



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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STÉPHANE DENÈVE AND THE ST. LOUIS SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA ANNOUNCE FIVE NEW FULL-TIME MUSICIANS

Appointments made to Principal Harp, Principal Tuba, Associate Principal Trumpet, clarinet, and double bass positions

(September 2, 2026, St. Louis, MO) – The St. Louis Symphony Orchestra and Music Director Stéphane Denève announce the appointment of five new full-time musicians as the SLSO begins its 2026/27 season, the orchestra's 147th.

The SLSO's 26/27 season begins on September 16 with the annual free community concert in Forest Park with the opening week of classical programming on September 26–27 at the Jack C. Taylor Music Center.

The five musicians joining the orchestra at the start of the 26/27 season are:

Bridget Conley, Principal Tuba and the Lesley A. Waldheim Chair, joins the SLSO following her tenure as a fellow with the New World Symphony in Miami. A master's degree recipient from the Yale School of Music, she has performed with ensembles including the Philadelphia Orchestra, the Cleveland Orchestra, Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra, the Florida Orchestra, Britt Festival Orchestra, and Seraph Brass. Conley was awarded the New World Symphony's Judith Rodin Fellowship for an Outstanding Woman Musician. As a soloist, Conley was the winner of the 2021 Leonard Falcone International Euphonium and Tuba Solo Artist Competition. She is also the co-founder of Sisters in Sound, an online platform that provides free access to professionally engraved arrangements and recordings of works by early women composers for brass ensembles.

She fills the seat previously held by Michael Sanders.

Grace Roepke, Principal Harp and the Elizabeth Eliot Mallinckrodt Chair, was most recently the Principal Harpist of the Louisville Orchestra. As the first and only harpist to be awarded the Grand and First Prize at the FRIENDS of the Minnesota Orchestra Young Artist Competition, she has also received top prizes in numerous competitions including the American Harp Society National Competition, Dutch World Harp Competition, and Lyon & Healy Awards. Roepke received her bachelor's and master's degrees from the Cleveland Institute of Music. A native of Minnesota, she has spent summers at various music festivals, including the Peninsula Music Festival, Grant Park Music Festival, Lucerne Festival Academy, Round Top Festival Institute, and Texas Music Festival.

She fills the seat previously held by Allegra Lilly.



Omri Barak, Associate Principal Trumpet, joins the SLSO from across the Show-Me State, where he served as Associate Principal and Second Trumpet of the Kansas City Symphony. Before that position, he served in the SLSO as acting second trumpet in the 2023/24 season. At age 19, he was named Principal Trumpet of the Allentown Symphony. He has been a frequent guest musician with the Pittsburgh, St. Louis, and Chicago Symphony Orchestras. In addition to his orchestral playing, he is an avid chamber musician and collaborator. Barak is an alumnus of the Curtis Institute of Music and Rice University's Shepherd School of Music.

He fills the seat previously held by Tom Drake, who retired at the conclusion of the 22/23 season.

Kamalia Freyling, second clarinet, joins the orchestra after serving as Acting Second Clarinet in the Detroit Symphony Orchestra for the 2025/26 season. Prior to that, she spent six seasons as Second and E-flat Clarinet in the Rochester Philharmonic Orchestra. Freyling has performed with orchestras both nationally and internationally, playing with the Buffalo Philharmonic, the National Symphony Orchestra of the Dominican Republic, the Oregon Bach Festival Modern Orchestra, the Sun Valley Music Festival Orchestra, New York String Orchestra, the Albany Symphony Orchestra, the Spoleto Festival Orchestra, and the Verbier Festival Orchestra. Freyling earned a master's degree from The Juilliard School and a bachelor's degree with a Performer's Certificate from the Eastman School of Music.

She fills the seat previously held by Tina Ward, who retired at the conclusion of the 17/18 season.

Teddy Gabrielides, double bass, joins the orchestra as a full-time member of the section after playing in the section on one-year contracts since the 24/25 season. Gabrielides grew up in Chicago and began his bass studies at age 10 before pursuing his undergraduate studies at the University of Southern California Thornton School of Music, and then DePaul University for his graduate studies. He attended Domaine Forget and the Aspen Music Festival several times each and has served as co-principal bass of the Civic Orchestra of Chicago. Before coming to St. Louis, Gabrielides played for a year in the Milwaukee Symphony Orchestra and was a regular substitute in the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, with whom he played on tours both domestic and international.

About the St. Louis Symphony Orchestra

Celebrated as one of today's most exciting, innovative, and enduring orchestras, the St. Louis Symphony Orchestra is the nation's second oldest, marking its 147th year with the 2026/27 season. The visionary and heartfelt approach of Stéphane Denève, The Joseph and Emily Rauh Pulitzer Music Director, anchors more than 400 extraordinary artists across four ensembles.

A leading American orchestra, the Grammy Award-winning SLSO is dedicated to its mission of enriching lives through the power of music, fostering a vibrant and connected community. The SLSO is committed to making music more accessible to all, furthered by the September 2025 reopening of its expanded and renovated home, the Jack C. Taylor Music Center, with historic Powell Hall at its heart. A cornerstone of



ST. LOUIS
SYMPHONY
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STÉPHANE DENÈVE, MUSIC DIRECTOR

NEWS

the St. Louis region, the SLSO partners with more than 150 community organizations to deepen music access.

The SLSO shapes the orchestra of the future through its commitment to integrity, innovation, collaboration, inclusion, and responsiveness, elevating St. Louis as a global destination.

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