



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

[July 1, 2024]

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**THE ST. LOUIS SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA AND MUSIC DIRECTOR STÉPHANE
DENÈVE ANNOUNCE APPOINTMENT OF SAMUEL HOLLISTER AS ASSISTANT
CONDUCTOR**

Hollister will also serve as The Fred M. Saigh Youth Orchestra Music Director of the St. Louis Symphony Youth Orchestra, a position endowed in perpetuity by The Saigh Foundation beginning in the 24/25 season

(July 1, 2024, St. Louis, MO) – Today, the St. Louis Symphony Orchestra announced that conductor **Samuel Hollister** has been named the SLSO’s Assistant Conductor and The Fred M. Saigh Youth Orchestra Music Director of the St. Louis Symphony Youth Orchestra, an appointment made following an international search.

Stéphane Denève, The Joseph and Emily Rauh Pulitzer Music Director of the St. Louis Symphony Orchestra, said, “In Samuel Hollister, I believe that our SLSO has once again found an exceptional young conductor who will follow our impressive lineage of talented and promising assistants. During his audition with the orchestra, Samuel showed a very sophisticated and mature understanding of the symphonic repertoire, a vivid imagination, and inspiring musicality. I am looking forward to getting to know him more and see him grow also in the position of Music Director of our precious St. Louis Symphony Youth Orchestra.”

Samuel Hollister, Assistant Conductor of the St. Louis Symphony Orchestra and The Fred M. Saigh Youth Orchestra Music Director, said, “From the first moment I heard the SLSO live in January, I knew that this was an astonishingly special orchestra. Working with this orchestra has already been a blessing, not only because of its extraordinary level of musical excellence, but also because of its warmth and its sense of family. I am also deeply grateful that this position will allow me to work with the talented members of the St. Louis Symphony Youth Orchestra. To me, working with young musicians is about much more than just fostering musical excellence and passion: it’s about mentorship, too. I have always relished that opportunity to get to know young musicians personally and to help them navigate their musical lives.”

Marie-Hélène Bernard, President and CEO of the St. Louis Symphony Orchestra, said, “We are excited to welcome Samuel to our organization and know that he will greatly benefit from working with Stéphane Deneve and many esteemed guest conductors. We were impressed by his commitment to education, which positions him as a great leader of our Youth Orchestra. We are also grateful to The Saigh Foundation for recognizing the importance of music in the development of young people. The foundation’s endowment of our Youth Orchestra Music



Director position is a testament to its commitment to the wellbeing and enrichment of the lives of youth in the St. Louis region.”

In his role as Assistant Conductor, Hollister will assume a variety of conducting responsibilities. He will make his St. Louis debut conducting the SLSO at its Concert for Kids: Wild Symphony performance on October 5, 2024, at the Touhill Performing Arts Center at the University of Missouri–St. Louis. He will also lead the orchestra in several education concerts throughout the season; at the SLSO’s performance at Southeast Missouri State University in Cape Girardeau, Missouri; and at the annual reading of new music by student composers at the University of Missouri. Central to his role, Hollister will assist Denève and an international roster of guest conductors during classical concert weeks.

In addition to his role as Assistant Conductor, Hollister will develop programming and lead the St. Louis Symphony Youth Orchestra (YO) as the ensemble’s Music Director. Founded in 1970 by then-Assistant Conductor Leonard Slatkin, the YO impacts more than 120 of the region’s rising musicians representing more than 50 schools annually, performing three concerts each season. Its members perform advanced orchestral repertoire and receive mentorship from SLSO musicians. There are currently more than 2,500 YO alumni, many who have pursued music as a career path.

Endowment of Youth Orchestra Music Director position

Beginning with the 24/25 season, the YO Music Director position has been endowed in perpetuity as the result of a generous gift by The Saigh Foundation, named after the late Fred M. Saigh—a champion of St. Louis institutions and former owner of the St. Louis Cardinals. As a result of the generous gift, the YO Music Director position has been renamed **The Fred M. Saigh Youth Orchestra Music Director**. Funds from the endowment will provide a permanent base of funding that will support the YO Music Director position, a key role in the SLSO that mentors and inspires the most accomplished young musicians in the St. Louis region. Established in 2000, The Saigh Foundation works to enhance the quality of life for children and youth in the St. Louis metropolitan area by supporting educational and health-related charitable institutions and organizations.

About Samuel Hollister

A multi-hyphenate musician, Hollister is a doctoral candidate in conducting at the Yale School of Music and the Music Director of the Civic Orchestra of New Haven (Connecticut). He earned his master’s degrees in orchestral conducting and music theory pedagogy from the Peabody Institute and his bachelor’s degree in both music and mathematics from Yale University. In 2018, he founded Aurora Collaborative, a Rhode Island non-profit community organization blending music with art and writing, where he advocated for new music and innovative concert experiences. Hollister—a pianist, harpsichordist, composer, and theorist—is an advocate for new music and the rediscovery of forgotten music. He has commissioned several new works



and was named a conducting fellow and pianist at Opera Saratoga in 2022, and he served as senior staff at Peabody’s Opera Department from 2020–2022.

Hollister’s initial contract will run through the 2025/2026 season. He succeeds former Assistant Conductor Stephanie Childress who held the same position with the SLSO from 2020 through May 2023.

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 145th year with the 2024/2025 season and its sixth with [Stéphane Denève, The Joseph and Emily Rauh Pulitzer Music Director](#). Widely considered one of the leading American orchestras, the Grammy® Award-winning SLSO maintains its commitment to artistic excellence, educational impact, and community collaborations—all in service to its mission of enriching lives through the power of music.

The transformational expansion and renovation of its historic home, Powell Hall, slated to be completed in 2025, builds on the institution’s momentum as a civic leader in convening individuals, creators, and ideas, while fostering a culture welcoming to all. Committed to building community through compelling and inclusive musical experiences, the SLSO continues its longstanding focus on equity, diversity, inclusion, and access, embracing its strengths as a responsive, nimble organization, while investing in partnerships locally and elevating its presence globally. For more information, visit slo.org.

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