

ST. LOUIS SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

STÉPHANE DENÈVE, MUSIC DIRECTOR

Program Book

NOTED



Sep–Oct 2026

26
/ 27
147th Season



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On the cover (from left): George Goad, Julie Thayer, Shannon Wood, Yin Xiong, and Angie Smart.
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From the President



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Welcome to Powell Hall at the Jack C. Taylor Music Center. Thank you for joining us as we kick off the St. Louis Symphony Orchestra's 147th season. We are grateful to have you with us for a year of extraordinary music, meaningful connections, and unforgettable experiences.

Led by Music Director Stéphane Denève's vision and showcasing our musicians' remarkable artistry, our 26/27 season offers everything that is exciting about live symphonic music. An extraordinary array of acclaimed guest conductors and artists, many making their SLSO debut, join our exceptional orchestra and elevate St. Louis as a national and international music destination. Premieres of new works by Christopher Stark, Ülo Krigul, Wynton Marsalis, and Kevin Puts advance the SLSO's reputation as one of America's most innovative orchestras and reflect a long-standing commitment to championing today's composers. We launch new programs for teens this season and continue to expand our education and family concerts, engaging a broad community of teachers and students from pre-K to college.

Two landmark anniversaries are being celebrated this season: the 100th anniversary of our Symphony Volunteer Association (SVA) and the 50th anniversary of the St. Louis Symphony Chorus. Both have shaped an unparalleled cultural heritage and have enriched our orchestra's extraordinary history, affirming our commitment to fostering a thriving future for music. Join us to celebrate the SVA and the Chorus across a series of events, including a choral showcase led by Director Erin Freeman (May 2) and several concerts featuring works by Stravinsky, Mahler, and Ravel.

Our mission extends far beyond the Jack C. Taylor Music Center. Together, we enrich lives through music, creating moments of connection and inspiration across our St. Louis community. Thank you for making our mission possible. We invite you to deepen your impact by visiting slo.org/donate and becoming a Friend of Music. Enjoy the performance!

A stylized, handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Marie-Hélène Bernard'.

Marie-Hélène Bernard
President and CEO



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Blanche Hoschede-Monet, French, 1865–1947, *The Small Grainstacks (detail)*, c.1894; oil on canvas; 18 1/8 x 22 1/16 inches; Alice and Rick Johnson 2024.05. Image courtesy of Ekemazi Museum of Art; photo by Shanti Knight

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We're glad you're here! A few tips to help you enjoy your visit to Powell Hall at the Jack C. Taylor Music Center:

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Enhance your experience with the new SLSO app (for iOS or Android). Access digital tickets, bar menus, discounts, and more. Save 20% on your first in-app purchase!

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Stéphane Denève

**The Joseph and Emily Rauh Pulitzer
Music Director**



© Jon Gitchoff

Known for his visionary storytelling and heartfelt interpretations, Stéphane Denève, The Joseph and Emily Rauh Pulitzer Music Director, joined the St. Louis Symphony Orchestra in September 2018.

Throughout his remarkable tenure, Stéphane has shaped his Music Directorship around creating extraordinary experiences that give an authentic voice to music. An expert with repertoire across genre and time, he has cultivated specific recognition for his interpretation of French, American, vocal, and operatic music. Through thoughtful and innovative programming, he maintains an enthusiasm for music and composers of today. A gifted communicator and educator, he is committed to inspiring the next generation of musicians and listeners, as well as nurturing the SLSO's role as a creative leader for the St. Louis community and making orchestral music accessible to all.

Recognized internationally for the exceptional quality of his performances and programming, he regularly appears at major concert venues with the world's greatest orchestras and soloists. In addition to his role in St. Louis, he is the Artistic Director of the New World Symphony (Miami) and the Principal Guest Conductor of the Netherlands Radio Philharmonic. He has held leadership positions at the Brussels Philharmonic, the Philadelphia Orchestra, and the Royal Scottish National Orchestra.

Since his first visit to St. Louis in 2003, Stéphane has charmed audiences with his wit, warmth, and genuine passion for music and the St. Louis region. He is shaping the future of the SLSO through his appointments of artistic leaders and one-third of the orchestra to date, advanced audience-building initiatives with new happy hour concerts, and made music more accessible to the community through cross-artistic collaborations with partnering St. Louis arts organizations. He has welcomed music lovers to SLSO performances in St. Louis, at universities throughout the Midwest, and in some of Europe's most-respected concert halls.



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About the SLSO

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



© Sam Fentress

St. Louis Symphony Orchestra

147th Season 2026/27

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First Impressions

Expanding the SLSO's Repertoire

By Maddie Hurst

Music Director Stéphane Denève leads a variety of classical programs featuring first-time SLSO performances during the 2026/27 season.

© Miranda Munguia

During the 2026/27 season, St. Louis Symphony Orchestra musicians will perform more than three dozen pieces for the first time. These range from world premieres and chamber music pieces to concertos to live-to-picture film scores and orchestral works by internationally celebrated composers.

The SLSO remains steadfast in its commitment to programming music by composers of today, a value that is central to the institution's artistic identity. Across the 26/27 season, including the Live at the Pulitzer and Live at The Sheldon chamber music series, classical concerts, and special presentations, more than 40 percent of the music performed will be by living composers, reflecting the orchestra's priority of bringing never-before-performed works to St. Louis audiences.

Here are just a few of this season's first-time performances.

Luciano Berio's *Folk Songs* Oct 2 & 4

Conductor Dalia Stasevska makes her SLSO debut leading the orchestra's first performance of Luciano Berio's *Folk Songs*, featuring soprano Aphrodite Patoulidou, also making her SLSO debut. Composed in 1964, *Folk Songs* draws on traditional melodies from the United States, Armenia, France, Italy, Azerbaijan, and elsewhere to explore an array of cultural influences and storytelling.

Edward Scissorhands in Concert Oct 23–25

The SLSO joins a select group of orchestras to present *Edward Scissorhands* in concert for the first time in a symphonic setting, performing Danny Elfman's beloved score live alongside the film on the big screen. Conducted by Larry Loh, the film's ethereal, enchanting music is imperative to the audience's journey with Edward.

Kris Bowers' *For a Younger Self* Jan 16–17

Composer Kris Bowers' *For a Younger Self* receives its first SLSO performance, featuring violinist Charles Yang and conducted by Paolo Bortolameolli. Known for his music for TV and films including *The Color Purple*, *King Richard*, and *Bridgerton*, this is Bowers' first work for a concert setting. The piece was inspired by feelings of fear and uncertainty when he and Yang moved to New York City to attend The Juilliard School. Bowers said the work "is an effort to encapsulate the essence of a young hero's journey—one where the protagonist, embodied by Charles and his violin, embarks upon the adventure of self-discovery amidst the challenges of young life in an unfamiliar space."

Mel Bonis' *Salomé* Jan 29–30

Conductor Anja Bihlmaier makes her SLSO debut leading a program of captivating storytelling as the orchestra brings music by French composer Mel Bonis to the Powell Hall stage for the first time with her *Salomé* from *Trois femmes de légende* (Three Women of Legend). During Bonis' youth, women were not encouraged to pursue musical careers and were prohibited from publishing music. Bonis fought against and defied the system, going on to compose more than 300 works.

Wynton Marsalis' *Symphony No. 5, "Liberty"* Mar 12–14

The SLSO and the Jazz at Lincoln Center Orchestra come together for the St. Louis premiere of Wynton Marsalis' *Symphony No. 5, "Liberty"*, an SLSO co-commission that facilitates a beautiful marriage between symphonic orchestra and jazz. The SLSO has a long-standing relationship with Marsalis and previously recorded and released his *Swing Symphony* in 2019.



Courtesy of the Japan Art Association

Wynton Marsalis joins the SLSO and the Jazz at Lincoln Center Orchestra for the performance of his *Symphony No. 5, "Liberty"*, an SLSO co-commission.

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Led by conductor Teddy Abrams in his SLSO debut, this performance commemorates Marsalis' final season as Artistic Director of Jazz at Lincoln Center, marking nearly four decades of artistic leadership.

Christopher Stark's Violin Concerto "Vesper Flights" Apr 9–11

Music Director Stéphane Denève leads the world premiere of Christopher Stark's violin concerto "Vesper Flights", written for SLSO Associate Concertmaster Erin Schreiber. The work was inspired by the remarkable flights that swifts take at dusk and dawn, ascending to a height of 6,000 feet. Both Stark and Schreiber find a muse in nature—Stark drawing from his home state of Montana's landscapes and Schreiber from her fascination for birds and passion for outdoor photography. A longtime SLSO collaborator and curator for the Live at the Pulitzer concert series, Stark teaches composition at Washington University in St. Louis.



© Joan Fisher

Christopher Stark composed his Violin Concerto "Vesper Flights" for SLSO Associate Concertmaster Erin Schreiber, who will give the world premiere in April 2027.

Secrets of the Whales in Concert Apr 23–24

The season also includes the SLSO's first performance of a *National Geographic* documentary in concert and the orchestra's first performance of a film score composed by a woman. French composer Raphaëlle Thibaut's music accompanies *Secrets of the Whales*, an acclaimed series that explores the intelligence, communication, and family bonds of whale species around the globe.

The SLSO's 147th season was intentionally curated with audiences of all ages, interests, and musical backgrounds in mind. These first-time additions to the orchestra's repertoire represent just one facet of a season designed to inspire curiosity, spark discovery, and connect listeners with music in new ways.



Investing in the Future Things to Know about Education at the SLSO

By Maddie Hurst

Dozens of music educators from around the St. Louis area take the Powell Hall stage with members of the orchestra for the Extra Credit concert.

© Jon Gitchoff

The St. Louis Symphony Orchestra has cultivated an international reputation for its artistry, but its impact stretches far beyond the stage and into classrooms around the world. Thousands of students each year encounter the SLSO outside of a traditional concert via digital learning materials, a classroom visit, or a field trip.

