



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**THE ST. LOUIS SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA WITH MUSIC DIRECTOR STÉPHANE DENÈVE AND THE IN UNISON CHORUS PERFORM WORLD PREMIERE OF SLSO COMMISSION: NATHALIE JOACHIM'S *FAMILY* TO CLOSE CLASSICAL SEASON, MAY 8-10**

**The St. Louis Symphony IN UNISON Chorus, a resident SLSO chorus that specializes in the performance and preservation of music from the African diaspora, joins the SLSO for Joachim's work, written specifically for the chorus**

**Denève also leads Kevin Puts' *Virelai* and Maurice Ravel's complete *Daphnis and Chloé* with the St. Louis Symphony Chorus to close the monumental first season in the new Jack C. Taylor Music Center; tickets start at \$20**

**(April 14, 2026, St. Louis, MO)** – In the classical finale of its 2025/26 season, the St. Louis Symphony Orchestra, Music Director Stéphane Denève, and the IN UNISON Chorus will give the world premiere performance of Nathalie Joachim's *Family*, which the SLSO commissioned specifically for the IN UNISON Chorus. Concerts also include performances of Kevin Puts' *Virelai* (after Guillaume de Machaut), and Maurice Ravel's complete *Daphnis and Chloé* featuring the St. Louis Symphony Chorus. The concerts are 7:30pm, Friday, May 8 and Saturday, May 9, and 3:00pm, Sunday, May 10.

The conclusion of the SLSO's 146th season brings together more than 300 artists on stage, elevating the transformative power of music and community. To mark the classical finale of the first season at the newly opened Jack C. Taylor Music Center, Denève programmed pieces that feature three SLSO ensembles: the orchestra, the St. Louis Symphony Chorus, and the St. Louis Symphony IN UNISON Chorus, as well as a piece by Composer in Residence Kevin Puts in a festive program that celebrates the institution's commitment to bold artistry.

**Stéphane Denève, the SLSO's Joseph and Emily Rauh Pulitzer Music Director**, said, "I cannot dream of a more exciting and meaningful end to this remarkable season, sharing the stage with 300 musicians to triumphantly close our classical season—the first in the spectacular Jack C. Taylor Music Center and the renovated Powell Hall. The IN UNISON Chorus and its director Kevin McBeth hold a special place in my heart—they are invaluable ambassadors for choral and orchestral music in the community. It will be a great joy to showcase their talents in an inspiring world premiere by the composer Nathalie Joachim. And to add to the celebration, I'm again delighted to welcome our magnificent St. Louis Symphony Chorus and its director Erin Freeman to the stage for a piece very dear to me: Ravel's fabulously colorful ballet *Daphnis and Chloé*. To complete the theme of family, we open with a work by Composer in Residence Kevin Puts, a wonderful friend of the orchestra."



In composing *Family*, Joachim integrated the voices and stories of IN UNISON Chorus members through interviews she conducted. This collaboration is a continuation of a growing relationship between the Grammy® Award-nominated Joachim and the SLSO. The SLSO also programmed her piece for solo cello and recorded vocals, *Dam Mwen Yo*, as part of its digital 2020/21 Live at the Pulitzer season—an annual chamber music series in collaboration with the Pulitzer Arts Foundation. Denève and the SLSO opened its 2022/23 season with performances of Joachim’s *Fanm d’Ayiti* (Women of Haiti), with Joachim herself performing vocals and flute in the piece. The IN UNISON Chorus, one of two SLSO resident choruses with more than 120 singers that specializes in music from the African diaspora, joins the SLSO on this classical program for performances of Joachim’s piece. The chorus has been under the direction of Kevin McBeth since 2011.

The commission of Joachim’s *Family* is supported by a grant from the National Endowment for the Arts. This program is presented by the Whitaker Foundation, which supports creative experiences throughout the region to foster discovery between neighbors and the community. The IN UNISON Chorus, an extension of the SLSO’s IN UNISON programming that creates community connections, has been supported since its inception in 1994 by Bayer Fund.

The concert opens with St. Louis native Puts’ *Virelai* (after Guillaume de Machaut), commissioned by the SLSO and performed at Denève’s first concert as Music Director. The piece was recorded by the SLSO and released in September 2025 on the Delos label as part of an album of Puts’ music commissioned or co-commissioned by the orchestra.

Denève and the orchestra conclude the program with Maurice Ravel’s complete music to the ballet *Daphnis and Chloé*. Featuring the St. Louis Symphony Chorus under the direction of Erin Freeman, Ravel’s score is often considered the pinnacle of French Impressionist music with its lush harmonies and lyrical melodies.

Tickets start at \$20 (\$15 for students) and are on sale now. Tickets 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. Audiences can attend a Pre-Concert Conversation, an engaging discussion about the music and artists on the program, one hour prior to each classical concert. Tune in to St. Louis Public Radio or Classic 107 on Saturday, May 9, at 7:30pm for a live broadcast of the performance. Listen on air (90.7 FM KWMU or 107.3 FM) or online ([stlpr.org](https://stlpr.org)).

**Calendar listing:**

**Friday, May 8, 7:30pm CDT**

**Saturday, May 9, 7:30pm CDT**

**Sunday, May 10, 3:00pm CDT**

Stéphane Denève, conductor

Kevin McBeth, conductor

St. Louis Symphony IN UNISON Chorus | Kevin McBeth, director

St. Louis Symphony Chorus | Erin Freeman, director



**ST. LOUIS  
SYMPHONY  
ORCHESTRA**

STÉPHANE DENÈVE, MUSIC DIRECTOR

**NEWS**

**Kevin Puts**

*Virelai* (after Guillaume de Machaut)

**Nathalie Joachim**

*Family* (**World Premiere/SLSO Commission**)

**Maurice Ravel**

*Daphnis and Chloé*

*The performance of Natalie Joachim's Family is supported by The Whitaker Foundation, The Steward Family Foundation, and the National Endowment for the Arts. IN UNISON is supported by Bayer Fund.*

**About the St. Louis Symphony Orchestra**

Celebrated as one of today's most innovative, 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 eighth 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—opened in September 2025. This milestone builds on the institution's momentum as a civic leader in convening individuals, creators, and ideas, while fostering a culture welcoming to all. For more information, visit [slo.org](https://slo.org).

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