

Stéphane Denève, conductor
 David Halen, violin
 Members of the St. Louis
 Symphony Chorus
 Amy Kaiser, director

Friday, February 8, 2019 at 10:30am
 Saturday, February 9, 2019 at 8:00pm
 Sunday, February 10, 2019 at 3:00pm

MOZART
 (1756-1791)

Eine kleine Nachtmusik (Serenade in
 G major), K. 525 (1787)
 Allegro
 Romanze: Andante
 Menuetto: Allegretto
 Rondo: Allegro

VAUGHAN WILLIAMS
 (1872-1958)

The Lark Ascending (1914)

David Halen, violin
 NO PAUSE

VAUGHAN WILLIAMS
 (1872-1958)

Serenade to Music (1938)

David Halen, violin
(soloists in order of appearance)
 Gina Malone
 DeWayne Trainer
 Philip Touchette
 Keith Boyer
 Adam Stefo
 Kate Reimann
 Leann Schuering
 Nyghél Byrd
 Matt Pentecost
 Jeffrey Heyl
 Adam Kosberg
 Sarah Price
 Elizabeth Ducey Moss
 Keith Wehmeier
 Joy Boland
 Debby Lennon

INTERMISSION

BRAHMS

(1833-1897)

Symphony No. 2 in D major, op. 73 (1877)

Allegro non troppo

Adagio non troppo

Allegretto grazioso (Quasi Andantino)

Allegro con spirito

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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These concerts are presented by the **Thomas A. Kooyumjian Family Foundation**.

Stéphane Denève is the **Felix and Eleanor Slatkin Guest Conductor**.

David Halen is the **William and Laura Orthwein Guest Artist**.

The concert of Friday, February 8, is underwritten in part by a generous gift from **Nancy and Don Ross**.

The concert of Saturday, February 9, is underwritten in part by a generous gift from **Dave and Agnes Garino**.

The concert of Sunday, February 10, is underwritten in part by a generous gift from **Curtis and Shannon Searcy**.

The St. Louis Symphony Chorus is underwritten in part by the **Richard E. Ashburner, Jr. Endowed Fund**.

The St. Louis Symphony Chorus is underwritten in part by the **Edward Chase Garvey Memorial Foundation**.

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STÉPHANE DENÈVE ON THIS PROGRAM

As told to Tim Munro

To “serenade” means to declare one’s love through music, played or sung. This week’s music is about promenading and serenading together, hand in hand. There is a feeling of tenderness and love throughout the whole program.

Eine kleine Nachtmusik is a very well-known piece, but I will conduct it for the very first time on this program! The challenge is to find the famous *Tempo giusto* [the first movement’s tempo marking]. The key to a perfect tempo is to find a balance between the pace of the music and its emotional impact. This balance is the “holy grail” of classical music.

I try to always serve the composer. With Mozart this goal is difficult, as the music is perfect in itself, so one always notices if the ego of the performer is in the way. I love music to “tell us” its own tale, its own story. I try to find the most pure childish joy of making music and let the music speak through...

I discovered **Vaughan Williams’ *Serenade to Music*** only a few years ago. I read that Rachmaninoff was in the audience for the premiere and that he wept, which is hard to believe once you know the rather austere and serious look of this giant Russian man. I listened to it and wept, too.

It is a real “ode to music,” celebrating the uniqueness of our art form, which truly is the shortest way from one heart to another! I adore the *Serenade*’s gorgeous and “sweet” harmonies, its superb lyricism, and its amazing text from Shakespeare.

This weekend’s program is the first time I will perform a full concerto with **David Halen**. David has the rare quality of a truly great concertmaster: to be supportive both to the conductor and to the orchestra, trying to achieve the best understanding and result between us. He knows about the emotional power of music and is a sensitive man himself, which is the most important thing for me.