In its first season back at the renovated Powell Hall at the new Jack C. Taylor Music Center, the SLSO expanded its education programs by launching the orchestra's first concert specifically for teens, livestreaming an education concert into classrooms, and continuing to welcome thousands into Powell Hall for concert field trips.

Here are a few things you may not know about the SLSO's education programs, which inspire students of all ages to get involved, and stay involved, in music.

Prioritizing Teachers

Partnerships with teachers are at the heart of SLSO education programs, serving as the foundation for all these initiatives. "We know the incredible benefits that being involved with music has on a child, and music educators in our schools are fundamental to opening those opportunities," Jessica Ingraham, Senior Director of Education, said.

In the 2024/25 season, more than 800 teachers in 46 states and seven countries experienced the impact of music in their classrooms using SLSO resources.

These materials include teacher guides for every education concert, Learning Lab—a free digital resource with content for all grade levels—and professional development opportunities. Digital resources created by the SLSO for teachers reached more than 237,000 students in the 24/25 season.

The Extra Credit program further fortifies the SLSO's support of educators, by highlighting their talents alongside orchestra musicians on stage at Powell Hall in a free community concert. In November, choral teachers will share the Powell Hall stage for the first time with members of the SLSO and its two choruses.

“Part of our role is to support arts education in our schools and shine a light on the incredible educators who teach these programs. They play such a vital role, not only in raising well-rounded children, but also ensuring the future of the arts,” Maureen Byrne, SLSO Vice President of Education and Community Programs, said.

A Classroom Quest

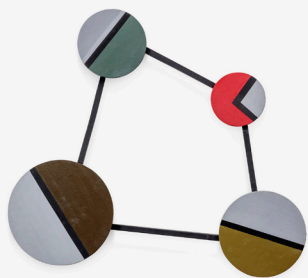
With the SLSO's in-school program, Music Quest, first through third graders embark on a musical escapade led by a host and six SLSO musicians. The objective of their quest? Save music from the evil villain, Dischordy. Students become the heroes of the story when they help secure the core elements of music, such as tempo, dynamics, and instrumentation, with the help of Harmonia, the protagonist host, and the orchestra members.

Music Quest taps into a need many children have: to explore and discover the world around them in a manner that meets them where they are. In just 45 minutes, students encounter classic works such as Beethoven's Fifth Symphony and Rossini's *William Tell* Overture, acquainting them with orchestral music in a digestible, adventurous way.



© Brendan Batchelor

Students attending Tiny Tunes participate in pre-concert activities, as seen here at a May 2026 concert.



BUENOS AIRES MODERN, 1935–1950

September 9, 2026–
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 WashU **KEMPER ART MUSEUM**

Gyula Kosice, *Coplanal*, 1947. Oil on wood, 27 1/2 × 29 1/8 × 2 1/8 in. (69.8 × 74 × 5.4 cm). Mildred Lane Kemper Art Museum, Washington University in St. Louis. University purchase. Parsons Fund, 2024. © Fundación Kosice–Museo Kosice, Buenos Aires.

Emphasizing Accessibility

At a May 2026 concert designed for pre-K classrooms, students started their visit to Powell Hall by running through an obstacle course, practicing their conducting skills, making music with SLSO volunteers, using their favorite colors to draw a picture, and taking a dance class in the Wightman Foyer. Students experienced music and joy in whichever form felt best to them before the concert even began.

SLSO education concerts remind students that music is for any age, ability, or background. This sentiment is backed by a financial commitment: around 30 percent of tickets and transportation measures are subsidized by the SLSO, welcoming students from all socioeconomic backgrounds into Powell Hall to experience live orchestral music.

Additionally, sensory-conscious accommodations for students at all concerts take access a step further, ensuring students of all abilities and neurotypes can enjoy the musical narrative being brought to life.

“Access is not extra—it is part of the work,” Ingraham said.

Learning with Professionals

The SLSO’s education department also includes the St. Louis Symphony Youth Orchestra, a nationally recognized ensemble



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The SLSO's Youth Orchestra is comprised of 100 of the most accomplished musicians from the St. Louis region and beyond, led by conductor Samuel Hollister.

comprised of 100 musicians aged 12 to 22. The YO performs three concerts every season, each showcasing the high caliber at which its young musicians perform.

But the YO doesn't work alone. Each season, SLSO musicians join YO musicians for a side-by-side rehearsal, followed by a lunch that reinforces a sense of community. Sharing a music stand and a passion for music, both students and professionals look forward to this invaluable learning experience and time of fellowship. "When they get to truly be in this orchestra, with professionals, it's mind-blowing to them," Byrne shared.

Surprising Partnerships

Many of the best creative experiences begin with an unlikely partnership. The SLSO has one of its own with the Endangered Wolf Center, a wildlife sanctuary housed in St. Louis County that preserves and protects a variety of wolf and canine species. In a program for both a live concert and a streaming digital setting, the SLSO strategically adapted Sergei Prokofiev's *Peter and the Wolf*, reassuring the audience that their wolf ends up safe and protected at the Endangered Wolf Center. Additionally, the SLSO provides teachers with educational materials about the canines and music, showing how music education can intersect with science and conservation.

Partnerships like this—and with other organizations like the Saint Louis Zoo, the Missouri Botanical Garden, and Opera Theatre of Saint Louis—are deeply woven into the SLSO's education portfolio, fortifying the orchestra's mission by creating a connected community centered around the power of music.

Learn more about SLSO education programs at siso.org/education.

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A Warm Welcome Say Hello to Our Newest Musicians

By Eric Dundon



As the SLSO begins our 147th season, five outstanding musicians are joining the orchestra's ranks, appointed by Music Director Stéphane Denève and bringing remarkable talent and experience to the ensemble.

Principal Tuba **Bridget Conley** has performed with some of the country's top orchestras and also served as a fellow with the New World Symphony, where she distinguished herself as both an award-winning soloist and advocate for music by women composers. Principal Harp **Grace Roepke** arrives from the Louisville Orchestra after earning top honors in national and international harp competitions. Associate Principal Trumpet **Omri Barak** returns to St. Louis after serving as acting second trumpet with the SLSO and most recently as Associate Principal Trumpet of the Kansas City Symphony. Clarinetist **Kamalia Freyling** brings experience from the Detroit Symphony Orchestra and Rochester Philharmonic Orchestra. And double bassist **Teddy Gabrielides** becomes a full-time member of the double bass section after performing with the orchestra last season on a one-year contract.

Together, these musicians strengthen an orchestra entering a new season with a shared commitment to exceptional artistry.

Learn more about these musicians at slo.org.



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Meet the Musicians

Michael Casimir Viola

What do you love most about your instrument?

In the string family, I think of the viola like the playmaker [in a soccer team]. I grew up playing soccer, and my favorite player was [the Brazilian player] Ronaldinho. He wasn't focused solely on scoring goals—he created opportunities, controlled the flow of the game, and made everyone around him better. That's how I think about playing the viola. I'm not usually the one carrying the melody, but I help shape the ensemble by driving the inner rhythm, connecting the harmony, and creating the foundation that lets the melody shine.

What's the best piece of advice you've received in your career?

You can't stand out by doing exactly what everyone else is doing. Of course, you need to master the fundamentals, but that's just the starting point. The real question is: What are you doing to make your music-making uniquely yours?

What's the most unusual place you've played your instrument?

The Parthenon in Greece.

What do you love about the SLSO?

I've always felt valued and appreciated.
I've never once doubted my place in this orchestra and our wonderful viola section!
I am always grateful that this was the first orchestra job I won.

Michael Casimir joined the SLSO in the 2018/19 season. Learn more and explore our Meet the Musicians video interviews at slo.org/videos.





The arts enrich life

Edward Jones is proud to support the St. Louis Symphony and their mission of enriching life through the power of music.

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Donor Spotlight



The St. Louis Symphony Volunteer Association

The St. Louis Symphony Volunteer Association (SVA) proudly celebrates its 100th anniversary during the 2026/27 season, marking a century of dedicated service to the SLSO.

Since its founding in the 1920s, the SVA has been an essential partner in advancing the SLSO's mission. Membership is open to anyone who shares a love of music and a desire to join a community dedicated to enriching lives through the power of music.

The impact of the SVA continues to grow. During the 25/26 season alone, more than 439 volunteers contributed over 11,500 hours of service, welcoming audiences, supporting education concerts and family programs, offering tours of the Jack C. Taylor Music Center, leading advocacy efforts, and enhancing the concert experience in countless ways. Their dedication helps ensure that every visitor—from first-time concertgoers to longtime subscribers—feels connected to the music and the SLSO.

The SVA's commitment to the SLSO extends beyond volunteer service and into a lasting investment in the orchestra's future. Through the Music for All Campaign, SVA members made a meaningful collective gift to support the transformational expansion and renovation of Powell Hall to create the new Jack C. Taylor Music Center.

As the SVA begins its second century of service, we extend our deepest gratitude to every past and present volunteer whose generosity, enthusiasm, and dedication have helped shape the SLSO's history and strengthen its future. Thank you for 100 years of service, friendship, and unwavering commitment to making music a vital part of our community.

Become a volunteer today! Join the SVA at slso.org/sva.

Honor Roll

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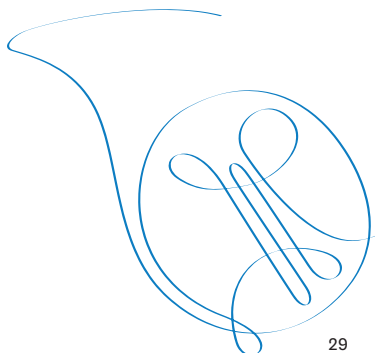
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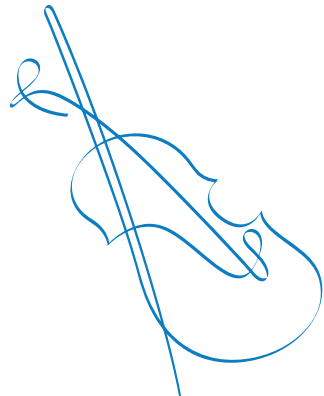
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Sep 18 Fri 7:00pm
Sep 19 Sat 7:00pm
Sep 20 Sun 2:00pm

Harry Potter

AND THE
CHAMBER
OF SECRETS™

— IN CONCERT —

Justin Freer, conductor



Find out more

This concert is a presentation of the feature film *Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets*™ with a live performance of the film's entire score, including music played by the orchestra during the end credits. Out of respect for the musicians and your fellow audience members, please remain seated until the conclusion of the credits.

