

Leonard Slatkin, conductor  
Olga Kern, piano  
Charlotte Blake Alston, speaker  
Sasha Cooke, mezzo-soprano  
St. Louis Symphony Chorus  
Amy Kaiser, director  
The St. Louis Children's Choirs  
Barbara Berner, artistic director

Saturday, April 27, 2019 at 8:00pm  
Sunday, April 28, 2019 at 3:00pm

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**LOREN LOIACONO** *Smothered by Sky* (2017)  
(b. 1989)

**RACHMANINOFF** Piano Concerto No. 1 in F-sharp minor, op. 1 (1891)  
(1873-1943)  
Vivace  
Andante  
Allegro vivace  
Olga Kern, piano

INTERMISSION

**BERNSTEIN** Symphony No. 3, *Kaddish* (1963)  
(1918-1990)  
I. Invocation –  
Kaddish 1 –  
II. Din-Torah  
Kaddish 2 –  
III. Scherzo –  
Kaddish 3 –  
Finale  
Charlotte Blake Alston, speaker  
Sasha Cooke, mezzo-soprano  
St. Louis Symphony Chorus  
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Leonard Slatkin is the **Ann and Lee Liberman Guest Artist**.

Olga Kern is the **Ellen Atwood Armstrong Guest Artist**.

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# PROGRAM NOTES

BY THOMAS MAY

“How could I know my son was going to grow up to be Leonard Bernstein?” the father of an American legend once famously quipped. Samuel Bernstein, an immigrant from Russia, wanted his eldest son to continue in the beauty-supply business he had successfully established in the Boston area. Yet Leonard refused to abandon his desire for a career in music — with consequences that continue to reverberate. In fact, so profound and lasting is his influence that we’re nearing the close of *two* back-to-back seasons commemorating the centenary of his birth.

This intense reassessment has underscored a curious situation about Bernstein. For all the adulation showered on *West Side Story*, the Overture to *Candide*, or the *Chichester Psalms*, many of this artist’s compositions are still rarely encountered in live performance. The Symphony No. 3, “Kaddish,” dating from the prime of his career, is a case in point.

The first half of our program opens with music by young composers. American composer Loren Loiacono wrote *Smothered by Sky* for Leonard Slatkin and the Detroit Symphony while still in her twenties. Sergei Rachmaninoff composed his Piano Concerto No. 1 at an even earlier stage in his career: as a teenager of eighteen, during his final year as a conservatory student.



## LOREN LOIACONO

**Born** 1989, Stony Brook, New York

**Now Lives** New York City, New York

## *Smothered by Sky*

### Transcending Gravity

A former student of the late Steven Stucky, Loren Loiacono has been emerging as a fresh orchestral voice in recent years. Along with pieces for the St. Louis and Detroit Symphony Orchestras, she has written works commissioned by the Albany Symphony and the Minnesota and American Composers Orchestras. Chamber and vocal music are similarly focal points of her work. Loiacono also champions the music of her colleagues through such initiatives as the Kettle Corn New Music concert series in New York, which offers alternatives to the formality of the conventional concert experience.

Leonard Slatkin is among the composer’s advocates. On the occasion of the piece’s world premiere by the Detroit Symphony, which Slatkin conducted, Loiacono explained that her creative process involves tapping into her fascination with literature and texts.

“I think in text, there’s a way that time can be managed,” she remarked in an interview in the Detroit Symphony program. “The trick of a lot of literature is in the rate at which things are revealed, how and when the author chooses to show you something that might contextualize what you previously read or what you thought you knew. And that resonates for me in music as well. What a majority of composers are essentially doing is controlling the flow of sound over time. Time is the main tool we actually have.”

*Smothered by Sky* doesn’t last long by the clock — at approximately six minutes, its dimensions are those of a traditional concert opener — but so much happens within that span that Loiacono aptly characterizes it as a “a mini-concerto for orchestra.”

When she began composing *Smothered by Sky*, Loiacono focused on writing “an un-fanfare,” as she puts it: “Instead of blaring trumpets, there’d be befuddled bass clarinets; instead of booming timpani, there would be pots, pans, and other everyday found objects. Instead of grandiosity, there would be goofiness.”

