



**St. Louis Symphony
Orchestra**

stéphane denève : music director



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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STÉPHANE DENÈVE BEGINS TENURE AS MUSIC DIRECTOR OF THE ST. LOUIS SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

The SLSO launches this new era with Denève leading free concert for thousands in Forest Park with the St. Louis Symphony IN UNISON Chorus, St. Louis Symphony Chorus, and St. Louis Youth Orchestra musicians, September 12, followed by the Music of John Williams, September 13-15

Season-opening program includes the world premiere of Kevin Puts’ *Virelai*, Jennifer Higdon’s *blue cathedral*, Debussy’s *La Mer*, Gershwin’s *An American in Paris*, and Guillaume Connesson’s *The Shining One* and Ravel’s Piano Concerto in G with new Artist-in-Residence Jean-Yves Thibaudet, September 21-22

Soloists Joëlle Harvey and Kelley O’Connor and the St. Louis Symphony Chorus join Denève and the SLSO in Mahler’s Symphony No. 2, “Resurrection,” September 27-28

Denève and the SLSO unveil new audience experience changes and accessibility initiatives, including SLSO Invites – a program to make memorable music experiences accessible for all listeners and education concerts free by 2021



Denève

(September 4, 2019, St. Louis, MO) – Today, the St. Louis Symphony Orchestra begins a new era with the start of Stéphane Denève’s tenure as Music Director. Denève begins as the 140-year-old orchestra’s 13th Music Director in a month that sees him lead the SLSO in three weekends of unforgettable concerts including the world premiere of a work by St. Louis native Kevin Puts, a program of music by the legendary film composer John Williams, the opening concert of the Lied Center’s 30th anniversary season in Lincoln, Nebraska, and the popular free concert on Forest Park’s Art Hill. The first month of this new chapter in the SLSO’s history also includes the SLSO Gala Celebration on September 20 and the introduction

of several programs designed to make extraordinary music experiences with the SLSO more accessible across the St. Louis region.

Stéphane Denève, 13th Music Director of the SLSO, said: “It seems like ages since I was first named Music Director of the St. Louis Symphony Orchestra. Now that the time for me to begin has finally arrived, I am filled with joy and anticipation for my new musical home. St. Louis is a luminous city and



its people are warm and friendly. I look forward to making music with my new musical family, the immensely talented musicians of the orchestra, and to sharing extraordinary musical experiences with my neighbors in the St. Louis community. We invite everyone in the community to join us on a musical journey this season, and we hope everyone will take advantage of our new programs that make music more accessible.”

Marie-Hélène Bernard, President and CEO of the SLSO, said: “Stéphane Denève brings boundless creativity and infectious enthusiasm to the St. Louis community. His passion for music as a common thread to unite people is evident in the way he approaches programming and in the new ideas he brings to the organization. This season will be a landmark one for the St. Louis Symphony Orchestra and we are excited to welcome our friends and family from St. Louis, and from around the world, to join us in experiencing the power of music.”

A guest conductor of the SLSO since 2003, Denève was named the next Music Director of the SLSO in June 2017. He served as Music Director Designate during the 2018/2019 season, his engagement season with the orchestra. Denève succeeds David Robertson, who served as Music Director for 13 years, from 2005 to 2018.

Concert in Forest Park – September 12

Denève opens the 2019/2020 season by leading the SLSO in the annual free concert on Forest Park’s Art Hill. Begun more than 50 years ago, these concerts have entertained thousands of concertgoers each year and serves as the launch of the SLSO’s season. This year, Denève has invited members of the St. Louis Symphony IN UNISON Chorus to perform with the orchestra in Forest Park. The IN UNISON Chorus is a volunteer chorus dedicated to the preservation and performance of music of African and African-American origin, borne from the SLSO’s IN UNISON program. Collaborating with more members of the SLSO family, brass and percussion players of the St. Louis Symphony Youth Orchestra, as well as members of the St. Louis Symphony Chorus will join the IN UNISON Chorus to perform alongside Denève and the SLSO in Tchaikovsky’s rousing *1812 Overture*. The evening ends with Sousa’s patriotic anthem, *The Stars and Stripes Forever*, and a show-stopping fireworks display.

Performed in memory of longtime SLSO supporter Mary Ann Lee, the concert in Forest Park is the celebratory opening of the SLSO’s season. Attendees are encouraged to come early, bring chairs and blankets, and enjoy food trucks.