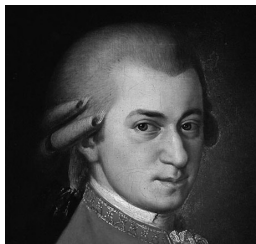
Since I first learned **Brahms’ *Second Symphony*** as a teenager, I have had the feeling that this symphony is like promenading in nature. It is not descriptive, like parts of Beethoven’s “Pastoral” symphony, but it has this natural flow, a certain “wandering” atmosphere, which describes Mother Nature at its best.

Maybe this “open air” sensation also comes from the simple, almost “folksong” quality of the French horns’ line at the beginning, or the song-like quality of the woodwinds in the third movement. Or maybe I think of nature because the music’s pure beauty is organically perfect!

I love this symphony. I think you can tell...

PROGRAM NOTES

BY TIM MUNRO



WOLFGANG AMADEUS MOZART

Born January 27, 1756, Salzburg, Austria

Died December 5, 1791, Vienna, Austria

Eine kleine Nachtmusik (Serenade in G major), K. 525

A fanfare, played by the full string section, grabs us by the shoulders. This arresting opening calls us to attention.

We have no idea why the 31-year-old Mozart set aside work on his opera *Don Giovanni* to write *Eine kleine Nachtmusik*. Was it to be performed at the party of an important aristocrat? Could it have been a financial boost for the cash-strapped composer?

Completing this work, Mozart wrote in his catalogue, “Eine kleine Nachtmusik.” We now use these words as the title of the piece, often translating it as “A little night music.” But the phrase was more likely a description of the piece. The word “Nachtmusik” had a specific meaning: it was a genre of background music, typically performed outdoors at a party, late at night.

“What is slight can still be great,” wrote Mozart’s father Leopold, himself a prodigious writer of such works. “If it is written in a natural, flowing and easy style, and bares the marks of sound composition. Such works are harder to compose than all those difficult harmonic progressions are to perform.”

Eine kleine Nachtmusik is often overshadowed by Mozart’s “serious,” “masterly” works, and yet Mozart the skilled theater composer is present in every measure here. Every few seconds the music shifts character: from attention-grabbing, to forceful, to withdrawn, to hesitant, to eager. It is a dramatic universe in miniature form.

He may have written the work in haste, but Mozart’s handwritten manuscript is clean and clear. At all moments he is sure and confident in his ideas. It is a small miracle that this work—now so famous that it is almost synonymous with the term “classical music”—may have cost Mozart only a day or two of toil.

First Performance unknown, likely performed in Vienna in 1787

First SLSO Performance February 17, 1928, Carl Schuricht conducting

Most Recent SLSO Performance September 23, 2016, David Robertson conducting

Scoring string orchestra

Performance Time approximately 16 minutes



RALPH VAUGHAN WILLIAMS

Born October 12, 1872, Down Ampney, England

Died August 26, 1958, London, England

The Lark Ascending

In appearance, the skylark is unremarkable: a tiny brown bird. But when it takes flight, something remarkable happens: it shoots high into the air, spraying a long, continuous song, a complex song full of trilling virtuosity.

To centuries of writers and musicians, this musical flight has come to symbolize the yearning of humans for freedom, for hope:

*He rises and begins to round,
He drops the silver chain of sound,
Of many links without a break,
In chirrup, whistle, slur and shake.*

These words are from George Meredith's 122-line poem *The Lark Ascending*, the inspiration for Vaughan Williams' work of the same name. Vaughan Williams gives the part of the "skylark" to a solo violin, whose music asserts its independence from the windswept orchestral grassland below, rising into the stratosphere, often breaking across the formal musical bar lines to break free.

*Shrill, irreflective, unrestrain'd,
Rapt, ringing, on the jet sustain'd
Without a break, without a fall,
Sweet-silvery, sheer lyrical.*



A skylark, with insects in its beak, in the Lake District, England.

The bird has long been associated with God, with heaven. Vaughan Williams, an agnostic, nevertheless believed that music had mystical qualities, “reaching out,” he wrote, “to the ultimate realities.” In the smeared harmonies of *The Lark Ascending*, added notes blurring the image, he captures a mythical, mystical quality.

