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Nadja Salerno-Sonnenberg announces plans to step down from NCCO

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Nadja Salerno-Sonnenberg at the head of a group portrait of NCCO

by Matthew Washburn, courtesy of the New Century Chamber Orchestra

Yesterday morning the New Century Chamber Orchestra ([NCCO](#)) announced that Nadja Salerno-Sonnenberg will step down from her role

as Music Director at the conclusion of the 2016–2017 season. That means that she will depart following NCCO’s 25th anniversary season. NCCO appointed Salerno-Sonnenberg as Music Director in September of 2008, and she has led the ensemble through an exciting period of growth over the course of eight seasons.

(For the record, this site was launched on **March 7, 2009** and has thus served as a platform to document the progress of almost the entirety of Salerno-Sonnenberg’s tenure.)

Salerno-Sonnenberg’s growth strategy has yielded many impressive achievements. NCCO founded a Featured Composer program, which expanded its repertoire with eight new works. That repertoire was expanded even further by a variety of imaginative decisions to which Salerno-Sonnenberg contributed. These included programming *The Four Seasons of Buenos Aires*, a collection of arrangements by Gidon Kremer of four compositions by Astor Piazzolla, which was featured on ***Together***, Salerno-Sonnenberg’s debut album with NCCO released on her own NSS MUSIC label, an enthusiasm for the music of Alfred Schnittke that included using his off-the-wall polka as an encore for a tour of the Midwest and California that was documented on the NSS MUSIC DVD release ***On Our Way: The Journey of Nadja Salerno-Sonnenberg and the New Century Chamber Orchestra***, and numerous opportunities to showcase the work of Clarice Assad, which included an impressive **arrangement** of Modest Mussorgsky’s *Pictures at an Exhibition* for strings, piano, and percussion.

Indeed, Salerno-Sonnenberg led NCCO on three extensive national tours and for three live recordings on her NSS MUSIC label. She also arranged concerts that involved partnerships with the [San Francisco Opera](#), the [San Francisco Girls Chorus](#), and [Chanticleer](#).

Salerno-Sonnenberg will continue her career as both recitalist and concerto soloist. However, she will also turn her attention to teaching the next generation of musicians. She was recently appointed to lead the newly formed Resident Artist Program at Loyola University's School of Music in New Orleans. She also plans to work with string ensembles at universities around the country.

As to the future of NCCO, Executive Director Philip Wilder and the Board of Directors have initiated a strategic process that will include creating a search committee dedicated to identifying the next stage of NCCO's artistic leadership. Part of that process will involve the appearance of guest concertmasters during the 25th anniversary season and, if necessary, subsequent seasons until a successor has been appointed. The search committee will be led by Founding President Paula Gambs and will include members of the Board, musicians, and staff.

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