



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**JULIE DESBORDES NAMED  
MUSIC DIRECTOR OF THE SALT RIVER BRASS,  
DEBUTS AS CONDUCTOR ON OCTOBER 16, 2022**

Phoenix, AZ — The Salt River Brass Board of Directors today announced Julie Desbordes as Music Director, effective June 1, 2022. Internationally recognized for presenting innovative programs and developing new audiences for ensemble music, Desbordes will make her debut at the band’s first concert of its 2022-2023 season on October 16, 2022. Desbordes’ appointment represents a significant moment for Salt River Brass. The third Music Director in its 34-year history, Desbordes is the first woman to serve in this role for the Salt River Brass, and one of only a small number of women leading brass bands across the globe.

Jamie Bernstein, daughter of Leonard Bernstein, says of Julie: “She is a true musician, *and* a true communicator – a combination of elements that is more urgently needed than ever in today’s classical music world. My father blazed the trail when it came to combining musicianship with communication skills, so when I see this combination in others, I get very excited.”

Desbordes, who has led ensembles in the Americas, Asia, and her native France, is currently Music Director of the Philharmonia Orchestra at Arizona State University, where she has also taught conducting since 2019. Previously based in New York City, she led two groundbreaking, inclusive orchestras there: QUO and the Turtle Bay Youth Orchestra. Recent guest conducting appearances include Hong Kong, Taiwan, Malaysia, Venezuela and Cuba. In 2021 she was the Assistant Conductor for Carnegie Hall’s National Youth Orchestra and NYO2, and also continues her ongoing work with Carnegie Hall as a frequent Core Faculty for their Music Educators Workshops.

Desbordes commented: "I am incredibly honored and excited to be appointed as the Salt River Brass Music Directorship and be welcomed into the SRB family, and I look forward to continuing to carry on SRB's long tradition of excellence in brass band music making in Arizona and beyond."

As a conductor and an educator, Desbordes develops new audiences for concerts as she leads diversity and inclusion efforts. At ASU, her Philharmonia Orchestra collaborates with dancers, incorporates video content into concerts, presents music by under-represented composers, and consistently delivers performances that excite seasoned and new audiences alike. Desbordes comes from a brass background, having started playing the cornet at age 7, and later making her conducting debut at age 17. She holds Masters and Bachelors degrees in both conducting and trumpet performance from conservatoires in France and Canada, and did her Doctor of Musical Arts studies in orchestral conducting at the Peabody Conservatory in Baltimore. Her conducting mentors include Raffi Armenian, Gustav Meier and Marin Alsop.

As Music Director, Desbordes will serve as SRB's principal conductor, be responsible for programming concerts, prepare the ensemble for performances, and coordinate educational programs and recordings. She also will serve on the Board of Directors as an ex officio, non-voting member. Desbordes was selected following a 10-month selection process. Julie succeeds Patrick Sheridan, who departed in 2020, and Jason Malloy, who served as Interim Music Director from October 2020 until April 2022.

Paul Lynch, President of the Salt River Brass Board of Directors, stated, "We are excited to have Julie Desbordes join and lead the Salt River Brass into the next chapter of our organization's exciting history. Julie portrayed a special ability to connect with our musicians and our audience. We are enthusiastic about her arrival and can't wait to get things going for our upcoming season with her as our Music Director.

"Salt River Brass is grateful for the legacy Patrick Sheridan leaves. Pat set the bar high for himself, the musicians, and our community. His programming was balanced to present the musicians with many unique challenges while simultaneously choosing works that allowed Salt River Brass' best qualities to be on display. We are grateful for everything Pat has done.

"We also thank Jason Malloy. Previously serving as our principal trombone and former President of the Board of Directors, Jason helped our group stay engaged and relevant during the pandemic, organizing several events including a recorded concert available for free viewing. He continued to lead Salt River Brass as we welcomed musicians and the community back into the concert hall during our return to live performances for the 2021-2022 season.

Desbordes will conduct the Salt River Brass for its 2022-2023 season in the Mesa Arts Center's Ikeda Theater. Concerts include:

October 16, 2022: Band-o-Rama  
November 13, 2022: American Salute  
December 11, 2022: Holiday Pops  
February 26, 2023: All that Jazz  
April 2, 2023: Spring has Sprung

Tickets, four-concert Flex Passes and season subscriptions are on sale now at [MesaArtsCenter.com](http://MesaArtsCenter.com).

### **About Salt River Brass**

Picture 36 brass and percussion virtuosi crafting the upbeat brilliance of a military band, the full-throated sonorities of a symphony orchestra and the warm intimate sounds of a chamber group. This is the Salt River Brass, with the versatility to program everything from light classics and marches to show tunes, folk melodies and jazz standards.

A nonprofit organization founded by its musicians in January 1988, the Salt River Brass has thrilled audiences in the Valley's finest concert venues and across the state of Arizona. The band and its volunteer musicians are proud to present a six-concert series in the beautiful Mesa Arts Center, regularly featuring outstanding guest soloists, ensembles, conductors and new musical works for our audiences' enjoyment.