The Music of John Williams – September 13-15

Denève also leads the SLSO in the first Live at Powell Hall performances of the season: The Music of John Williams (September 13-15). A bedrock of film music composition, John Williams redefined the American music landscape with his work on some of Hollywood’s biggest films, including *Star Wars*, *Jaws*, *E.T. – The Extraterrestrial*, *Close Encounters of the Third Kind*, and *Harry Potter*. A collaborator and personal friend of Denève’s, the SLSO will perform unpublished works from *Memoirs of a Geisha* and *Dracula*, borrowed from Williams’ personal library specifically for this program.



Opening Weekend – September 21-22

Denève's opening program on September 21-22 represents his musical marriage to the SLSO following his engagement season and is programmed around the well-known wedding saying, "Something old, something new, something borrowed, something blue." His opening concert as Music Director of the SLSO (something old) begins with the world premiere of *Virelai* by St. Louis native Kevin Puts (something new), and features Jennifer Higdon's *blue cathedral* (something blue), Debussy's *La Mer*, Guillaume Connesson's short piano concerto *The Shining One* featuring the Jean-Paul and Isabelle Montupet Artist-in-Residence Jean-Yves Thibaudet, Ravel's Piano Concerto in G with Thibaudet, and closes with Gershwin's *An American in Paris* (something borrowed).

Denève's opening program explores the relationship between French and American musical cultures, which he has called the Franco-American Arch – a narrative thread he develops throughout his inaugural season. The program also demonstrates Denève's commitment to music of today, with works by living composers making up half of the concert. Throughout the season, he has programmed works by 13 composers of today, with an additional piece with contributions from 10 living composers.

Opening weekend also introduces virtuoso pianist Jean-Yves Thibaudet to the SLSO audience as the Jean-Paul and Isabelle Montupet Artist-in-Residence, the SLSO's first titled artist since the 1990s. Denève's close collaborator, friend, and best man at his wedding, Thibaudet has impressed St. Louis audiences since his debut with the orchestra in 1988. Thibaudet returns for two more engagements throughout the season, including a recital in partnership with the Washington University Department of Music on January 17, 2020, and a performance in the SLSO's first symphonic play – *Maurice Ravel: A Musical Journey*, on May 1, 2020.

Mahler's Symphony No. 2, "Resurrection" – September 27-28

On September 27-28, Denève collaborates with more members of the SLSO family – this time the St. Louis Symphony Chorus – for performances of Mahler's monumental Symphony No. 2, "Resurrection." Voted the fifth-best symphony of all time by conductors surveyed by *BBC Music Magazine*, Mahler's "Resurrection" offers the composer's view on the life and afterlife and features Denève leading massive instrumental and vocal forces. Joining the SLSO and St. Louis Symphony Chorus are renowned vocalists Joëlle Harvey, soprano, and Kelley O'Connor, mezzo-soprano. O'Connor last appeared with the SLSO in November 2018, collaborating with Denève to give the acclaimed St. Louis premiere of Peter Lieberson's *Neruda Songs*.

New Accessibility Initiatives and Improved Audience Experience

Denève feels strongly about making experiences at the SLSO accessible to the entire community. He believes in the power to build connections in our community through music. Aligning with the SLSO's beliefs, he also wants to remove as many barriers for entry as possible, including making SLSO concerts more affordable and making the overall concert experience even more welcoming. The SLSO family includes the entire community and everyone should have a sense of belonging when they



share a concert experience with the SLSO. As a result, the SLSO unveils a host of initiatives designed to increase accessibility to concerts and improve the audience experience, including:

- **SLSO Invites**

Realizing Denève’s aspiration to make music experiences more accessible, the SLSO introduces SLSO Invites, a comprehensive program to welcome people into the SLSO family. At the heart of the program is Stéphane’s Seats, a dedicated block of seats for Denève to host community partners in each of his weeks leading the SLSO. This block of seats, approximately 12 per concert, are near the stage in order for guests to see a concert up close. Denève will host special friends from the immigrant community, music educators, and others, for free in Stéphane’s Seats.

- **New Pricing**

A change in the SLSO’s pricing structure, tickets to classical concerts will now start at \$15. Student tickets begin at \$10 for each classical concert. New this year, childrens’ tickets are \$10 for each classical concert for kids age 18 and younger with the purchase of an adult ticket.

- **2 for the Badge**

Through the SLSO’s "2 for the Badge" program, police officers, firefighters, and first responders, as well as active and retired military personnel, can receive two complimentary tickets to any SLSO classical concert. "2 for the Badge" tickets can be obtained by showing a badge or current identification on the day of the performance at the SLSO Box Office.

- **Free Education Concerts by 20/21**

Placing high value on music education, Denève and the SLSO have committed to making all SLSO education concerts free for schools by the 2020/2021 season – the 100th anniversary of the SLSO’s education programs.