The composer was then drawn to the concept of “escape velocity” from physics: the lowest velocity required for a body to escape the gravitational attraction of another body. Writes Loiacono: “Despite its real-world origins and applications, there is a poetic idea to the trajectory the term implies. *Smothered by Sky* does not attempt to literally depict a rocket taking off or a satellite going into orbit. Instead, it embraces the metaphor behind that narrative, of barreling through atmospheric chaos in order to transcend gravity itself.”

The piece’s “‘un-fanfare’ constantly builds momentum, growing more and more anarchic in search of musical tranquility. But, just as in real life, gravity always threatens to win out. What goes up must come back down.”

**First Performance** October 21, 2017, Leonard Slatkin conducting the Detroit Symphony Orchestra

**First SLSO Performance** April 27, 2019, Leonard Slatkin conducting

**Scoring** 3 flutes (3rd doubling piccolo), 3 oboes, 3 clarinets (1st doubling E-flat clarinet, 3rd doubling bass clarinet), 2 bassoons, contrabassoon, 4 horns, 3 trumpets, 3 trombones, tuba, timpani, percussion (bass drum, flexatone, glockenspiel, sizzle cymbal, snare drum, vibraslap, whip, xylophone, 3 cow bells, 5 brake drums, 5 temple blocks, 5 tom toms), harp, piano, and strings

**Performance Time** approximately 6 minutes

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## **SERGEI RACHMANINOFF**

**Born** April 1, 1873, Starorussky Uyezd, Russia

**Died** March 28, 1943, Beverly Hills, California

### **Piano Concerto No. 1 in F-sharp minor, op. 1**

#### **A Victim of His Success**

Sergei Rachmaninoff was only 17 when he started writing what we know as the first of his four completed piano concertos. And it wasn't even really the first. He'd made attempts even earlier to write a keyboard concerto, but he ran aground.

But even if Rachmaninoff had failed to complete a single concerto, he would remain an admired figure in the history of the piano. He was said to command “the secret of the golden, living tone which comes from the heart and which is inimitable,” as fellow piano legend Arthur Rubinstein put it.

Yet, like Leonard Bernstein, Rachmaninoff had to find ways to balance his abundance of gifts as a performer and composer. Although he worked additionally as a conductor, Rachmaninoff became a celebrity pianist. His career bridged what has been mythologized as a golden age of Romantic superstar virtuosos and the early modern era of recording and mass media.

Rachmaninoff became such a victim to the success of his dazzling image as a pianist that his activity as a composer diminished. (Similarly, Bernstein's ambitions to compose more fell victim of his success on the podium.) Audiences wanted Rachmaninoff to keep playing the role of pianist, which was essential after the composer abandoned his native Russia in 1917. His concert fees paid the bills to support his family, but the energy required to continue on the performing circuit robbed Rachmaninoff of time to compose.

#### **Youthful Vivacity**

The Piano Concerto No. 1 is a relic of a time still filled with boundless promise for the future, when Rachmaninoff's personality at the keyboard merged harmoniously with his composing ambitions. Young Sergei began working on it in earnest in the summer of 1890, which he spent at an idyllic estate owned by relatives.

The pivotal role that nature played for Rachmaninoff's creative spirit can be gleaned from his description in a letter of the landscape surrounding the estate. It almost resembles an ecstatic passage from a Willa Cather novel: “The steppe was a seemingly infinite sea of fields of wheat, rye, and oats stretching in every direction to the horizon, wavering and shimmering like water in the balmy summer haze.”

Composition of the concerto came in a torrent. “I wrote down and orchestrated the last two movements in two-and-a-half days. You may imagine what a job that was! I wrote from five in the morning until eight at night, and after finishing it I was so exhausted — yet still I am pleased with it,” Rachmaninoff wrote to a Conservatory friend in the summer of 1891, when he finished scoring the concerto.

In March 1892 he played the first movement from the new work at a very long student concert at the Moscow Conservatory, where he was completing his studies. The First Piano Concerto became his first official published opus.

### The Music

The concerto opens arrestingly, with an echo of the A minor concerto of Edvard Grieg. Another conspicuous inspiration is Tchaikovsky, who personally encouraged his young colleague after hearing Rachmaninoff's one-act opera *Aleko*.

Norris remarks that the First Piano Concerto shows “a youthful vivacity and impetuosity, which were soon to be replaced by the more somber melancholy and wistfulness of the later works.” And yet the main theme is instantly recognizable as Rachmaninoff, master not simply of melody but of melody that grips the emotions. A large cadenza reconsiders the first movement's themes.