Running time: approximately 3 hours and 10 minutes, including a 25-minute intermission

Directed by **Chris Columbus**

Produced by **David Heyman**

Written by **Steve Kloves**

Based on *Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets* by **J.K. Rowling**

Starring

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Emma Watson

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Music by **John Williams**

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Opening Weekend

Stéphane Denève, conductor

Yefim Bronfman, piano



Find out more

Hector Berlioz

(1803–1869)

Roman Carnival Overture, Op. 9 (8 minutes)

Franz Liszt

(1811–1886)

Piano Concerto No. 2 in A major, S.125 (21 minutes)

Adagio sostenuto assai – Allegro agitato assai

Allegro moderato

Allegro deciso – Marziale un poco meno allegro

Allegro animato

Yefim Bronfman, piano

INTERMISSION

Andrea Tarrodi

(b. 1981)

Liguria (10 minutes)

Ottorino Respighi

(1879–1936)

Pines of Rome (23 minutes)

The Pines of the Villa Borghese –

Pines Near a Catacomb –

The Pines of the Janiculum –

The Pines of the Appian Way

Join the SLSO for a special **Opening Night After Party** in the Berges Family Grand Lobby following the concert on September 26. Stay for cocktails, conversation, and a celebratory atmosphere featuring DJ Limewire Prime as we kick off the 2026/27 season together. No additional ticket required.

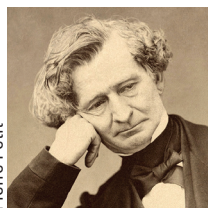
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Italian Splendor

Experience the splendors of Italy with Music Director Stéphane Denève and the SLSO in this captivating season opener. Visit a kaleidoscopic carnival in Berlioz's *Roman Carnival Overture* and venture through colorful fishing villages of the northern coast in Andrea Tarrodi's *Liguria*. Respighi's *Pines of Rome* guides us through parks and catacombs and then to the dark forests of the Italian hills. At the center of it all, the dazzling technique of pianist Yefim Bronfman transports us from the dream-like to the thunderous in Liszt's Piano Concerto No. 2.

Roman Carnival Overture



Pierre Petit

Hector Berlioz

Born 1803, La Côte-St-André, near Grenoble, France

Died 1869, Paris, France

Berlioz, like the better French chefs, never threw anything away. If a tune or movement or aria he liked didn't work in one place (or even if it did), it could serve elsewhere. This was the case with *Le carnaval romain*—The Roman Carnival.

The *Roman Carnival Overture* is eight minutes of dashing music, orchestrated in Berlioz's brightest colors, intended as the prelude to the second act of his opera *Benvenuto Cellini*—as an extra added attraction in the revivals that the opera would surely have. The opera was, however, so decisively savaged at its premiere in Paris in 1838—"hissed with admirable energy and unanimity," according to its composer—that only two revivals, neither being much more cordially received, took place during Berlioz's lifetime, and there have been few revivals since.

The present *Overture* was introduced under the composer's baton as an independent concert piece in Paris in 1844. It was a resounding success, as indicated by the fact that it had to be encores immediately.

The *Overture* seamlessly stitches together themes from the opera, including Cellini's first-act aria in praise of his beloved—the luscious melody now sung by the English horn—and the wild *saltarello*, a folk dance in triple time, which is the recurring, cymbals-punctuated theme. The latter is taken from the second act of the opera, where it dominates the carnival scene being played out in Rome's Piazza Colonna.

*Adapted from a note by Herbert Glass © 2009
By kind permission of the Los Angeles Philharmonic.*

First performance: February 3, 1844, in Paris, the composer conducting; **First SLSO performance:** December 5, 1907, Max Zach conducting; **Most recent SLSO performance:** December 31, 2018, Ward Stare conducting; **Instrumentation:** 2 flutes (one doubling piccolo), 2 oboes (one doubling English horn), 2 clarinets, 2 bassoons, 4 horns, 2 trumpets, 2 cornets, 3 trombones, timpani, percussion, strings

Piano Concerto No. 2



Franz Liszt

Born 1811, Raiding, Hungary (now Austria)

Died 1886, Bayreuth, Germany

A Composer of Contradictions

Franz Liszt was a mess of contradictions. He generated Beatles-level adulation yet delighted in the esoteric. He took minor religious orders yet carried on dozens of high-profile love affairs. He traveled Europe widely yet remained loyal to his native Hungary.

Liszt's music reflects these contradictions. He wrote splashy piano showpieces as well as giant experimental symphonies. He showed respect for the music of his forebears, but also pushed music into unknown, experimental realms.

A Long Time Coming

The Second Piano Concerto was sketched by the twenty-something Liszt during his first explosion of fame. But it ultimately took him two decades to complete. The score went on a long journey with the composer himself, shifting as he himself shifted. It journeyed with him as he attempted to balance the refined classical forms of the 18th century with the freedom of the 19th. Liszt called the Second Piano Concerto a "symphonic concerto." It contained the whole world of a conventional symphony, but he trimmed the fat, fitting four movements into one unbroken statement. "New wine demands new bottles," he declared.

The concerto also journeyed with Liszt as he attempted to move away from splashy virtuosity, towards musical experimentation. As a pianist, Liszt was criticized for a theatrical performing style, with facial contortions and

physical gestures. The Second Piano Concerto offers passages of show-stopping brilliance for the soloist, but the orchestra is an equal partner.

Abridged from a note by Tim Munro © 2019

First performance: January 7, 1857, Franz Liszt conducting the Weimar Court Orchestra, Hans von Bronsart as soloist; **First SLSO performance:** January 7, 1910, Max Zach conducting, Tina Lerner as soloist; **Most recent SLSO performance:** January 19, 2020, Stéphane Denève conducting, Jean-Yves Thibaudet as soloist; **Instrumentation:** solo piano; 2 flutes, piccolo, 2 oboes, 2 clarinets, 2 bassoons, 2 horns, 2 trumpets, 3 trombones, tuba, timpani, cymbals, strings

Liguria



© Louisa Sundell

Andrea Tarrodi

Born 1981, Stockholm, Sweden

Visual Cues

Andrea Tarrodi's musical approach is guided by her experience both as a painter and someone living with synesthesia, a neurological trait that causes her to associate colors with sounds. Before writing any musical notation, Tarrodi often paints the music she imagines. After completing a composition, she creates an accompanying visual work of art. This multi-faceted approach gives Tarrodi's work a singular sense of vivid color, texture, and shape.

Vibrant Villages

Tarrodi describes her 2012 orchestral piece, *Liguria*, as a "walking tour" through a series of Italian coastal villages, each connected by cliffs and mountains. She describes the villages briefly in her notes:

Riomaggiore with its high waves; Manarola with its clock tower; Monterosso [al Mare], where sunbathers stressedly hurried to secure a place on the beach and open up their colorful beach umbrellas, as if in a scene in a Fellini film; Vernazza, with its watchtower and cliffs; and lastly, Corniglia, where the night sky was filled with stars.

The Music

Composed in six sections ("Waves," "Horizon," "Blue Path," "Colours," "Mountains," and "Stars"), *Liguria* begins with a low percussion rumble

from the back of the ensemble, followed by a quick crescendo that creates a full orchestral wash of sound. Tarrodi's music is immediately impressionistic, depicting successive waves surging forward and releasing. When the waves calm, a solo English horn introduces the "Horizon" section, singing a gentle melody supported by other woodwinds and then low strings. "Blue Path" features gentle chimes and bells in the background, layered with murmuring woodwinds and mystical strings. The energy suddenly shifts and momentum builds. A scurrying, anticipatory mood sets in, with fluttering piccolo gestures and pizzicato violins. Tarrodi paints the grand "Mountains" that connect the villages, then directs our focus skyward. Tranquil statements from harp and percussion leave us to stargaze as the music concludes.

Emma Plehal © 2026

First performance: April 20, 2012, Daniel Harding conducting the Swedish Radio Symphony Orchestra at Berwaldhallen, Stockholm, Sweden; **First SLSO performance:** These concerts; **Instrumentation:** 3 flutes (1 doubling piccolo), 2 oboes, English horn, 2 clarinets, E-flat clarinet, 2 bassoons, contrabassoon, 4 horns, 3 trumpets, 3 trombones, tuba, timpani, percussion, harp, strings

Pines of Rome

Marie Boehm (1927)



Ottorino Respighi

Born 1879, Bologna, Italy
Died 1936, Rome, Italy

The Roman Trilogy

Today's concert concludes with a "symphonic poem for orchestra" from Respighi's Roman trilogy—a showpiece that demonstrates an orchestra's power and brilliance, as well as the poetry and colors of the composer's musical imagination.

The significance of Respighi's "Roman" works extends well beyond their exhilarating surface appeal. They bring together the diversity of influences that shaped this Italian-born but Russian- and German-educated composer. These works were central to Respighi's efforts to develop a truly Italian symphonic voice. Above all, these symphonic poems represent his "need to express Rome's sublime beauty in music."



Museum of Fine Arts, Boston

John Gadsby Chapman, *Pines of the Villa Berberini*, 1856.