- **New Hospitality Efforts**

Inspired by Denève’s vision of making a symphonic experience welcoming to all, the SLSO has made significant changes to the audience experience in conjunction with the addition of a Director of Hospitality and Audience Experience position, including menu upgrades with more locally-sourced options, the launch of SLSO “Keep Cups” – commemorative drink containers allowed in every SLSO concert, improved signage in Powell Hall, “selfie spots”, and enhanced customer service training for SLSO staff.

Lied Center for Performing Arts’ 30th anniversary season opener – September 19

Committed to enriching lives through the power of music in St. Louis and beyond, Denève and the SLSO open the Lied Center for Performing Arts’ 30th anniversary season in Lincoln, Nebraska, on September 19. The SLSO last appeared at the Lied Center in February 2018, performing Stravinsky’s *The Firebird* in collaboration with the American Ballet Theatre and Principal Dancer Misty Copeland to sold-out crowds. Denève brings his intriguing mix of American and French repertoire to the Lied Center, performing works by Jennifer Higdon, Gershwin, Debussy, and Ravel’s Piano Concerto in G



with SLSO Artist-in-Residence Jean-Yves Thibaudet.

Gala Celebration and Nightcap – September 20

The SLSO welcomes Denève with a Gala Celebration on Friday, September 20, beginning at 6:00pm. The event, hosted at the Ritz-Carlton Hotel, includes a cocktail hour, hors d’oeuvres, dinner, and a special musical presentation by jazz trumpeter Byron Stripling, his quartet, and SLSO musicians in a performance inspired by the Hot Club of France. New this year, a special Gala Nightcap event featuring dessert and dancing to music by Stripling and a big band is available. Tickets are sold separately for the Gala Nightcap.

Gala celebration co-chairs are Nick and Judy Kouchoukos, Jean-Paul and Isabelle Montupet, and Steve and Laura Savis. Gala Nightcap co-chairs are Molly Hyland and Curt Ittner. To purchase tickets for the Gala or Gala Nightcap, visit slo.org/en/support-the-symphony/special-events/gala/.

Calendar Listings

Stéphane Denève leads the SLSO in the following programs to begin his tenure as the 13th Music Director:

FOREST PARK CONCERT

Thursday, September 12, 2019, 7:00pm

Forest Park’s Art Hill, 35 Fine Arts Drive, St. Louis, MO

Stéphane Denève, conductor

Members of the St. Louis Symphony IN UNISON Chorus | Kevin McBeth, director

Members of the St. Louis Symphony Chorus | Amy Kaiser, director

Members of the St. Louis Symphony Youth Orchestra | Gemma New, Music Director

SMITH (arr. Sousa/Damrosch)	<i>The Star-Spangled Banner</i>
J. WILLIAMS	<i>Olympic Fanfare and Theme</i>
MILLS (arr. Hayman/Maness)	<i>“Meet Me in St. Louis” -- “Take Me Out to the Ballgame”</i>
BERNSTEIN	<i>Candide Overture</i>
BERNSTEIN	<i>“Mambo” from West Side Story</i>
BIZET	Selections from <i>Carmen</i> Suite No. 1
BIZET	<i>“Farandole” from L’Arlésienne</i> Suite No. 2
TRADITIONAL (arr. Hayes)	<i>“Ain’t That Good News”</i>
BERLIOZ	<i>“Hungarian March” from The Damnation of Faust</i>
HANDY (arr. Hayman)	<i>St. Louis Blues March</i>
J. WILLIAMS	<i>“Main Title” from Star Wars</i>
TCHAIKOVSKY	<i>1812 Overture, op. 49</i>
SOUSA	<i>Stars and Stripes Forever</i>