A nocturne-like sensibility comes to the fore in the middle movement, which opens with a tender horn solo — more shades of Tchaikovsky — and offers the soloist an introspective monologue.

**First Performance** March 27, 1897, St. Petersburg, Russia, Alexander Glazunov conducting the orchestra of the Russia Music Concerts

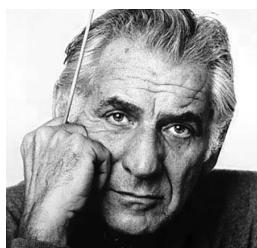
**First SLSO Performance** December 29, 1911, Max Zach conducting with Arthur Shattuck as soloist

**Most Recent SLSO Performance** May 4, 2012, Peter Oundjian conducting with Stephen Hough as soloist

**Scoring** solo piano, 2 flutes, 2 oboes, 2 clarinets, 2 bassoons, 4 horns, 2 trumpets, 3 trombones, timpani, percussion (cymbals and triangle), and strings

**Performance Time** approximately 27 minutes

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### LEONARD BERNSTEIN

**Born** August 25, 1918, Lawrence, Massachusetts

**Died** October 14, 1990, New York City, New York

## Symphony No. 3, *Kaddish*

### Obscuring an Identity

“Gershwin was a songwriter who grew into a serious composer. I am a serious composer trying to be a songwriter,” Bernstein remarked in his 1955 essay “Why Don’t You Run Upstairs and Write a Nice Gershwin Tune?” Throughout his career, Bernstein’s cornucopia of gifts forced him to cope with difficult choices. This struggle is usually portrayed in terms of the elusive balance he sought to achieve between his divided identities as a conductor and a composer.

In his reference to Gershwin, though, Bernstein underscores another way in which his personality was divided, with far-reaching implications for his art. Even

when he could devote time to composing, he felt torn between “serious” projects and the lure of popular idioms — above all, from the Broadway stage — and inevitably was drawn to fuse both worlds.

But Bernstein’s efforts with the popular side of the equation proved so successful that they eventually obscured the musical identity with which he started out on his career as a composer.

### Continuing a Tradition

More than a decade before *West Side Story*, Bernstein staked his claim to continue the grand tradition of the symphony. The premiere of his Symphony No. 1 (*Jeremiah*) occurred in January 1944 — just a couple of months after a last-minute substitution with the New York Philharmonic had made him an overnight conducting sensation.

*Jeremiah* movingly announced a theme that is threaded throughout Bernstein’s work: the “crisis of faith” that he saw as the predicament of modern humanity — faith in a divinity, in the project of civilization, in tonality, and in the ability of music itself to communicate.

Bernstein’s Second Symphony (*The Age of Anxiety*, inspired by the dramatic poem of the same name by W.H. Auden) continues this exploration in a secular context.

### God and Humanity on Trial

With the Third Symphony (*Kaddish*), the composer complains directly to God himself about the human condition.

Some of the responses to the new work were venomous — anticipating the intensity of reaction that would later be provoked by Bernstein’s 1971 *MASS*, a theatrical setting of the Catholic liturgy commissioned for the opening of the Kennedy Center in the nation’s capital. Indeed, the vision of *MASS* is already foreshadowed by the “blasphemies” of the *Kaddish* Symphony.

*Kaddish* began in 1955 as a commission from the Boston Symphony (under Charles Munch, successor to Serge Koussevitzky, who had been one of Bernstein’s chief mentors). Bernstein’s overloaded schedule kept him from completing the Third Symphony until 1963. He was still finishing orchestration when he learned of the assassination of President Kennedy and decided to dedicate the new work “to the beloved memory of John F Kennedy.”

### The Text

Bernstein had already decided to shape the work as a choral symphony, scoring it for a huge orchestra, boys’ choir, solo soprano, and speaker. The title comes from the ancient Kaddish prayer that Bernstein sets. The text is in Aramaic, with the exception of the last lines of the Complete Kaddish, which are in Hebrew.

In Jewish tradition, the Kaddish (the word for “holy” or “sanctification” in Aramaic) is an expression of praise and worship for the Creator and, in fact, contains not a single reference to death. Yet it has long been associated with mourning for the deceased — an image reinforced here by the dedication to the slain Kennedy.