The Music

Pines of Rome is organized in four, continuous movements, each representing a different view and a particular mood. “The Pines of the Villa Borghese” races by so fast you might almost miss the traditional children’s singing game that Respighi quotes. As in all good games, everyone gets a go with the tune, including a rare, quiet moment when it’s played by oboe and clarinet. The exuberance comes to a climax with a wild, whooping conclusion, so extraordinary the first audience booed.

“Pines Near a Catacomb” brings a serious tone, evoking a gloomy, underground tomb. Listen for the remote, muted sound of a trumpet playing a “Sanctus” chant from the Roman Catholic *Liber Usualis*.

“The Pines of the Janiculum” is all about atmosphere: a moonlit night on a distant hill overlooking the city. The mood is set with an impressionist rippling from the piano and a clarinet floating on a cloud of muted strings. But this movement is most famous for the appearance of a nightingale at the end. In 1924 the gramophone record was the latest

in music technology, and Respighi took delight in using a recording of an actual nightingale.

For “The Pines of the Appian Way” Respighi provided a very detailed “caption,” all of which can be heard in the powerful and evocative music:

Misty dawn on the Appian Way: pine trees guarding the magic landscape; the muffled, ceaseless rhythm of unending footsteps. The poet has a fantastic vision of bygone glories: trumpets sound and, in the brilliance of the newly risen sun, a consular army bursts forth towards the Sacred Way, mounting in triumph to the Capitol.

Abridged from a note by Yvonne Frindle © 2022

First performance: December 14, 1924, Bernardino Molinari conducting the Augusteo Orchestra in Rome; **First SLSO performance:** January 7, 1927, Rudolph Ganz conducting; **Most recent SLSO performance:** November 27, 2022, Xian Zhang conducting; **Instrumentation:** 3 flutes (one doubling piccolo), 2 oboes, English horn, 2 clarinets, bass clarinet, 2 bassoons, contrabassoon, 4 horns, 3 trumpets, 3 trombones, tuba, timpani, percussion, harp, piano, organ, celesta, 6 off-stage “buccine” (this performance uses 4 trumpets and 2 trombones), strings

Artists

For Music Director Stéphane Denève's bio, see page 4.



Yefim Bronfman is internationally recognized as one of today's most acclaimed and admired pianists, standing among a handful of artists regularly sought by festivals, orchestras, conductors and recital series. Born in Tashkent in the Soviet Union, his commanding technique, power and exceptional lyrical gifts are consistently acknowledged by the press and audiences alike. Following return visits to summer festivals in Vail

and Tanglewood, Bronfman's season begins with the St. Louis Symphony Orchestra and concludes with the closing week of the San Francisco Symphony. He is a recipient of the prestigious Avery Fisher Prize, in addition to receiving the Jean Gimbel Lane prize in piano performance from Northwestern University. Yefim Bronfman's most recent appearance with the SLSO was in October 2021, when he performed Sergei Rachmaninoff's Piano Concerto No. 3 with Stéphane Denève conducting.

Yefim Bronfman returns to the SLSO for a recital performance on June 16, 2027.

Debussy's La Mer

Dalia Stasevska, conductor

Aphrodite Patoulidou, soprano and nyckelharpa



Find out more

Anna Meredith

(b. 1978)

Arranged by Jack Ross
and Anna Meredith

Nautilus (6 minutes)

Jean Sibelius

(1865–1957)

***Scene with Cranes from Kuolema (Death),
Op. 44, No. 2*** (6 minutes)

Luciano Berio

(1925–2003)

Folk Songs (23 minutes)

1. “Black is the colour...” (USA)
2. “I wonder as I wander...” (USA)
3. “Loosin yelav...” (The moon has risen) (Armenia)
4. “Rossignolet du bois” (Little nightingale) (France)
5. “A la femminisca” (May the Lord send fine weather) (Sicily, Italy)
6. “La donna ideale” (The ideal woman) (Italy)
7. “Ballo” (Dance) (Italy)
8. “Motettu de tristura” (Song of sadness) (Sardinia, Italy)
9. “Malurous qu’o uno fenno” (Wretched is he) (Auvergne, France)
10. “Lo fiolaire” (The spinner) (Auvergne, France)
11. “Azerbaijan love song” (Azerbaijan)

Aphrodite Patoulidou, soprano

INTERMISSION

Traditional

Arranged by

Aphrodite Patoulidou

Kalevala Melody (5 minutes)

Aphrodite Patoulidou, soprano and nyckelharpa

*The performance will continue without pause***Jean Sibelius*****Luonnotar* (Kalevala), Op. 70** (10 minutes)

Aphrodite Patoulidou, soprano

Claude Debussy

(1862–1918)

La mer (23 minutes)De l'aube à midi sur la mer (From Dawn to Noon
on the Sea)

Jeux des vagues (Play of the Waves)

Dialogue du vent et de la mer (Dialogue of Wind
and Sea)

This weekend's concerts are sponsored in part by a generous gift from **Lawrence P. Katzenstein and Cheryl O. Quinn**.

The Sunday, October 4 concert is sponsored in part by a generous gift from **Marcela Manjarrez**.

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Stories in Sound

Conductor Dalia Stasevska makes her SLSO debut with a program bookended by works alluding to aquatic voyages. In 2021, Stasevska was the conductor for the world premiere of Anna Meredith's *Nautilus*, which plunges us into a thrilling realm of relentless, climbing horns, ferocious bass, and thunderous, stomping percussion. Finnish composer—and avid bird-watcher—Jean Sibelius invites us to listen for the avian-like call of the clarinets in *Scene with Cranes*, and a globe-trotting tour of traditional song unfolds in Luciano Berio's *Folk Songs*. Soprano Aphrodite Patoulidou's vocals immerse us in the epic folklore of Finland's *Kalevala*, underpinning a rare performance of Sibelius' *Luonnotar*. Finally, Stasevska steers us home with Claude Debussy's *La mer*, infused with the intrigue, excitement, and jeopardy of life on the ocean waves.

Nautilus

© Gem Harris



Anna Meredith

Born 1978, London, England

Defying Labels

Scottish composer-producer Anna Meredith's work blurs the lines between classical, acoustic, and electronic music, and experimental rock. The original, electronic-driven version of her uncompromising, irrepressible *Nautilus* first appeared on Meredith's *Black Prince Fury* EP in 2012, and later also on her 2016 debut album, *Varmints*. Meredith's composer's note for *Nautilus* described the work as a "call to arms" for herself, as she embarked on her career as an electronic artist. Meanwhile, *Pitchfork* writer Laura Snape praised the track's "imperious brass fanfares, artillery-fire percussion, and earth-quaking bass."

From Electronic to Orchestra

In 2021, Finland's Lahti Symphony Orchestra commissioned an orchestral version of *Nautilus* to commemorate Dalia Stasevska's inaugural concert as Chief Conductor. Meredith's bandmate and close collaborator, Jack Ross, arranged *Nautilus* for a full symphony orchestra, and Stasevska conducted the premiere at Lahti's Sibelius Hall in September 2021.

The orchestral version of *Nautilus* intensifies the impact of the original's constituent parts. For the opening fanfare, trumpets, horns, oboes, and B-flat clarinets replace synthesizers. In the hands of a full orchestra, the escalating brass lines that Meredith conceived of "whilst stomping along a beach in Scotland" are more potent than ever. The thunderous percussion that erupts into life in the final third of the piece also originated from Meredith's beach "stomp," as she experimented and played with the sounds created by her steps on the sand.

Iain Shaw © 2026

First performance: September 16, 2021, Dalia Stasevska conducting the Lahti Symphony Orchestra in Lahti, Finland; **First SLSO performance:** These concerts; **Instrumentation:** 2 flutes (one doubling piccolo), 2 oboes, 2 clarinets (one doubling bass clarinet), 2 bassoons, 4 horns, 4 trumpets, 3 trombones, tuba, timpani, percussion, strings

Scene with Cranes

Daniel Nyblin and
Ivar Rafael Helander



Jean Sibelius

Born 1865, Hämeenlinna, Finland

Died 1957, Järvenpää, Finland

In the autumn of 1903, around the time he was composing the music for Arvid Järnefelt's symbolist play *Kuolema* (Death), Sibelius laid the foundation for Ainola, his lifelong home. Located 24 miles north of Helsinki, with a view of Lake Tuusula, Ainola gave him a connection to nature and to the local birds—the swans, cranes, and wild geese—that ran through his creative life.

You may have heard this obsession in *The Swan of Tuonela* (begun in 1893), with its darkly poetic English horn solo, or in the Fifth Symphony (1915), with its stirring horn theme. “Every day I have seen the cranes. Flying south in full cry with their music,” Sibelius wrote in his diary in 1915. “Their cries echo throughout my being.” Cranes echo, too, in this orchestral miniature, when descending pairs of notes from the clarinets interrupt the glassy stillness of the muted strings.

Scene with Cranes was compiled in 1906 from two numbers Sibelius had written for the play. The main music represents a vision of Elsa, beautiful and proud, as she gazes at her reflection in a forest spring and hums (“Eilaa, eilaa”). Later, Elsa and her beloved wake to the cries of cranes in flight. A single bird detaches itself from the flock and brings them a baby. (Yes, that myth is both ancient and universal.) Transferring the penetrating calls of the cranes from the original strings to clarinets was a stroke of genius. As the music draws to a close, solo violin and cello return to the vision of Elsa.

Yvonne Frindle © 2026

First performance: December 14, 1906, the composer conducting in Vassa, Finland;

First SLSO performance: These concerts; **Instrumentation:** 2 clarinets, timpani, strings

Folk Songs

Willy Prager



Luciano Berio

Born 1925, Oneglia, Italy

Died 2003, Rome, Italy

Two violas play “like a wistful ‘country dance fiddler,’” quite independently of the singer, who enters with the harp. This delicate arrangement of “Black is the colour...” echoes with authenticity.

Or does it? The first of Berio’s *Folk Songs* was a “new” tune, composed by Kentucky folklore enthusiast John Jacob Niles (1892–1980). It caught on; when Berio first arranged it, recordings by Nina Simone and Joan Baez were in circulation.