In memory of Mary Ann Lee



Media support provided by the St. Louis Post-Dispatch

THE MUSIC OF JOHN WILLIAMS

Friday, September 13, 2019, 7:00pm

Saturday, September 14, 2019, 7:00pm

Sunday, September 15, 2019, 2:30pm

Powell Hall, 718 N. Grand Blvd., St. Louis, MO

Stéphane Denève, conductor

Daniel Lee, cello

Erin Schreiber, violin

John WILLIAMS

Superman March

John WILLIAMS

Excerpts from *Close Encounters of the Third Kind*

John WILLIAMS

Selections from *Memoirs of a Geisha* Suite
for Cello and Orchestra

John WILLIAMS

“Adventures on Earth” from *E.T.: the Extra-Terrestrial*

John WILLIAMS

“Hedwig’s Theme” from *Harry Potter and the Sorcerer’s Stone*

John WILLIAMS

“Harry’s Wondrous World” from

Harry Potter and the Sorcerer’s Stone

John WILLIAMS

The Book Thief

John WILLIAMS

“Night Journeys” from *Dracula*

John WILLIAMS

Theme from *Schindler’s List* for Violin and Orchestra

John WILLIAMS

“The Barrel Chase” from *Jaws*

John WILLIAMS

“Raiders March” from *Raiders of the Lost Ark*

John WILLIAMS

“Main Title” from *Star Wars*

Media support provided by the St. Louis Post-Dispatch

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BIENVENUE STÉPHANE

Saturday, September 21, 2019, 8:00pm

Sunday, September 22, 2019, 3:00pm

Powell Hall, 718 N. Grand Blvd., St. Louis, MO

Stéphane Denève, conductor

Jean-Yves Thibaudet, piano



**St. Louis Symphony
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stéphane denève : music director



Tickets are on sale now and may be purchased at or slo.org by calling the Box Office at 314-534-1700.

About Stéphane Denève, SLSO Music Director

Stéphane Denève is the 13th Music Director for the 140-year-old St. Louis Symphony Orchestra, beginning his tenure in the 2019/2020 season. He also serves as Music Director of the Brussels Philharmonic, Principal Guest Conductor of The Philadelphia Orchestra, and Director of the Centre for Future Orchestral Repertoire (CffOR).

Recognized internationally for the exceptional quality of his performances and programming, Denève regularly appears at major concert venues with the world's greatest orchestras and soloists. He has a special affinity for the music of his native France and is a passionate advocate for music of the 21st century. A gifted communicator and educator, he is committed to inspiring the next generation of musicians and listeners, and has worked regularly with young people in the programs such as those of the Tanglewood Music Center, New World Symphony, the Colburn School, and the Music Academy of the West.

He is a frequent guest with leading orchestras such as the Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra, Orchestra Sinfonica dell'Accademia Nazionale di Santa Cecilia, The Cleveland Orchestra, Los Angeles Philharmonic, San Francisco Symphony, New York Philharmonic, Toronto Symphony, Orchestre National de France, Vienna Symphony, DSO Berlin and NHK Symphony. Last season, he led a major U.S. tour with the Brussels Philharmonic.

In the field of opera, Denève has led productions at the Royal Opera House, Glyndebourne Festival, La Scala, Deutsche Oper Berlin, Saito Kinen Festival, Gran Teatro de Liceu, Netherlands Opera, La Monnaie, Deutsche Oper Am Rhein, and at the Opéra National de Paris.

As a recording artist, he has won critical acclaim for his recordings of the works of Poulenc, Debussy, Ravel, Roussel, Franck and Honegger. He is a triple winner of the Diapason d'Or of the Year, has been shortlisted for Gramophone's Artist of the Year Award, and has won the prize for symphonic music at the International Classical Music Awards. His most recent releases include *Lost Horizon*, a two-disc set of music by Guillaume Connesson with the Brussels Philharmonic, saxophonist Timothy McAllister, and violinist Renaud Capuçon on Deutsche Grammophon; Honegger's *Jeanne d'Arc au bûcher* with the Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra on its label; and *Cinema* with violinist Renaud Capuçon and the Brussels Philharmonic on Erato/Warner Classics featuring some of the most memorable melodies from the silver screen.

For further information, please visit slo.org/deneve.

About the St. Louis Symphony Orchestra

Celebrated as one of today's most exciting and enduring orchestras, the St. Louis Symphony Orchestra is the second-oldest orchestra in the country, marking its 140th year with the 2019/2020



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season and its first with Music Director Stéphane Denève. Widely considered one of the world's finest orchestras, the SLSO maintains its commitment to artistic excellence, educational impact, and community connections – all in service to its mission of enriching lives through the power of music.

In addition to its regular concert performances at Powell Hall, which has been the permanent home of the SLSO for more than 50 years, the orchestra is an integral part of the diverse and vibrant St. Louis community, presenting dozens of free education and community programs and performances throughout the region each year. It has an ongoing commitment to championing music of our time, through commissions, a collaboration with the Mizzou New Music Initiative, and its popular St. Louis Symphony Live at the Pulitzer. The SLSO also serves as the resident orchestra for Opera Theatre Saint Louis, with the upcoming season marking the 43rd year of this unique partnership.

The Grammy Award-winning SLSO's impact beyond the St. Louis region is realized through weekly Saturday night concert broadcasts on St. Louis Public Radio, acclaimed recordings, and regular touring activity. A sought-after artistic partner by preeminent musicians and composers from across the globe, as well as by local and national organizations, the SLSO enjoys a long history of robust and enduring artistic collaborations that have developed and deepened over the years.

Today, the SLSO builds on the institution's current momentum on all fronts, including artistic, financial, audience growth, and community impact, and looks toward the future with Stéphane Denève. For more information, visit slo.org.

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