Vaughan Williams was also part of the first generation that turned away from Germany as a source of inspiration, seeking “true” English music in the songs of its own people. In the singable melodies and gently lilting rhythms of *The Lark Ascending* we might hear the sound of folk song.

Meredith’s skylark eventually brings humanity together, including those “whose lives” have been, “by many a battle-dint, defaced.” (In other words: those “whose lives have been destroyed by war”). On the same day that Vaughan Williams sketched *The Lark Ascending*’s main melody, on a cliff overlooking the ocean, Britain’s first troops headed to the continent.

He didn’t know it at the time, but Vaughan Williams would soon join those on their way to war. There he would witness unspeakable horrors that he could never bring himself to speak about. After *The Lark Ascending*, the world was to be forever changed.

First Performance June 14, 1921, London, Adrian Boult conducting the British Symphony Orchestra

First SLSO Performance July 15, 1977, Robert Marcellus as conductor with Robert Mann as soloist

Most Recent SLSO Performance September 14, 2014, Urbana-Champaign, David Robertson conducting with Erin Schreiber as soloist

Scoring solo violin, 2 flutes, oboe, 2 clarinets, 2 bassoons, 2 horns, percussion (triangle), and strings

Performance Time approximately 13 minutes

RALPH VAUGHAN WILLIAMS

Serenade to Music

Two lovers, Jessica and Lorenzo, walk in a forested estate on a moonlit night. Their love is illicit; they have eloped. A band of musicians plays nearby. As they await resolution, the couple muses on the beauty of this night, on the power of music.

When Vaughan Williams wrote *Serenade to Music*, based on this scene from Shakespeare's *Merchant of Venice*, his spirit was flagging. An explosive decade of creativity had ground to a halt. He was overwhelmed by the dire state of his wife's health, by his responsibility to care for her. "I have the feeling that I shall never write another note of music," he wrote.

It was a gift of friendship that shook him out of this stupor. The conductor Sir Henry Wood was a giant in English musical life whose support of new English music had kick-started a national renaissance. So when Wood reached his fiftieth year as director of London's Promenade Concerts ("the Proms"), it was time to celebrate.

To mark this half-century, Vaughan Williams gathered sixteen of the country's most renowned singers for an ode to the power of music. This unusual event gave rise to the work's instrumentation: sixteen solo singers and orchestra.

Each vocal soloist gets their own moment in the spotlight: some calm, some dramatic, some mournful. At key moments all come together to form a chamber choir, like a group of friends supporting each other, joined by a shared belief in the power of music.

First Performance October 5, 1938, London, Sir Henry Wood conducting orchestra members from the London Symphony Orchestra, BBC Symphony Orchestra, and London Philharmonic Orchestra

First SLSO Performance May 20, 1982, Leonard Slatkin conducting

Most Recent SLSO Performance February 14, 1998, David Loebel conducting

Scoring solo violin, 16 vocalists, 2 flutes (2nd doubling piccolo), oboe, English horn, 2 clarinets, 2 bassoons, 4 horns, 2 trumpets, 3 trombones, tuba, timpani, percussion (triangle and bass drum), harp, and strings

Performance Time approximately 15 minutes

[Vaughan Williams' sixteen original singers are named in the final published score of *Vaughan Williams' Serenade to Music*. In honor of that tradition, and to celebrate the members of the SLSO Chorus, each singer's solo moment is identified below.]

