



St. Louis Symphony Orchestra

stéphane denève : music director



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STÉPHANE DENÈVE AND THE ST. LOUIS SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA ANNOUNCE FOUR NEW FULL-TIME MUSICIANS

Appointments made to the first violin, oboe, and horn sections

(October 1, 2020, St. Louis, MO) – The St. Louis Symphony Orchestra and Music Director Stéphane Denève are pleased to announce the appointments of four new full-time musicians as the SLSO begins its 2020/2021 season, the orchestra’s 141st.

The SLSO’s 2020/2021 season began in September with SLSO On the Go—live, socially distanced chamber music and solo concerts for small gatherings in outdoor spaces. The season also includes a robust portfolio of digital media performances, media broadcasts on St. Louis Public Radio and the Nine Network, a line-up of virtual events, and a library of educational resources. Additional plans for live concerts and events will be announced as details are confirmed.

The SLSO’s new musicians are:

I-Jung Huang, first violin, joins the SLSO with an impressive résumé of competition appearances and wins, as well as a long list of orchestras with whom she’s soloed, including the Houston Symphony, Hudson Valley Philharmonic, Taiwan Philharmonic, and Taipei Symphony. She served as the Concertmaster of prestigious school orchestras, including the Manhattan School of Music, The Juilliard School, and the New England Conservatory. Her recent project, “TwoBows,” a house concert fundraising project for Doctors Without Borders, received partial funding from the Juilliard Project Grants.

Hannah Ji, first violin, joined the first violin section of the St. Louis Symphony Orchestra in 2020 after spending two seasons as a one-year replacement musician. A graduate of the Curtis Institute of Music, The Juilliard School, and The Colburn School, her performances have been broadcast on NPR’s nationally syndicated program From the Top and PBS’ Live from Lincoln Center. As an orchestra musician, she served as Concertmaster and Principal Second Violin with Symphony in C, Spoleto Festival USA, YMF Debut Orchestra, The Colburn School, The Juilliard School Orchestra, and The Curtis Symphony Orchestra. Since joining the SLSO, Ji has been active in the SLSO’s Mentoring the Music: Peer to Peer program.

Victoria Knudtson, horn, began her duties as assistant/utility horn in January 2020 following her appointment by Music Director Stéphane Denève during his inaugural season. Previously, Knudtson joined the St. Louis Brass ensemble in March 2018. She was a horn fellow of the Boston Symphony’s Tanglewood Music Center in 2019 and at the Pacific Music Festival in Sapporo, Japan, with Music Director Valery Gergiev



in 2018. She is a graduate of Indiana University and received an artist diploma at the Curtis Institute of Music, studying under former SLSO Principal Horn Jennifer Montone.

Xiomara Mass, oboe, was appointed to the second oboe position after spending two seasons as a replacement musician for the SLSO in that role. Born and raised in Puerto Rico, she began her musical training at the age of four and made her solo debut with the Puerto Rico Symphony Orchestra when she was 13. Mass is a laureate of several international festivals and competitions, and she also maintains a rigorous schedule as an educator. She is an adjunct professor at Washington University in St. Louis and taught as an adjunct professor at the DePaul University School of Music. Most recently, she was the Audience Choice Winner of the inaugural Virtual Oboe Competition, and the only finalist representing the United States.

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 141st year with the 2020/2021 season and its second 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.

The SLSO musical family also includes two resident choruses: the St. Louis Symphony Chorus, founded in 1976; and the St. Louis Symphony IN UNISON Chorus, an ensemble focused on the music of African-American and African cultures. The SLSO family also includes the St. Louis Symphony Youth Orchestra, founded by Conductor Laureate Leonard Slatkin in 1970.

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 presents *St. Louis Symphony: Live at the Pulitzer*, a four-program series at the Pulitzer Arts Foundation. The SLSO also serves as the resident orchestra for Opera Theatre of Saint Louis, with the upcoming 2021 festival season marking the 44th year of the 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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