Niles also composed “I wonder as I wander...” based on a Christmas song he’d tried to collect from a preacher’s daughter: “After eight tries, I had only three lines of verse, a garbled fragment of melodic material—and a magnificent idea.” Berio’s treatment is equally magnificent. Naive simplicity emerges in lilting voice and harp, while clarinets, viola, and cellos evoke a portable reed organ. A rhapsodic flute coda suggests “a bird on the wing.”

Thus begins Berio’s anthology of folk songs from the US to Azerbaijan. Giving the songs new rhythmic and harmonic interpretations, he effectively “recomposed them,” the instrumental parts underlining “the expressive and cultural roots of each song.”

Berio created the original chamber version of *Folk Songs* in 1964 when he was still married to singer-composer Cathy Berberian, and her voice and enthusiasms permeate the music. The first two songs represent Berberian’s country of birth; the third, “Loosin yelav...,” her Armenian heritage. In the second verse of this song in praise of the rising moon, a silvery clarinet chases the darkness away.

“Rossignolet du bois” offers relationship advice from a French nightingale. The troubadour’s melody has the focus, accompanied by harp, pensive clarinet tones and antique cymbals. At the end, Berio brings in the full ensemble for one clanging chord—a ship’s bell?—introducing “A la femminisca,” a prayer sung by the wives of Sicilian fishermen. The singer now adopts a fiercely resonant chest voice as supplication alternates with sobbing in a soundscape of ringing bells.

Two original songs by Berio follow. In “La donna ideale” (a Genoese listicle on choosing a wife) folk-song flavor emerges in uneven phrases and vocal ornaments. “Ballo” (a Sicilian text) dazzles with sheer speed—madness and folly!—grounded by rhythmic strumming.

The nightingale makes another agony-aunt appearance as the singer seeks consolation for lost love in the Sardinian “Motettu de tristura.” Berio dresses the mournful tune in an elusive and eerie blanket of sound. The piccolo, like the nightingale, never repeats itself in song.

Berio’s lean treatment of the next two songs offers a striking contrast to the familiar lush orchestrations in Joseph Canteloube’s *Chants d’Auvergne*. “Malurous qu’o uno fenno” might be an ironic commentary on Berio’s relationships—“Unfortunate is he who has a wife...!” The cellos’ buzzing hurdy-gurdy effects color the spinner’s tale of youthful flirtation in “Lo Fiolaire.”

Berberian “went crazy for” the “Azerbaijan love song,” and not knowing the language, she listened to it hundreds of times, making a (hilariously garbled) phonetic transcription. To date, no one has been able to translate it! This vivacious song with its pipe-and-tabor vibe and uninhibited vocal oscillations makes a thrilling finale.

Yvonne Frindle © 2019/2026

First performance: The chamber ensemble arrangement premiered in 1964 at Mills College in Oakland, California, the composer conducting with Cathy Berberian as soloist. Berio’s arrangement for symphony orchestra premiered in 1973; **First SLSO performance:** These concerts; **Instrumentation:** soprano; 2 flutes, oboe, 3 clarinets, bassoon, horn, trumpet, trombone, percussion, harp, strings

Luonnotar



Daniel Nyblin (1913)

Jean Sibelius

An Improvised Prelude: Kalevala Melody

Before today’s performance of Jean Sibelius’ *Luonnotar*, soprano Aphrodite Patoulidou sets the scene with an improvised prelude. Patoulidou’s Kalevala Melody is inspired by the same source material

that Sibelius drew on for *Luonnotar*: Finland's national epic, the *Kalevala*. First published in 1835, then expanded in 1849, the *Kalevala* became a cornerstone of Finland's blossoming national identity as the 19th century progressed. Generations of artists—Sibelius among them—have been influenced by this wellspring of folklore and mythology.

Patoulidou riffs on the meter and melodic style used to chant the *Kalevala*'s tales. She accompanies her atmospheric vocals with the nyckelharpa, a Swedish stringed folk instrument. The nyckelharpa is played with a bow, but the musician creates different notes by pressing on dozens of wooden keys along the neck. Patoulidou's improvisation is a stirring gateway to the world of the *Kalevala*. After a brief pause, the orchestra launches us into the story of *Luonnotar*.

Sibelius and the Kalevala

During the 1890s, Sibelius wrote several major works based on episodes from the *Kalevala*, and he continued to draw inspiration from the epic poem over the course of his long career. Sibelius may have written *Luonnotar* in 1910, when Finnish newspapers announced that he had completed such a work for the renowned soprano Aino Ackté. However, the music was not performed until nearly three years later, when Sibelius used it to fulfill a commission from the Gloucester Music Festival, in England.

The Tale of Luonnotar

The text of *Luonnotar* comes from the opening canto of the *Kalevala*, which sets forth a creation myth. Luonnotar is the “Spirit of Nature,” who floated alone in the universe before the earth and heavens were made. Tired of her lonely maiden's existence, she descended to the primordial ocean, where she swam for seven centuries. Longing to conceive, she called to the god Ukko. At last, a sea bird flew by her, seeking a place to nest. Luonnotar raised her knee above the water, and upon it the bird lay her eggs. But at length the eggs emitted such great heat that Luonnotar flinched, spilling them into the water. The eggs shattered, and from their pieces were formed the earth, sky, sunlight, moon, and stars.

A Distinctive Voice

Luonnotar is not often heard, mostly because the soprano part, with its very wide range, is extremely challenging. The composition deserves more frequent performance. Writing to a friend, Sibelius declared that whatever else might be said of it, “this piece is written in ‘my own’ style.” That assessment is entirely accurate. As much as any of his works, *Luonnotar* embodies the distinctive “voice” of the composer's maturity.

Adapted from a note by Paul Schiavo © 2009; note on Kalevala Melody by Iain Shaw © 2026

First performance: September 10, 1913, Herbert Brewer conducting the Gloucester Festival Orchestra in Gloucester, England, with Aino Ackté as soloist; **First and most recent SLSO performances:** March 27, 2009, followed by three subsequent performances in March and April 2009, David Robertson conducting with Karita Mattila as soloist; **Instrumentation:** soprano; 2 flutes, 2 oboes, 2 clarinets, bass clarinet, 2 bassoons, 4 horns, 2 trumpets, 3 trombones, 2 timpani, 2 harps, strings

La mer

Studio Nadar (c.1908)



Claude Debussy

Born 1862, Saint-Germain-en-Laye, France

Died 1918, Paris, France

Musical Escape

In 1904, Debussy was in pain. After leaving his unhappy marriage, his wife threatened suicide and eventually shot herself, non-fatally. Debussy was cast adrift, deserted by friends, a shell of his former self. As he so often did, he escaped into music—a musical ocean, to be precise. For a man who had once considered life as a sailor, the open sea retained its power, both beautiful and terrifying.

Symphonic Sketches

La mer (The Sea) is subtitled “three symphonic sketches.” Debussy chose these words carefully, fearing the word “symphony” aligned him with a reviled conservative culture. “I feel more and more that music,” wrote Debussy, “is not something that can flow inside a rigorous, traditional form.” The sounds of *La mer* flow like ocean waters: sometimes still, sometimes storm-tossed, sometimes forming recognizable shapes, sometimes slipping from our grasp. *La mer*’s new musical world confounded many listeners. Debussy dismissed the criticisms of those who “love and defend traditions which, for me, no longer exist.”

The Music

Debussy is a sonic magician. With pen and paper, he conjures whole worlds that might be gone in an instant. A trumpet and an English horn produce new colors through alchemy. Cellos soar through the air, leaving French horn contrails. Clarinet and flute play hide-and-seek amid plucked violas. Each movement takes a journey that feels simultaneously unpredictable and organic. The first movement glows and flutters, ending with an overwhelming surge. In the second, slippery melodies dart and

weave around the orchestra. The finale is wild and violent, barely able to contain its radiant, hymn-like conclusion.

Abridged from a note by Tim Munro © 2019

First performance: October 15, 1905, conducted by Camille Chevillard at the Concerts Lamoureux in Paris; **First SLSO performance:** January 23, 1913, Max Zach conducting; **Most recent SLSO performance:** May 3, 2024, Stéphane Denève conducting the SLSO at the Stifel Theatre; **Instrumentation:** 2 flutes, piccolo, 2 oboes, English horn, 2 clarinets, 3 bassoons, contrabassoon, 4 horns, 3 trumpets, 2 cornets, 3 trombones, tuba, timpani, percussion, 2 harps, celesta, strings

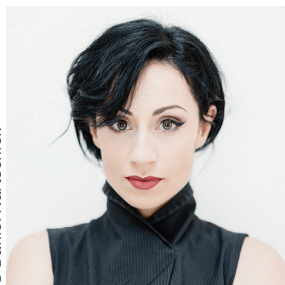
Artists

© Veikko Kähkönen



Dalia Stasevska is the Principal Guest Conductor of the BBC Symphony Orchestra. She has established herself as a commanding musical voice, a boundary-pushing innovator, and a fearless activist and advocate for change. Stasevska has conducted leading orchestras around the world, including recent performances with soloists including Augustin Hadelich, Yo-Yo Ma, and Carol Jantsch. She is also a passionate opera conductor. Her solo debut album with the BBC Symphony Orchestra, *Dalia's Mixtape*, was nominated for a Gramophone Award. Born in Ukraine, Stasevska grew up in Finland, studying violin and composition at the Tampere Conservatoire before studying violin, viola, and conducting at the Sibelius Academy. These concerts mark Dalia Stasevska's SLSO debut.