SLSO Chorus soloists (in order of appearance):

Gina Malone (GM)	Matt Pentecost (MP)
DeWayne Trainer (DT)	Jeffrey Heyl (JH)
Philip Touchette (PT)	Adam Kosberg (AK)
Keith Boyer (KB)	Sarah Price (SP)
Adam Stefo (AS)	Elizabeth Ducey Moss (EDM)
Kate Reimann (KR)	Keith Wehmeier (KW)
Leann Schuering (LS)	Joy Boland (JB)
Nyghél Byrd (NB)	Debby Lennon (DL)

Serenade to Music

Text from William Shakespeare: *Merchant of Venice*, Act 5, Scene 1

How sweet the moonlight sleeps upon this bank!	All
Here will we sit, and let the sounds of music	All
Creep in our ears; soft stillness and the night	All
Become the touches of sweet harmony.	All—GM
Look how the floor of heaven	DT
Is thick inlaid with patines of bright gold ¹ :	DT
There's not the smallest orb that thou beholdest,	PT
But in his motion like an angel sings,	PT
Still quiring to the young-ey'd cherubins;	KB
Such harmony is in immortal souls ² ;	All
But, whilst the muddy vesture of decay	AS
Doth grossly close it in, we cannot hear it.	AS—All

Come ho! and wake Diana ³ with a hymn;	KR
With sweetest touches pierce your mistress ⁴ ear,	KR
And draw her home with music.	KR—All

I am never merry when I hear sweet music,	LS
The reason is, your spirits are attentive ⁵ :	NB
The man that hath no music in himself,	MP
Nor is not moved with concord of sweet sounds,	JH
Is fit for treasons, stratagems and spoils;	NB
The motions of his spirit are as dull as night,	AK
And his affections dark as Erebus ⁶ ;	AK
Let no such man be trusted.	All

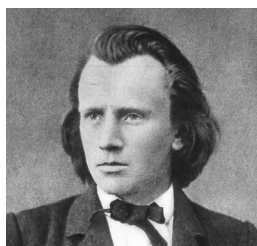
Music! hark! It is your music of the house.	SP
Methinks it sounds much sweeter than by day.	EDM
Silence bestows that virtue on it.	KW

How many things by season season'd are	JB
To their right praise and true perfection! ⁷	JB
Peace ho! The moon sleeps with Endymion ⁸ ,	DL
And would not be awak'd.	DL

Soft stillness and the night	All
Become the touches of sweet harmony.	All

Notes:

- 1 Stars in the night sky
- 2 Reference to the "Harmony of the Spheres"
- 3 Diana: A goddess associated with the moon
- 4 "Mistress": A reference to the imminent return of a character in the play
- 5 Lack of "merriness" comes because of close attention paid to the music
- 6 Erebus: God of darkness, son of Chaos
- 7 Meaning, "Many things are perfect because of when they occur."
- 8 Endymion: This young man, put to sleep by Zeus for having fallen in love, is visited every night by the moon.



JOHANNES BRAHMS

Born May 7, 1833, Hamburg, Germany
Died April 3, 1897, Vienna, Austria

Symphony No. 2 in D major, op. 73

At the opening, the scene is set. Above a forest floor of lower strings, two French horns play a quiet hunting fanfare. They are answered by pure woodwind sunlight.

Brahms loved the outdoors. Throughout his life, nature helped him return to equilibrium, an equilibrium lost in the bustle of the city. Raised in a hard-scrabble part of Hamburg, he took long walking trips with his family. Later, escaping Vienna meant he could breathe and be alone with his thoughts.

In the summer after his 43rd birthday, Brahms dropped in on the town of Pörschach. He intended to stay overnight, but one night turned into a full summer, turned into three full summers. This lakeside town, with mountains visible in the distance, calmed him, softened his hard edges.

Brahms had another reason to be relaxed that summer. For decades Brahms felt the great symphonies of Beethoven peering over his shoulder. But Brahms had climbed the peak, had finally completed his First Symphony, a work of such jowl-trembling seriousness that at times it seems locked in battle with Beethoven's legacy.

Released from this stress, the Second Symphony itself seems to relax. Its folk-like melodies, quaint third movement, and buoyant finale, breathe the enriching lakeside air. Brahms even includes a hint of music from his song "How lovely to live

in spring!” near the end of the first movement. The symphony, he wrote, is “quite an innocent, cheerful little thing.”