“Far from being a threnody, Kaddish is a series of paeans in praise of God,” explains Jack Gottlieb, Bernstein’s former assistant and a scholar of his work. In the *Kaddish* Symphony, the composer “exploits the dualistic overtones of the prayer: its popular connotation as a kind of requiem and its celebration of life.”

The Kaddish prayer is interwoven throughout the three movements of the Symphony. Bernstein created a verbal counterpoint in the text he himself wrote for the Speaker. Humphrey Burton, one of his biographers, recalls that in 1958 the composer had been inspired by a performance by his actress wife, Felicia Cohn Montealegre, who undertook the speaking role in Arthur Honegger's oratorio *Jeanne d'Arc au bûcher*. "Melodrama" is the technical name for this genre of narrated, spoken text blended with music. The concept sounds decidedly old-old-fashioned, yet it has been revived in the modern era to powerful effect.

Bernstein's own text juxtaposes the ancient prayer with provocative references to God as an "angry, wrinkled Old Majesty," and to his covenant as a "tin bargain." And yet there is a long tradition of rebellious laments addressed directly to God in Jewish tradition. These can be found in the Bible and in folklore, where the deity is called to trial for forgetting his people. Bernstein echoes these traditional precedents by setting up his text as a dialogue that both questions and praises God. The central movement is in fact titled *Din-Torah*, referring to a trial scene of "judgment by law."

Overall, Bernstein's text sets its wonder for Creation against a sense of despair over humanity's squandering of this glory and its promise. The threat of nuclear annihilation stands as the ultimate symbol of human failing — and a real possibility, as the recent Cuban Missile Crisis of 1962 had driven home.

## The Music

A fundamental tension between despair and affirmation underlies the music of the symphony. Some moments are atonal, while some are of an almost childlike simplicity. The result is a fresh perspective on the familiar "darkness to light" paradigm of the symphony (as admired above all in Beethoven's Fifth and Ninth).

The Speaker sets the tone for the opening movement. The orchestra plays motifs from which the material of the whole work is generated. After its hushed initial entrance, the chorus erupts with full force in the first setting of the Kaddish prayer. Gottlieb observes that Bernstein associated this music with "David dancing ecstatically round the Holy Ark."

Their proclamations take us right into the "Trial" movement, where the large percussion section plays a leading role. The solo soprano later comes in to sing the second setting of the Kaddish, now treated as a kind of gentle lullaby.

The last movement covers a widely emotional spectrum. The first part is sardonic scherzo music, but this gives way to an innocent broad melody, which is taken up by the children's choir. The concluding part starts with dissonant anguish and a soul-searching Adagio. The Speaker returns for a final speech before the chorus embarks on a joyful fugue, pressing forward to an affirmative "Amen."

## Finally, Consolation

Haunted by dualities throughout his life, these are given especially vivid dramatic expression in his *Kaddish* Symphony: between the purely musical and the programmatic, the complex techniques of classical tradition and the vitality of popular music, the "Paradise" of tonality and the alienated modern condition of atonality. Bernstein's conjuring of pure, innocent melody at the end of *Kaddish* — that elusive "nice Gershwin tune" — comes to stand for the consolation, musical and metaphoric, on which his vast symphonic structure depends.



**First Performance** December 10, 1963, Tel Aviv, Israel, Leonard Bernstein conducting the Israel Philharmonic Orchestra with Hannah Rovina and Jennie Tourel as soloists

**First SLSO Performance** February 26, 1965, Eleazar de Carvalho conducting with Felicia Montealegre and Jennie Tourel as soloists

**Most Recent SLSO Performance** February 27, 1965, Eleazar de Carvalho conducting with Felicia Montealegre and Jennie Tourel as soloists

**Scoring** speaker, mezzo-soprano, chorus, children's chorus, 4 flutes (3rd doubling alto flute, 4th doubling piccolo), 2 oboes, English horn, 2 clarinets, E-flat clarinet, bass clarinet, alto saxophone, 2 bassoons, contrabassoon, 4 horns, 4 trumpets, 3 trombones, tuba, timpani, percussion (bass drum, cymbals, snare drum, tenor drum, field drum, triangle, tambourine, tam tam, glockenspiel, xylophone, vibraphone, chimes, crotales, wood block, temple blocks, whip, ratchet, sandpaper blocks, 3 bongos, rasp, hand drum, finger cymbals, 2 suspended cymbals), harp, piano, celesta, and strings

**Performance Time** approximately 41 minutes

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## Text and Translation

Below is the Kaddish prayer, with translation. The Speaker's text is by the composer, and it will be projected above the stage.

