



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

[August 21, 2025]

Contacts: St. Louis Symphony Orchestra: Eric Dundon | [ericd@slso.org](mailto:ericd@slso.org), 314-286-4134

National/International: Nikki Scandalios | [nikki@scandaliospr.com](mailto:nikki@scandaliospr.com), 704-340-4094

**THE ST. LOUIS SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA CELEBRATES REOPENING OF  
POWELL HALL AT THE JACK C. TAYLOR MUSIC CENTER**

**Opening Weekend concerts, September 26-28, feature Music Director Stéphane Denève leading the orchestra in world premiere performances of Composer in Residence Kevin Puts' *House of Tomorrow*—with mezzo-soprano Joyce DiDonato and the St. Louis Symphony Chorus—and James Lee III's *Fanfare for Universal Hope*; concerts also include first SLSO performances of Joan Tower's *Fanfare for the Uncommon Woman No. 1*, Aaron Copland's *Fanfare for the Common Man*, and Richard Strauss' *Ein Heldenleben***

**Ribbon cutting ceremony at the Jack C. Taylor Music Center on September 19; opening weeks at the historic venue include a gala; social events; symphonic programs with Denève, Conductor Laureate Leonard Slatkin, and acclaimed guest artists; films; a tribute to Chuck Berry; chamber music; and a community open house**

**(August 21, 2025, St. Louis, MO)**—Today, the St. Louis Symphony Orchestra (SLSO) announced details for the reopening of its historic home, Powell Hall at the Jack C. Taylor Music Center, following a transformational, two-year expansion and renovation project. The celebratory opening of the institution's 2025/26 season, its 146th, serves as a milestone moment for the orchestra and for Powell Hall, which turns 100 in November and has served as the SLSO's home since 1968. Led by Stéphane Denève in his seventh season as The Joseph and Emily Rauh Pulitzer Music Director, the SLSO's Opening Weekend is September 26-28. Anchored by a program that highlights the virtuosity of SLSO musicians, the public opening of the venue includes celebrations held within the transformed venue and also marks the start of award-winning composer Kevin Puts' tenure as SLSO Composer in Residence. Opening Weekend Concerts are 10:30am, Friday, September 26, 7:30pm, Saturday, September 27, and 3:00pm, Sunday, September 28.

Denève and the SLSO reunite with Powell Hall in a celebration of the past, present, and future, paying homage to the building's historic place in St. Louis' civic life while looking toward increased artistic, community, and educational opportunities within the expanded space. Opening Weekend concerts open with a trio of fanfares by Aaron Copland, Joan Tower—who served as an SLSO Composer in Residence in the 1980s—and the world premiere of James Lee III's *Fanfare for Universal Hope*. The SLSO's commission of Lee reflects the close artistic collaboration between the composer and orchestra during Denève's tenure, which has seen performances of four of his pieces, including the world premiere of *Visions of Cahokia* in 2023, inspired by the local indigenous civilization. Multi-Grammy-Award-winning mezzo-soprano



Joyce DiDonato and members of the St. Louis Symphony Chorus join the orchestra for the world premiere of a song cycle by Kevin Puts, *House of Tomorrow*, which draws text and musical inspiration from the poetry of Khalil Gibran. The concerts conclude with Richard Strauss' *Ein Heldenleben*, telling a triumphant tale of adventure and accomplishment.

All concerts will take place at Powell Hall at the Jack C. Taylor Music Center (718 N. Grand Blvd.), which will reopen in September 2025 following a two-year expansion and renovation of Powell Hall, the first major project at the historic venue since the 1960s. The \$140 million project, designed by the internationally acclaimed architecture firm Snøhetta with local firm Christner Architects as the architect of record, centers the SLSO's priorities on artistic excellence, community engagement, and education leadership. The project provides new and improved amenities for audiences and artists, while preserving and enhancing the internationally recognized acoustics and aesthetics of the concert hall. A new Education and Learning Center provides additional space for the SLSO's two resident choruses, its Youth Orchestra, and a robust portfolio of education and community programs. The 25/26 season programming showcases the virtuosity and nimbleness of the orchestra musicians and guest artists, and includes a wide variety of music, responding to the community's diverse tastes and interests.