This lightness can make the Second Symphony seem a slighter, simpler cousin of the First. But shadows remain. Darker instruments—trombones, tuba, and timpani—hover over the first movement’s idyll. Near movement’s end, a lonely French horn lets out an unsettled, agitated call, and is calmed only very gradually. Later, gnarled chords introduce a second movement which, though in a major key, is full of pangs of longing.

Defending the darkness in his otherwise pastoral symphony, Brahms writes of himself as “a severely melancholic person” who feels “black wings constantly flapping above.” At the time that he was working the Second Symphony, Brahms wrote a choral work of existential worry: “Why has light been given to the weary of soul, and life to the troubled hearts?” This motet, wrote Brahms, “casts the necessary shadow on the serene [second] symphony.”

But as the symphony progresses, these troubled shadows slowly disperse. Light-footed dances appear, momentum increases, then all at once tension is releasing in a finale of blazing summer light.

First Performance December 30, 1877, Vienna, Hans Richter conducting

First SLSO Performance February 15, 1906, Alfred Ernst conducting

Most Recent SLSO Performance January 10, 2013, David Robertson conducting

Scoring 2 flutes, 2 oboes, 2 clarinets, 2 bassoons, 4 horns, 2 trumpets, 3 trombones, tuba, timpani, and strings

Performance Time approximately 43 minutes



Portschach am Wörthersee, where Brahms began work on the Second Symphony.

Vaughan Williams on “classical” versus “popular” music

“The reason why ‘English music’ is nowadays considered negligible by so many writers is that we have separated our music from our nationality. ‘Classical’ music is considered to be a foreign luxury imported from abroad with our champagne and our cigars for those who have the money to afford it and the taste to appreciate.”

“We must break down the distinction between ‘classical’ and ‘popular’—all music should be classical and all music should be popular. If we can give up that nervous apprehension about what other people are thinking of us and can be content to make our own music for our own people, then we shall earn for our music the respect of others and regain the proud position we held in the days of John Dunstable.”

Love? Night? The outdoors?

In 17th century Italy, a *serenata* was a musical celebration of a prominent person. Performed outdoors at night (*sera*, meaning “evening”), in artificial light, this opera-like piece was for soloists and an orchestra that could number in the hundreds of musicians.

Then, as language tends to, the meaning of the word shifted and split, pursuing two parallel paths. On one path, this “serenade” was still performed outdoors and at night, but the solo performer was calling to a beloved. This meaning came out of the latin word *serenus*, meaning “serene” or “calm.”

On another path, the “serenade” became late-night pieces of outdoor entertainment at parties. Thousands of such works were written, at first for wind instruments (with their greater volume), and later for string ensembles.



Serenata: An Italian Serenata by Antoine Watteau (1715).



STÉPHANE DENÈVE

Music Director Designate

Felix and Eleanor Slatkin Guest Conductor

Stéphane Denève currently is Music Director Designate for the St. Louis Symphony Orchestra, Music Director of the Brussels Philharmonic, Principal Guest Conductor of The Philadelphia Orchestra, and Director of the Centre for Future Orchestral Repertoire (CffOR). He will become Music Director of the St. Louis Symphony Orchestra in the 2019/2020 season.

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. The 18/19 season will also see him lead a major U.S. tour with the Brussels Philharmonic.

In the field of opera, Stéphane 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 discs of Prokofiev suites and the works of Guillaume Connesson with Brussels Philharmonic, as well as recordings with Lucas and Arthur Jussen and the Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra, all for Deutsche Grammophon.