*Yit'gadal v'yit'kadash sh'mē raba, amen,*

*bāl'ma div'ra chir'utē, amen,*

*v'yam'lich mal'chutē*

*b'chayēchon uv'yomēchon*

*uv'chayē d'chol bēt Yis'raēl,*

*ba-agala uviz'man kariv,*

*v'imru: amen.*

*Y'hē sh'mē raba m'varach*

*l'alām ul'al'mē al'maya.*

*Yit'barach v'yish'tabach v'yit'pa-ar*

*v'yit'romam v'yit'nasē*

*v'yit'hadar v'yit'aleh v'yit'halal*

*sh'mē d'kud'sha, b'rīch Hu,*

*l'ēla min kol bir'chata*

*v'shirata, tush'b'chata v'nechemata,*

*da-amiran bāl'ma,*

*v'imru: amen.*

*Y'hē sh'lama raba*

*min sh'maya v'chayim al'ēnu*

*v'al kol Yis'raēl*

*v'imru: amen.*

*Oseh shalom bim'romay,*

*Hu ya-aseh shalom al'ēnu*

*v'al kol Yis'raēl*

*v'imru: amen.*

Magnified and sanctified be His great name, Amen.

Throughout the world which He hath  
created according to His will, Amen,

And may He establish His kingdom  
During your life and during your days,  
And during the life of all the house of Israel,  
Speedily, and at a near time,  
And say ye, Amen.

May His great name be blessed,  
Forever and to all eternity.

Blessed and praised and glorified,  
And exalted and extolled and honored,  
And magnified and lauded  
Be the name of the Holy One, blessed be He;  
Though He be beyond all blessings,  
And hymns, praises and consolations,  
That can be uttered in the world.  
And say ye, Amen.

May there be abundant peace  
From heaven, and life for us  
And for all Israel;  
And say ye, Amen.

He who maketh peace in His high places,  
May He make peace for us  
And for all Israel;  
And say ye, Amen.



## LEONARD SLATKIN

Conductor Laureate

Ann and Lee Liberman Guest Artist

Internationally acclaimed conductor Leonard Slatkin is Conductor Laureate of the St. Louis Symphony Orchestra, Music Director Laureate of the Detroit Symphony Orchestra (DSO), and Directeur Musical Honoraire of the Orchestre National de Lyon (ONL). He maintains a rigorous schedule of guest conducting throughout the world and is active as a composer, author, and educator.

Highlights of the 2018/2019 season include a tour of Germany with the ONL; a three-week American Festival with the DSO; the Kastalsky Requiem project commemorating the World War I Centennial; Penderecki's 85th birthday celebration in Warsaw; five weeks in Asia leading orchestras in Guangzhou, Beijing, Osaka, Shanghai, and Hong Kong; and the Manhattan School of Music's 100th anniversary gala concert at Carnegie Hall. He will also conduct the Moscow Philharmonic, Balearic Islands Symphony, Orchestre Philharmonique de Radio France, Louisville Orchestra, Berner Symphonieorchester, Pittsburgh Symphony, RTÉ National Symphony in Ireland, and Monte Carlo Symphony.

Slatkin has received six Grammy awards and 33 nominations. His recent recordings include works by Saint-Saëns, Ravel, and Berlioz (with the ONL) and music by Copland, Rachmaninoff, Borzova, McTee, and John Williams (with the DSO). In addition, he has recorded the complete Brahms, Beethoven, and Tchaikovsky symphonies with the DSO (available online as digital downloads) and conducted the London Symphony Orchestra for an album featuring violinist Anne Akiko Meyers.

A recipient of the National Medal of Arts, the highest award given to artists by the United States government, Slatkin also holds the rank of Chevalier in the French National Order of the Legion of Honor. Moreover, he has received Austria's Decoration of Honor in Silver, the League of American Orchestras' Gold Baton Award, and the 2013 ASCAP Deems Taylor Special Recognition Award for his debut book, *Conducting Business*. His second book, *Leading Tones: Reflections on Music, Musicians, and the Music Industry*, was published by Amadeus Press in 2017.