Opening Weekend events follow the SLSO's ceremonial opening of the season, the free community concert in Forest Park on Wednesday, September 17. First given in 1968, this annual performance under the stars welcomes tens of thousands of music lovers to Art Hill from across the region.

### Reopening events

In addition to Opening Weekend concerts, special events and a vast range of concerts celebrate the opening of the Jack C. Taylor Music Center and honor the centennial of Powell Hall. These events showcase the transformation of the venue, inviting guests to experience the grand and welcoming architecture of the new foyer and Education and Learning Center, as well as rediscover the magic that has made Powell Hall an internationally renowned concert hall.

Additional reopening events include:

- A ceremonial ribbon cutting of the Jack C. Taylor Music Center, marking the start of a new chapter for the historic venue;
- Celebratory social events surrounding each of the Opening Weekend concert, September 26-28;
- A vast range of concerts in the first six weeks, featuring performances of beloved repertoire including Edward Elgar's Symphony No. 1, Jean Sibelius' Symphony No. 2, and Benjamin Britten's *War Requiem*; appearances by St. Louis-favorite artists including Conductor Laureate Leonard Slatkin, pianist Emanuel Ax, and violinist Augustin Hadelich; performances of the score to *Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone™* while the film plays live; a special tribute to St. Louis rock icon Chuck Berry; and chamber music featuring SLSO musicians; and



- A free community open house day, welcoming the region to explore the venue alongside performances of musicians from across the SLSO's family of ensembles, November 8.

Details about all concerts are available at [slo.org](https://slo.org). Details about the November 8 community open house will be announced later. Tickets for all concerts and Opening Weekend special events are on sale now, and may be purchased at [slo.org](https://slo.org) or by calling the Box Office at 314-534-1700. A full concert calendar is available at [slo.org](https://slo.org) or on the SLSO's mobile app available for iOS or Android.

### Kevin Puts, Composer in Residence

In addition to marking the milestone reopening of Powell Hall at the Jack C. Taylor Music Center, Opening Weekend also celebrates the dynamic partnership between composer Kevin Puts, Denève, and the SLSO. Honoring a remarkable 20-year musical relationship, Denève has named Puts the SLSO's Composer in Residence for the 25/26 season. The Opening Weekend world premiere of Puts' *House of Tomorrow*, featuring mezzo-soprano Joyce DiDonato, is the first of several performances of Puts' music in the 25/26 season. The orchestra also performs *Contact* (March 20 and 22, 2026), *Concerto for Orchestra* (March 27-28, 2026), and *Virelai* (May 8-10, 2026), as well as *Home*, a string quartet piece performed at a Live at The Sheldon chamber music concert (February 5, 2026). The SLSO commissioned and gave the world premiere performances of *Concerto for Orchestra* (January 2023) and *Virelai* (September 2019).

As Composer in Residence, Puts will participate in key initiatives, engage with audiences, and join in education and learning opportunities with students and musicians in the St. Louis Symphony Youth Orchestra. He will visit the orchestra on two occasions—in September 2025 and March 2026.

Since the first SLSO performances of his music in 2004, the orchestra has performed many of Puts' pieces ranging from full orchestral works to chamber works and choral music sung by the St. Louis Symphony Chorus. The orchestra will release an album of Puts' music on September 19 on the Delos label, featuring *Concerto for Orchestra*, *Virelai*, and *Silent Night Elegy*, an SLSO co-commissioned work performed by the orchestra in February 2020.

### 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 146th year with the 2025/26 season and its seventh 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 project that expands and renovates the orchestra's historic home, Powell Hall—designed by Snøhetta and creating the Jack C. Taylor Music Center—will be completed in September 2025. This milestone builds on the institution's momentum as a civic



St. Louis Symphony  
Orchestra

Stéphane Denève : Music Director

News

leader in convening individuals, creators, and ideas, while fostering a culture welcoming to all.  
For more information, visit [slo.org](https://slo.org).

# # #