© Daniel Nartschick



Aphrodite Patoulidou has been praised for her luminous, richly colored voice, compelling stage presence, and remarkable artistic versatility. Equally at home in Mozart, Mahler, Strauss, and contemporary repertoire, her artistic practice extends beyond the classical stage, bringing music into dialogue with folk traditions, visual art, and the Swedish nyckelharpa. She has performed with world-renowned orchestras such as the Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra, Munich Philharmonic, and Orchestre Philharmonique de Radio France, among many others. Her operatic roles include Elle (*La voix humaine*), Susanna (*Le nozze di Figaro*), Belinda (*Dido & Aeneas*), and Sophie Scholl (*Weisse Rose*). As a visual artist, she creates special projects inspired by her passion for dark romantic themes. These concerts mark Aphrodite Patoulidou's SLSO debut.

ST. LOUIS SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

Oct 8 Thu 7:30pm
Powell Hall

Oct 10 Sat 7:30pm
J. Schedegger
Center for the Arts,
Lindenwood
University

Symphonic Dreamscapes Hisaishi and Beyond



Find out more

Samuel Hollister, conductor

Felix Mendelssohn
(1809–1847)

A Midsummer Night's Dream Overture, Op. 21
(12 minutes)

Kaija Saariaho
(1952–2023)

Ciel d'hiver (10 minutes)

Arnold Bax
(1883–1953)

Tintagel (12 minutes)

INTERMISSION

Joe Hisaishi
(b. 1950)

**Excerpts from Symphonic Suite from
*Princess Mononoke*** (18 minutes)

Joe Hisaishi

Spirited Away Suite (25 minutes)

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147th Season

Magic and Wonder

Joe Hisaishi's luminous, imaginative music and decades-long collaboration with animator and filmmaker Hayao Miyazaki and Studio Ghibli has produced some of the most beloved works in cinema. Hisaishi scored all of Miyazaki's Studio Ghibli feature films, including *My Neighbor Totoro* (1988), *Princess Mononoke* (1997), *Spirited Away* (2001), and *The Boy and the Heron* (2023). Hisaishi has composed music for over 80 films, in addition to releasing dozens of solo albums.

In recent years, he has worked as a classical music conductor and composer, producing several symphonies and concertos. Hisaishi has performed with leading orchestras around the world, and collaborated with artists including Philip Glass, David Lang, and Mischa Maisky.

In this concert, you'll hear the St. Louis Symphony Orchestra perform selections from Hisaishi's acclaimed scores for *Spirited Away* and *Princess Mononoke*, paired with classical works by Felix Mendelssohn, Kaija Saariaho, and Arnold Bax that share the same sense of magic and wonder. This vibrant program reveals surprising connections between cinematic and symphonic storytelling, and celebrates the timeless power of orchestral music to transport us to extraordinary places.

Artist



© Joan Fisher

Samuel Hollister

**Assistant Conductor and the Fred M. Saigh
Youth Orchestra Music Director**

Conductor, pianist, harpsichordist, composer, arranger, and theorist Samuel Hollister believes that music tells powerful stories that create and strengthen community. Since 2024, he has served as the Assistant Conductor of the St. Louis Symphony

Orchestra and The Fred M. Saigh Youth Orchestra Music Director of the St. Louis Symphony Youth Orchestra. Hollister made his subscription classical debut with the SLSO in spring 2026, adding to the dozens of classical, pops, film, family, education, and side-by-side performances with the SLSO he conducts each season. Hollister is a fierce advocate of new music and has worked closely with composers including Kevin Puts, John Corigliano, and Joan Tower, as well as commissioning concertos for guitar and marimba and unearthing long-lost masterworks of the past. Hollister's love of music communication informs his work as a lecturer, writer on music, and host of the SLSO's weekly Noted podcast.

Jeff Goldblum

with the Mildred Snitzer Orchestra

Jeff Goldblum, vocals and piano

Bryan Carter, conductor

Mildred Snitzer Orchestra



Find out more

Program to be announced from the stage.

Running time: Approximately 2 hours and 15 minutes including a 20-minute intermission.

Keep the night going following the concert with **After Party**, the SLSO's post-concert hang. Sip drinks, spend time with friends, and take in the music in the Berges Family Grand Lobby. No additional ticket required.



© Kuba Ryniewicz

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147th Season

Artists

© Christian Coppola



Jeff Goldblum has enjoyed a storied career now spanning nearly six decades of award-winning work in film, television, and theater. In addition to starring in box office behemoths including *Jurassic Park*, *Independence Day*, and *Thor: Ragnarok*, he has also produced both film and television projects. He is an Academy Award-nominated director for his short feature film, *Little Surprises*. Since launching the Mildred Snitzer Orchestra 30 years ago, Goldblum

and his band have delighted audiences all over the world playing contemporary arrangements of classic jazz and American Songbook standards. The group has released four albums, all with Decca Records, featuring brilliant guest artists including Gregory Porter, Kelly Clarkson, Miley Cyrus, Fiona Apple, Freda Payne, Haley Reinhart, Imelda May, and Maiya Sykes. Their most recent release, *Night Blooms*, includes guest appearances from Ariana Grande, Cynthia Erivo, Charlie Puth, Dodie, Scarlett Johansson, and Melody Gardot.

© Emilio Madrid



Bryan Carter is a two-time Grammy and Tony Award-winning drummer, vocalist, composer, arranger, orchestrator, and conductor. Trained at The Juilliard School, Carter has performed with celebrated artists from jazz masters Wynton Marsalis and McCoy Tyner to pop icons Mary J. Blige and Charli XCX. Carter is the founder and artistic director of Jazz at Pride, a nonprofit organization dedicated to performance and education that

centers world-class queer artists. Its collaborators have included queer icons Alex Newell, Tituss Burgess, Dylan Mulvaney, Marc Shaiman, and Billy Eichner. His television credits include *Maya & Marty* and *Late Night with Seth Meyers* (NBC), *Sesame Street* (HBO), and *Good Night, and Good Luck* (CNN and Netflix). Broadway credits include *The Fear of 13*, *Good Night, and Good Luck*, *Some Like It Hot*, and *A Strange Loop*. Carter's work has been featured at major cultural institutions including the Royal Albert Hall, Jazz at Lincoln Center, the BAFTA Awards, and the Tony Awards.

Concerts for Kids

Howl at Powell

Samuel Hollister, conductor

Laura Roth, dancer



Find out more

Johann Sebastian Bach

(1685–1750)

Orchestrated by Leopold Stokowski

Toccata and Fugue in D minor,

BWV 565 (4 minutes)

Adam Glaser

(b. 1970)

March of the Little Goblins

(4 minutes)

Engelbert Humperdinck

(1854–1921)

“Witch’s Ride” from *Hänsel und*

Gretel (4 minutes)

Modest Mussorgsky

(1839–1881)

Orchestrated by Maurice Ravel

“Baba-Yaga” from *Pictures at an*

Exhibition (4 minutes)

Ludwig Göransson

(b. 1984)

Arranged by Larry Moore

Black Panther (4 minutes)

Pinar Toprak

(b. 1980)

Captain Marvel (2 minutes)

Camille Saint-Saëns

(1835–1921)

Danse macabre, Op. 40 (3 minutes)

Laura Roth, dancer

John Powell

(b. 1963)

Arranged by Sean O’Loughlin

From the motion picture *How to*

Train Your Dragon (4 minutes)

At the conclusion of the concert, you're invited to a 15-minute talkback with SLSO musicians and special guests on the auditorium orchestra level.

Concerts for Kids are inclusive of people with sensory differences. If you need accommodations, please visit the Guest Services desk on the orchestra level. Learn more about the available accommodations at slo.org/visit.

Artists

For conductor Samuel Hollister's bio, see page 53.



Laura Roth has a BA in Dance from Southeast Missouri State University and is in her third season with Ballet 314. Roth has been dancing professionally in St. Louis since 2013. For many years she was a company member with Common Thread Contemporary Dance Company and Leverage Dance Theater. She has had the opportunity to freelance with Space Station Dance Residency, Spare Parts Dance Residency, and Masterworks Chorale, as well as participating in Washington University MFA thesis projects and other projects. Roth has independently produced two concert dance performances: a varied rep show in 2021 and a solo show in 2024. She also choreographs musicals in the St. Louis region, with recent choreography roles including *Crazy For You* with Kirkwood Theatre Guild and the upcoming *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat* with Gateway Center for Performing Arts, where she also teaches ballet.

Learn more about **Ballet 314** at ballet314.org.



© Phillip Hamer

Mozart and Schumann

Kristiina Poska, conductor

Marie-Ange Nguci, piano



Find out more

Ülo Krigul

(b. 1978)

Proteus Pulse US Premiere (9 minutes)

W.A. Mozart

(1756–1791)

Piano Concerto No. 21 in C major, K. 467 (29 minutes)

Allegro

Andante

Allegro vivace assai

Marie-Ange Nguci, piano

INTERMISSION

Robert Schumann

(1810–1856)

Symphony No. 3 in E-flat major, Op. 97, “Rhenish”

(32 minutes)

Lebhaft

Scherzo: Sehr mässig

Nicht schnell

Feierlich

Lebhaft

Keep the night going following the October 17 concert with **After Party**, the SLSO’s post-concert hang. Sip drinks, spend time with friends, and take in the music in the Berges Family Grand Lobby. No additional ticket required.

Marie-Ange Nguci is the **Jean L. Rainwater Guest Artist**.

This weekend’s concerts are sponsored in part by a generous gift from **Nancy and Walter Galvin**.

The Saturday, October 17 concert is sponsored in part by a generous gift from **Ben and Susan Uchitelle**.

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147th Season

Scenes from the Rhine

Conductor Kristiina Poska makes her SLSO debut with a program that takes us from Estonia to the German Rhineland in a celebration of the variety of European folk music. The concert opens with the US premiere of a shapeshifting new composition by Poska's fellow Estonian, Ülo Krigul, before rising-star pianist Marie-Ange Nguci dazzles with Mozart's sweet, playful Piano Concerto No. 21. Robert Schumann's Third Symphony emphasizes the vibrant culture along Germany's River Rhine, re-imagining folk dances, bucolic scenes, and the grandeur of Cologne's historic cathedral.