## **OLGA KERN**

Ellen Atwood Armstrong Guest Artist

Russian-American pianist Olga Kern is now recognized as one of her generation's great artists. With her vivid stage presence, passionately confident musicianship and extraordinary technique, the striking pianist continues to captivate fans and critics alike. Kern was born into a family of musicians with direct links to Tchaikovsky and Rachmaninoff and began studying piano at the age of five. She jumpstarted her U.S. career with her historic Gold Medal at the Van Cliburn International Piano Competition in Fort Worth, Texas, as the first woman to do so in more than 30 years.

Steinway Artist and First prize winner of the Rachmaninoff International Piano Competition at the age of 17, Kern is a laureate of many international competitions and tours throughout Russia, Europe, the United States, Japan, South Africa, and South Korea. In 2016, she served as Jury Chairman of both the Seventh Cliburn International Amateur Piano Competition and the first Olga Kern International Piano Competition, where she also holds the title of Artistic Director. Ms. Kern frequently gives masterclasses and since September 2017 has served on the piano faculty of the prestigious Manhattan School of Music. Additionally, Kern has been chosen as the Virginia Arts Festival's new Connie & Marc Jacobson Director of Chamber Music, beginning with the 2019 season.

For the 2018/2019 season, Kern will perform with the Moscow Philharmonic and Santa Fe Symphony, as well as opening Pacific Symphony's season. Kern will also be featured soloist with the Royal Scottish National Orchestra, both in Glasgow and on their Spring 2019 U.S. tour. She will appear in recitals in Chicago, Dallas, Detroit, Southern California, Zurich, and Milan.



## **CHARLOTTE BLAKE ALSTON**

Charlotte Blake Alston performs in venues throughout North America and abroad. Venues are wide and include the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, the Smithsonian Institution, the Kimmel Center, the Women of the World Festival in Cape Town, South Africa, prisons, detention centers, and a refugee camp in northern Senegal.

She breathes life into traditional and contemporary stories from African and African American oral and cultural traditions. Her solo performances are often enhanced with traditional instruments such as djembe, mbira, shekere, or the 21-stringed kora. In 1999, Alston began studying the kora and the West African history-telling traditions of Senegal, Mali, Guinea, and Guinea Bissau. Her teacher was the highly respected Senegalese griot (jali), the late Djimo Kouyate. She has recently resumed her studies with Malian Virtuoso Yacouba Sissoko.

She brings her stories and songs to national and regional festivals, schools, universities, museums, libraries, and performing arts centers throughout the United States and Canada, as well as local and national radio and television. Her repertoire is wide, and programs are adapted to any grade level or age group.

She has been a featured narrator for several orchestras and conductors including The Philadelphia Orchestra, The Orchestra of St. Luke's, The Cleveland Orchestra, and the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra. She represented Carnegie Hall in 2003 when she hosted a series of concerts in Miyazaki, Japan, with the Eddie Arron String Quartet and fellow storyteller, Motoko. Currently, she performs as both pre-concert artist and host of Carnegie Hall's Family and Education Concert Series. In addition, she previously served as a host for Carnegie Hall's Community Sing-Ins.



## SASHA COOKE

Grammy Award-winning mezzo-soprano Sasha Cooke has been called a “luminous standout” (*New York Times*) and “equal parts poise, radiance and elegant directness” (*Opera News*). Cooke is sought after by the world’s leading orchestras, opera companies, and chamber music ensembles for her versatile repertoire and commitment to new music.

In 2018/2019, Cooke’s operatic engagements will include role debuts as Eduige in *Rodelinda* at the Gran Teatre del Liceu and the title role of *Orlando* with the San Francisco Opera. She returns to the title role in Humperdinck’s *Hänsel und Gretel*, which she performs with the Los Angeles Opera under the direction of James Conlon. Orchestral appearances include the Chicago Symphony Orchestra for Handel’s *Messiah*, Cleveland Orchestra for Mahler’s Symphony No. 2 “Resurrection” with Franz Welser-Möst that incorporates a domestic tour, National Symphony Orchestra for Ravel’s *Shéhérazade* under Mirga Gražinytė-Tyla, and Houston Symphony in her first performance of Dvořák’s *Stabat Mater* led by Andrés Orozco-Estrada. Ms. Cooke celebrates the centennial of Leonard Bernstein’s birth by performing his songs with the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra, in addition to the Symphony No. 1 *Jeremiah* with the Nashville Symphony. She will reprise *Passage* (a work she created at the Kennedy Center in 2017) with the Sioux City Symphony Orchestra.