For further information, please visit www.stephanedeneve.com



DAVID HALEN

Concertmaster

Eloise and Oscar Johnson, Jr. Chair

William and Laura Orthwein Guest Artist

David Halen is living a dream that began as a youth the first time he saw the St. Louis Symphony Orchestra perform in Warrensburg, Missouri. Born in Bellevue, Ohio, he didn't have to look far for his musical influences: his father, the late Walter J. Halen, was also his violin professor at Central Missouri State University; his mother, a former member of the Kansas City Symphony; and his older brother, the Acting Concertmaster of the Houston Symphony Orchestra. Halen began playing the violin at the age of six and earned his bachelor's degree at the age of 19. In that same year, he won the Music Teachers National Association Competition and was granted a Fulbright scholarship for study with Wolfgang Marschner at the Freiburg Hochschule für Musik in Germany, the youngest recipient ever to have been honored with this prestigious award. In addition, Halen holds a master's degree from the University of Illinois at Champaign-Urbana, studying with Sergiu Luca.

Halen served as Assistant Concertmaster with the Houston Symphony Orchestra under Sergiu Comissiona and Christoph Eschenbach until 1991. He then came to St. Louis, where he was permanently named Concertmaster in September 1995, without audition, by the Orchestra, and with the endorsement of then Music Directors Leonard Slatkin and Hans Vonk. He has soloed with the orchestra in much of the major concerti in the violin repertoire. In addition, he has soloed with the Houston, San Francisco and West German Radio (Cologne) symphonies.

During the summer he teaches and performs extensively, serving as Concertmaster at the Aspen Music Festival and School. He has also soloed, taught and served as Concertmaster extensively at the Orford Arts Centre in Quebec, the Manhattan School of Music, Indiana University, the National Orchestra Institute at the University of Maryland, the Academy of the West in Santa Barbara, and the New World Symphony in Miami Beach. In 2007 he was appointed Distinguished Visiting Artist at Yale University, and at the new Robert McDuffie Center for Strings at Mercer University in Macon, Georgia. In the fall of 2012, Halen joined the string faculty of the University of Michigan.



AMY KAISER

Director of the St. Louis Symphony Chorus

Director of the St. Louis Symphony Chorus since 1995, Amy Kaiser is one of the country's leading choral directors. She has conducted the St. Louis Symphony Orchestra in Handel's *Messiah*, Schubert's Mass in E flat, Vivaldi's *Gloria*, and sacred works by Haydn and Mozart, as well as Young People's Concerts. Guest conductor for the Berkshire Choral Festival in Massachusetts, Santa Fe, and at Canterbury Cathedral and Music Director of the Dessoff Choirs in New York for 12 seasons, she led many performances of major works at Lincoln Center.

Other conducting engagements include Chicago's Grant Park Music Festival, Peter Schickele's PDQ Bach with the New Jersey Symphony, and more than 50 performances with the Metropolitan Opera Guild. Principal Conductor of the New York Chamber Symphony's School Concert Series for seven seasons, Kaiser also led Jewish Opera at the Y, and many programs for the 92nd Street Y's acclaimed *Schubertiade*. She has prepared choruses for the New York Philharmonic, Ravinia Festival, Mostly Mozart Festival, and Opera Orchestra of New York.

Kaiser is a regular pre-concert speaker for the SLSO and presents popular classes for the Symphony Lecture Series and Opera Theatre of Saint Louis. A former faculty member at Manhattan School of Music and The Mannes College of Music, she was a Fulbright Fellow at Oxford University and holds a degree in musicology from Columbia University. A graduate of Smith College, she was awarded the Smith College Medal for outstanding professional achievement.

MEMBERS OF THE ST. LOUIS SYMPHONY CHORUS | 2018/2019

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Leann Schuering
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Nora Teipen
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Symphony Shuttle

**Convenient transportation from West County is
available for Friday morning Coffee Concerts**

Avoid traffic and parking before our Coffee Concerts. Hop aboard our SLSO Shuttle and enjoy a Q&A with a retired SLSO musician on the ride to Powell Hall. Shuttle tickets are \$15 per passenger, per concert. The motor coach departs the St. Louis County Library Headquarters (1640 S. Lindbergh Blvd) promptly at 9:15am and returns by 1:30pm. All passengers must have both a Shuttle and Coffee Concert ticket.

slo.org/shuttle