Proteus Pulse



© Jaan Krivel

Ülo Krigul

Born 1978, Tallinn, Estonia

Water as Muse

Ülo Krigul's source material for this evocative, impressionistic work was not only his interest in the shapeshifting Greek god of the sea, but a fascination with water and our uneasy relationship with the oceans and the natural world more generally. "Water has been the subject of many of my compositions in recent years," Krigul said in his composer's note. "Its connective energy and ever-changing yet still familiar states of being, its qualities encompassing both ice and vapour, and its endless source of symbolism and physics continue to inspire me."

Waves of Sound

Proteus Pulse is "quite clearly divided into four parts," Krigul said, though each flows into the next without pause. From foreboding horns to swirling violins and rumbling, rhythmic bass, musical ideas that sneak in as "tiny drops in the background" evolve into waves of sound that momentarily dominate the soundscape. "We can hear a kind of foretelling of what might come next," Krigul said.

Although the specific details may vary, stories about water "both as a master of genesis and as a master of flood" are a shared thread across history and among different cultures and belief systems. The failure to heed cautionary tales is equally familiar, and *Proteus Pulse*'s unsettling mood of portent appears to carry its own warning.

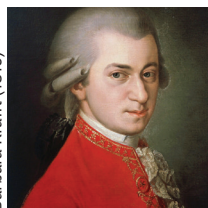
“I think we can also hear in this piece of music that the good old Proteus is in dire straits,” Krigul said. “We have captured him and are keeping him in far from elegant conditions. And as promised, he is now willing to foretell the future to us. Will we listen?”

Iain Shaw © 2026

First performance: March 17, 2022, in Tallinn, Estonia, Kristiina Poska conducting the Flanders Symphony Orchestra; **First SLSO performance:** These concerts; **Instrumentation:** 2 flutes (one doubling piccolo), 2 oboes, 2 clarinets, 2 bassoons, 4 horns, 2 trumpets, 3 trombones, timpani, percussion, harp, strings

Piano Concerto No. 21

Barbara Krafft (1819)



Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart

Born 1756, Salzburg, Austria

Died 1791, Vienna, Austria

Contrasting Concertos

Mozart settled in Vienna in the spring of 1781. Four years later he was enjoying the period of his greatest success in the Austrian capital. In particular, his “academies,” or subscription concerts, had become fashionable events for the city’s music-loving aristocracy. Mozart always included at least one piano concerto on these programs, playing the solo part himself.

This C-major concerto followed quickly on the heels of the composer’s Piano Concerto in D minor, K. 466. The contrast could hardly be more extreme, but these concertos form a complimentary set: one dark and turbulent, the other bright and joyous.

Mozart created several such pairs of emotionally contrasted works. More than one commentator has suggested that the composer produced these Janus-headed pairs to maintain some sort of spiritual equilibrium. Although no one can prove this hypothesis, we cannot but wonder at such vivid expressions of darkness and light coming nearly at once from the same source.

What to Listen For

- The disarmingly simple initial theme, developed in chains of long, repeating melodic sequences.
- The ensuing slow movement brings an altogether different mood. As C.M. Girdlestone noted, “The world of the Andante is that of the ‘dream’ andantes, a family which comprises some of Mozart’s most beautiful slow movements.”
- The finale reveals still another side of Mozart’s character, its playful recurring principal theme complimented by a spirited display of keyboard virtuosity.

Adapted from a note by Paul Schiavo © 2009

First performance: March 9, 1785, in Vienna; the composer performed the solo part and conducted from the keyboard; **First SLSO performance:** December 11, 1942, Vladimir Golschmann conducting with Robert Casadesus as soloist; **Most recent SLSO performance:** March 3, 2019, Peter Oundjian conducting with Lars Vogt as soloist; **Instrumentation:** solo piano; flute, 2 oboes, 2 bassoons, 2 horns, 2 trumpets, timpani, strings

Symphony No. 3

Joseph Kriehuber (1839)



Robert Schumann

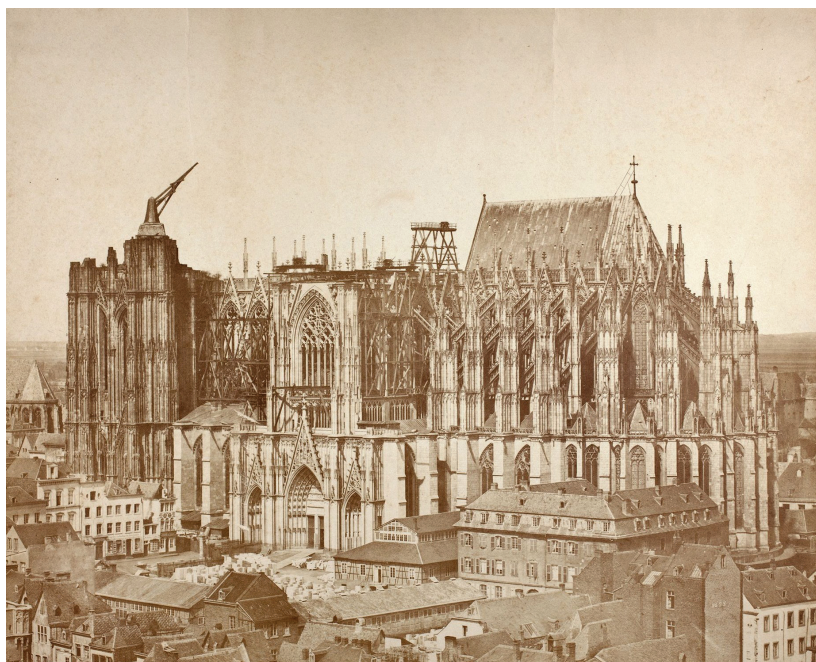
Born 1810, Zwickau, Germany

Died 1856, Endenich, Germany

From Cathedral to Composition

Shortly after their arrival in the Rhineland, the Schumanns traveled to witness the much-publicized completion of the Cologne Cathedral, which was six centuries in the making. One can imagine the sense of wonder the Schumanns experienced in touring the building, which was the largest cathedral in Europe and the tallest structure in the world at the time of its completion.

Metaphorically, the compositional style of the “Rhenish” Symphony reflects the architectural development of the cathedral, with its blend of Gothic and modern design. A musical marriage of formal conservatism and romantic vitality, the symphony reflects Schumann’s characteristic commitment to honoring and building upon canonic tradition.



Johannes Franciscus Michiels

Cologne Cathedral in 1855, five years after Schumann's visits inspired the fourth movement of his Third Symphony.

Exuberance and Grandeur

The symphony opens with a finale-like exuberance. Its primary theme, which Schumann develops with unrelenting persistence, derives its energy from use of contrasting rhythms.

The symphony's remaining movements reflect Schumann's impressions of the Rhineland. The second movement, a scherzo that Schumann originally titled "Morning on the Rhine," but later renamed, captures the sun rising on the Rhineland's hill country with a lightly undulating theme. The third movement, a slow intermezzo, offers a romantic, song-like rumination on the composer's new environment. The fourth movement's ethereal tone evokes the grandeur of the Cologne Cathedral, before a final movement that reaches its resplendent conclusion.

Adapted from a note by Skyler Dykes © 2023

First performance: February 6, 1851, in Düsseldorf, Germany, the composer conducting; **First SLSO performance:** March 8, 1912, Max Zach conducting; **Most recent SLSO performance:** March 4, 2023, Stephanie Childress conducting; **Instrumentation:** 2 flutes, 2 oboes, 2 clarinets, 2 bassoons, 4 horns, 2 trumpets, 3 trombones, timpani, strings

Artists



© Kaupo Kikkas

Kristiina Poska stands among the most sought-after conductors on today's international music scene. She has served as Music Director of the Orchestre Français des Jeunes since 2025, and as Principal Guest Conductor of the Latvian National Symphony Orchestra since the 2021/22 season. Previously, she held the position of Chief Conductor of the Flanders Symphony Orchestra from 19/20 through 24/25. Her recent highlights include debuts with the BBC Symphony Orchestra, Essen Philharmonic, Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra, and Baltimore Symphony Orchestra, and return performances with ensembles such as the Royal Scottish National Orchestra and Minnesota Orchestra. She is equally prolific with operatic repertoire, including works by Mozart, Béla Bartók, and Richard Strauss. These concerts mark Kristiina Poska's SLSO debut.



© Henrik Princeli

Marie-Ange Nguci has firmly positioned herself as one of today's leading young soloists, captivating audiences with the visionary power of her interpretations, whether conducting or leading from the piano. She is a regular guest of some of the world's most prestigious concert halls, including Vienna Musikverein, Amsterdam Concertgebouw, Tokyo Suntory Hall, Philharmonie de Paris, Zürich Tonhalle, and Sydney Opera House.

During the 2025/26 season, she was Artist in Residence with Radio France, appearing alongside Philharmonique de Radio France and Orchestre National de France with conductors such as Cristian Măcelaru and Simone Young. Other recent highlights include debuts with Oslo Philharmonic, Czech Philharmonic, Gothenburg Symphony Orchestra, the Estonian Symphony Orchestra and Netherlands Radio Philharmonic. Marie-Ange Nguci's most recent appearance with the SLSO was at Touhill Performing Arts Center in April 2024, when she performed Beethoven's Piano Concerto No. 2 with John Storgårds conducting.

Branford Marsalis and Dianne Reeves Celebrate John Coltrane

Branford Marsalis, saxophone

Dianne Reeves, vocals

Joey Calderazzo, piano

Eric Revis, bass

Justin Faulkner, drums



Find out more

Program will be announced from the stage.

Keep the night going following the concert with **After Party**, the SLSO's post-concert hang. Sip drinks, spend time with friends, and take in the music in the Berges Family Grand Lobby. No additional ticket required.



© Shervin Lainez

This concert is presented in partnership with
The Sheldon Concert Hall and Galleries.

