



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**THE ST. LOUIS SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA AND MUSIC DIRECTOR STÉPHANE
DENÈVE WELCOME THE ST. LOUIS COMMUNITY TO FOREST PARK FOR ANNUAL
FREE COMMUNITY CONCERT, SEPTEMBER 19**

Denève leads the SLSO in its annual concert for the community in works by Ludwig van Beethoven, Hector Berlioz, Edvard Grieg, Scott Joplin, Hugh Martin, W.A. Mozart, John Philip Sousa, Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky and John Williams, with guest vocalist Kennedy Holmes

**Celebratory opening of SLSO's 145th season includes food trucks on Art Hill and concludes
with fireworks display over Forest Park's Grand Basin**

(August 15, 2024, St. Louis, MO) – Led by Music Director Stéphane Denève, the St. Louis Symphony Orchestra marks the beginning of its 2024/2025 season with the return of its free concert in Forest Park at 7:00pm CDT, Thursday, September 19, on Art Hill. Since its inaugural Forest Park concert more than 50 years ago, the SLSO has performed for thousands of people each year as a community celebration of music and the kick-off of the SLSO's season.

A portion program serves as preview for the orchestra's 145th season and Denève's sixth as The Joseph and Emily Rauh Pulitzer Music Director. Selections include favorites from symphonies by Ludwig van Beethoven, W.A. Mozart, and Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky. The orchestra brings a local flair to the concert with performances of St. Louis-native Scott Joplin's *The Cascades*—written for the 1904 World's Fair—and a tribute to St. Louis' turn hosting the 1904 Olympics with John Williams' *Olympic Fanfare and Theme*. The orchestra will be joined by guest vocalist, St. Louis native Kennedy Holmes, a finalist on NBC's *The Voice*, for performances of "The Trolley Song" from *Meet Me in St. Louis*—also a nod to the World's Fair—in her third appearance with the SLSO. A close collaborator of the inimitable film composer John Williams, Denève programmed selections of Williams' score from *E.T. the Extraterrestrial*, which the orchestra will play in its entirety September 21-22 at Stifel Theatre. The festivities end with a show-stopping fireworks display following John Philip Sousa's patriotic anthem *The Stars and Stripes Forever*.

Performed in memory of longtime SLSO supporter Mary Ann Lee, this concert marks the 56th anniversary of the first Forest Park concert in 1968. Attendees are encouraged to come early, bring chairs and blankets, and enjoy food trucks at the top of Art Hill. Designed to engage families with children, the SLSO's Education and Community Partnerships team will host a family fun zone at the top of Art Hill from 6:00 to 7:00pm, engaging children through musical activities, including music creation and conducting members of the St. Louis Symphony Youth Orchestra. SLSO staff and volunteers will hand out glow sticks for children to join Denève in



conducting the orchestra. Local vendors at the concert will include Angie Burger, ByJack, Cajun Seduction, Delicious Delights, Doggie Mac’s Food Truck, Falafel Saha Food Truck, Fire and Ice Cream Truck, Go Gyro Go, Grace Meat + Three, Holy Crepe, Honey Bee Tea, Picture Perfect Panini, Ron Ron’s Black Fried Rice, Scoops of Joy, STL BarKeep, Takozz Real Mexican Food, The Popcorn Bar, and Urban Chestnut Brewing Company. Food and drink vendors will be available starting at 5:00pm.

Audiences can sign up to receive updates about the concert, including information about food trucks, parking, and shuttles, at slo.org/forestpark.

Following the opening of the season in Forest Park, Denève leads the orchestra in performances of the complete score to *E.T. the Extraterrestrial*, with music by John Williams, at Stifel Theatre as the film plays (September 21-22). The orchestra’s first classical concerts of the season, September 27 and 29, welcome violinist and friend of the SLSO Gil Shaham for performances of Mason Bates’ *Nomad Concerto* alongside Hector Berlioz’s *Symphonie fantastique*. As the transformational expansion and renovation of the orchestra’s home—Powell Hall—enters its final year, the SLSO will perform throughout the St. Louis region, most notably at the Touhill Performing Arts Center at the University of Missouri—St. Louis and Stifel Theatre.

Tickets for all 24/25 season concerts are on sale now and can be purchased at slo.org or by calling the SLSO Box Office at 314-534-1700.

Calendar listing:

The St. Louis Symphony Orchestra and Music Director Stéphane Denève open its 2024/2025 season with a free community concert on Forest Park’s Art Hill at 7:00pm Thursday, September 19. The annual concert—featuring classical music, film music, and patriotic tunes—concludes with a festive fireworks display.

Thursday, September 19, 2024, 7:00pm CDT
Art Hill at Forest Park, 1 Fine Arts Drive, St. Louis, Missouri, 63110

Stéphane Denève, conductor
Kennedy Holmes, vocals

John Stafford Smith
Arranged by Adam Maness

The Star-Spangled Banner

J. Rosamund Johnson
Arranged by Hale Smith

“Lift Every Voice and Sing”

Ludwig van Beethoven
Hector Berlioz

Molto vivace from Symphony No. 9
“Hungarian March” from *The Damnation of Faust*

W.A. Mozart
Edvard Grieg

Allegro from Symphony No. 31, “Paris”
Selections from *Peer Gynt* Suite No. 1



Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky	Finale from Symphony No. 5
Various	<i>Armed Forces Salute</i>
Arranged by Hayman/Kessler	
Hugh Martin	“The Trolley Song” from <i>Meet Me in St. Louis</i>
Arranged by Salinger/Russ	
Scott Joplin	<i>The Cascades</i>
Arranged by Virgil Barstad	
John Williams	<i>Olympic Fanfare and Theme</i>
John Williams	<i>Flying Theme</i> from <i>E.T.</i>
John Philip Sousa	<i>The Stars and Stripes Forever</i>

This concert is performed in memory of Mary Ann Lee.

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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