-born Jurowski, who emigrated to Germany with his family in 1990, has been widely hailed in the West as one of the most talented conductors of his generation. He has also gained a devoted following in Moscow for his imaginative programming and superbly executed performances during recent seasons as principal guest conductor of the Russian National Orchestra.

His appointment to lead the State Symphony Orchestra follows by just seven months the naming of his brother, Dmitry Jurowski, 32, to the post of chief conductor of the Russian Philharmonia, the official orchestra of the city of Moscow.

Vladimir Jurowski conducts the Russian National Orchestra on Friday at Tchaikovsky Hall and makes his first appearance as head of the State Symphony Orchestra on Nov. 11 at the Great Hall of the Moscow Conservatory.

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