## AMY KAISER

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.

## ST. LOUIS SYMPHONY CHORUS | 2018/2019

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Scott Meidroth  
Elizabeth Ducey Moss  
Duane L. Olson  
Malachi Owens, Jr.  
Susan D. Patterson  
Matt Pentecost  
David Pierce

Lillian Pinto de Sá  
Sarah Price  
Amy Prince  
Shelly Ragan  
Valerie Christy Reichert  
Kate Reimann  
Mary Robinson  
Terree Rowbottom  
Nathan Tulloch Ruggles  
Paul N. Runnion  
Mark V. Scharff  
Leann Schuering  
Janice Simmons-Johnson  
Charles G. Smith  
Erin Smith  
Adam Stefo  
J. Spencer Stephens  
Alyssa Strauss  
Dean Strouse  
Heather Butler Taylor  
Michelle D. Taylor  
Nora Teipen  
Byron E. Thornton  
Natanja Tomich  
Philip Touchette  
DeWayne Trainer  
Pamela M. Triplett  
David R. Truman  
Greg Upchurch  
Samantha Dane Wagner  
Nancy Maxwell Walther  
Keith Wehmeier  
Nicole Weiss  
April Lowe Whitehead  
Mary Wissinger  
Paula N. Wohldmann  
Ruth Wood-Steed  
Susan Donahue Yates  
Danielle Yilmaz  
Carl Scott Zimmerman



## BARBARA BERNER

Highly regarded by her peers and beloved by her singers, Barbara Berner celebrates her 20th season as Artistic Director of The St. Louis Children's Choirs. Under her direction, Concert Choir has performed at American Choral Directors Association conventions, Carnegie Hall, the White House, and on tour to Australia, Austria, the Czech Republic, Denmark, England, Wales, Germany, Sweden, and Scotland. Berner conducted the National Children's Festival Chorus at Lincoln Center. She has prepared Concert Choir for over ninety performances with the St. Louis

Symphony Orchestra. Berner received a Master of Music degree from Ithaca College and holds an Advanced Certificate from the Kodály Pedagogical Institute in Kecskemét, Hungary. She was awarded Artist-Teacher and Master Teacher Diplomas from the CME Institute for Choral Teacher Education. In 2017, she was awarded the Missouri Arts Award for excellence in Arts Education.

## THE ST. LOUIS CHILDREN'S CHOIRS

Now celebrating its 41st season, The St. Louis Children's Choirs includes 440 singers ages 6-18 from 193 schools and over 80 zip codes. The program is designed to empower young people to reach their full potential by fostering excellence and character development through a rigorous choral music education. Young artists perform repertoire that includes sacred, classical, contemporary, jazz, gospel, and world music representing a variety of cultural traditions and languages. Inspired by a mission of "Shaping young lives through musical excellence," the Children's Choirs is dedicated to serving young musicians from across the St. Louis community.

## THE ST. LOUIS CHILDREN'S CHOIRS | CONCERT CHOIR | 2018/2019

Barbara Berner  
*Artistic Director*

Billie Derham  
*Accompanist*

Esther Appelstein  
Varsha Arun

Bailey Bacher  
Kelly Beekman  
Margaret Beekman

Kelby Birmes

Naomi Bowers

Lilly Byers

Maeta Christian

Stella Cordes

Rebecca Cunningham

Jessica DeMoor

Hannah Donaldson

Katelyn Dougherty

Cecilia Escudero

Katie Furby

Mollie Garrett

Maya Goldwasser

Aliana Good

Milana Gurt

Mira Iyer

Menea Kefalov

Maggie Kiley

Josie Kopff

Yara Levin

Lena Liang

Alyssa Linneman

Isabella Lupescu

Sylvia Martinez

Cate McCandless

Alexia Nastasia

Cate Ohs

Evelyn Ohs

Emma Page

Natalia Parr

Rachel Phillips

Cherry Qiu

Alexander Roesler

Rosy Rojas

Eve Rosenblum

Madelyn Sanderson

Jaden Smith

Alexis Spittal

Alexandria Stewart

Emma Tripppeer

Lauren Vitale

Eva Vognild

Hannah Von Hoffer

Fiona Walsh

Elena Welch

Olivia Whittle

Rebecca Williams