26
/ 27
147th Season

Artists

© Yvonne Schmedemann



Branford Marsalis is a three-time Grammy Award-winning saxophonist, National Endowment for the Arts Jazz Master, and a Tony and Emmy Award nominee. He is equally at home performing concertos with symphony orchestras and sitting in with members of the Grateful Dead, but the core of his musical universe remains the Branford Marsalis Quartet. After more than three decades, this celebrated ensemble continues to be revered

for its uncompromising interpretation of a kaleidoscopic range of both original compositions and jazz and popular classics. After receiving Grammy nominations for its last two albums, *Upward Spiral* and *The Secret Between the Shadow and the Soul*, the Quartet made its Blue Note Records debut in 2025 with the release of the Grammy-nominated *Belonging*, a full album interpretation of Keith Jarrett's 1974 album of the same name.

© Jerris Madison



Dianne Reeves is a five-time Grammy Award-winning jazz vocalist. As a result of her virtuosity, improvisational prowess, and unique jazz and R&B stylings, Reeves received the Grammy for Best Jazz Vocal Performance for three consecutive recordings, a Grammy first in any vocal category. Reeves was featured in George Clooney's award-winning film *Good Night, and Good Luck*, for which she received a Grammy. Her most recent release, *Beautiful Life*,

also won a Grammy. Reeves has received honorary doctorates from DePaul University, the Berklee College of Music, and The Juilliard School. Like Branford Marsalis, Reeves was designated an NEA Jazz Master—the highest honor the United States bestows on jazz artists.

To honor John Coltrane's enduring legacy, the Branford Marsalis Quartet and Dianne Reeves released a tribute album, *Dedicated to You*, on Blue Note Records in September 2026. The album revisits Coltrane's seminal 1963 collaboration with Johnny Hartman, and will be followed by a world tour.

ST. LOUIS SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

Oct 23 Fri 7:00pm
Oct 24 Sat 7:00pm
Oct 25 Sun 2:00pm

Edward Scissorhands in Concert

Lawrence Loh, conductor



Find out more

This concert is a presentation of the feature film *Edward Scissorhands* with a live performance of the film's score. Out of respect for the musicians and your fellow audience members, please remain seated until the conclusion of the end credits.

Running time: 2 hours and 5 minutes, including a 25-minute intermission

Rated PG-13

Directed by **Tim Burton**

Produced by **Denise Di Novi** and **Tim Burton**

Screenplay by **Caroline Thompson**

Story by **Tim Burton** and **Caroline Thompson**

Music and lyrics by **Danny Elfman**

Original score composed by **Danny Elfman**

Executive Producer **Richard Hashimoto**

Keep the night going following the October 24 concert with **After Party**, the SLSO's post-concert hang. Sip drinks, spend time with friends, and take in the music in the Berges Family Grand Lobby. No additional ticket required.



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26
/ 27
147th Season

Artist

© Anthony Martinez



Lawrence Loh enjoys a dynamic career as a conductor of orchestras around the world. He was appointed Music Director of the Waco Symphony Orchestra in 2024, and also serves as Conductor Laureate of the Syracuse Orchestra, following his decade-long tenure as Music Director (2015–2025). Loh has also held artistic leadership positions at orchestras including the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra, West Virginia Symphony Orchestra,

Northeastern Pennsylvania Philharmonic, and Syracuse Opera. His recent guest conducting appearances include the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra, Baltimore Symphony Orchestra, Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra, National Symphony Orchestra, San Francisco Symphony, and Seattle Symphony. His summer festival appearances include the Bravo! Vail Music Festival, the Chautauqua Institution Summer Music Festival, and Tanglewood. A self-described “Star Wars geek” and film music enthusiast, Loh has conducted numerous John Williams and film music tribute concerts, often serving as both host and conductor.

About Disney Concerts

Disney Concerts is the concert production and licensing division of Disney Music Group, the music arm of The Walt Disney Company. Disney Concerts produces concerts and tours, and licenses Disney music and visual content to symphony orchestras, choruses and presenters on a worldwide basis. Disney Concerts’ concert packages include a variety of formats, such as “live-to-picture” film concerts, and themed instrumental and vocal compilation concerts that range from instrumental-only symphonic performances to multimedia productions featuring live vocalists and choirs. Featuring concerts from the largest movie franchises in the world—from Walt Disney Pictures, Walt Disney Animation Studios, Marvel Studios, Lucasfilm, Pixar and 20th Century Studios—current titles include the *Star Wars* Film Concert Series, *Toy Story*, *Disney Princess: The Concert*, *Coco*, *The Lion King, Up*, *Tim Burton’s The Nightmare Before Christmas*, *The Muppet Christmas Carol* and *Infinity Saga Concert Experience*.

Playlist: Symphony Happy Hour Beethoven's Sixth

Stéphane Denève, conductor



Find out more

**Ludwig van
Beethoven**
(1770–1827)

**Symphony No. 6 in F major, Op. 68,
“Pastoral”** (39 minutes)

Awakening of cheerful feelings on arriving in the
country (Allegro ma non troppo)

Scene by the brook (Andante molto mosso)

Merry gathering of country folk (Allegro) –

Thunder, Storm (Allegro) –

Shepherd's Song: Happy and grateful feelings
after the storm (Allegretto)

Keep the night going following the concert with **After Party**, the SLSO's post-concert hang. Sip drinks, spend time with friends, and take in the music in the Berges Family Grand Lobby. No additional ticket required.

For Music Director Stéphane Denève's bio, see page 4.

To read more about Beethoven's Symphony No. 6, see page 73.

The Playlist: Symphony Happy Hour series is presented
by the **William T. Kemper Foundation**.

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147th Season

Beethoven's Pastoral

Stéphane Denève, conductor

Julia Bullock, soprano



Find out more

George Walker

(1922–2018)

Folksongs for Orchestra (12 minutes)

I. Going to lay down my sword and shield

II. And they crucified my Lord

III. My Lord, what a morning

IV. O Peter, go ring dem bells

Samuel Barber

(1910–1981)

Knoxville: Summer of 1915, Op. 24 (16 minutes)

Julia Bullock, soprano

INTERMISSION

Ludwig van

Beethoven

(1770–1827)

Symphony No. 6 in F major, Op. 68, “Pastoral”

(39 minutes)

Awakening of cheerful feelings on arriving in the country (Allegro ma non troppo)

Scene by the brook (Andante molto mosso)

Merry gathering of country folk (Allegro) –

Thunder, Storm (Allegro) –

Shepherd's Song: Happy and grateful feelings after the storm (Allegretto)

Keep the night going following the October 31 concert with **After Party**, the SLSO's post-concert hang. Sip drinks, spend time with friends, and take in the music in the Berges Family Grand Lobby. No additional ticket required.

Julia Bullock is the **Linda and Paul Lee Guest Artist**.

This weekend's concerts are sponsored in part by a generous gift from **Nancy Friedland and James Florczak**.

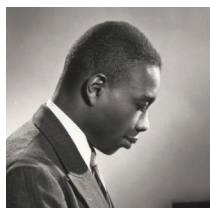
The Saturday, October 31 concert is sponsored in part by a generous gift from **Dr. Anne C. Goldberg**.

26
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Reflections of Home

As a music lover, you've probably stored away countless memories that can be unlocked by hearing a particular orchestral work, song, or even a few notes of a melody. The composers featured in today's program worked from an impulse to create music evoking an aesthetic, a feeling, or a sense of place. George Walker—the first Black composer to win a Pulitzer Prize—placed African American spirituals in an orchestral frame for his *Folksongs for Orchestra*, which conjures emotions ranging from joy and hope to anxiety, sorrow, and comfort. St. Louis native Julia Bullock makes her SLSO debut, giving voice to Samuel Barber's brooding *Knoxville: Summer of 1915*, before Beethoven invites us to a countryside reverie—weather permitting—with his stunning Pastoral Symphony.

Folksongs for Orchestra



George Walker

Born 1922, Washington, DC

Died 2018, Montclair, New Jersey

Four Spirituals

George Walker completed *Folksongs for Orchestra* (originally titled *Spirituals for Orchestra*) in fall 1990. The Baltimore Symphony Orchestra, conducted by David Zinman, gave the premiere in May 1992. The piece offers a set of four orchestral miniatures honoring traditional and beloved African American spirituals. Walker directly quotes a recognizable segment of each spiritual's melody rather than fragmenting or altering it, framing the songs respectfully and signaling to listeners which part of the text he is using.

Going to lay down my sword and shield

The first movement, drawn from the spiritual often known as “Down by the Riverside,” opens with a brief pastoral introduction before settling into a joyful, hopeful ambiance built around the idea of leaving burdens and conflict behind. Accented woodwind gestures lead the way, balanced by a sweet, chant-like melody in the strings, until the music gradually fades away.

And they crucified my Lord

Dramatic chords open the second folksong, signaling impending danger. These notes are punctuated by brass warnings and percussive clanking that evokes a hammer pounding nails. Sharply accented interjections from the winds and a pulsing timpani heighten the tension, before the music dissolves into a somber, lingering tone from a solo flute.

My Lord, what a morning

Evoking judgment day alongside a determined dream of freedom, the third folksong unfolds in a plaintive, ceremonial atmosphere. Brass lines sing out over sustained wind chords, suggesting a reflective optimism.

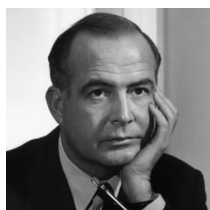
O Peter, go ring dem bells

The final movement celebrates the arrival of loved ones in Heaven, drawing on the spiritual's message, "I heard from Heaven today." The upbeat music conveys the comfort gained from receiving word that those who have passed on have found peace. Walker's orchestral set concludes with cheerful exclamations of joy from the brass and woodwinds.

Emma Plehal © 2026

First performance: May 1992, David Zinman conducting the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra;
First and most recent SLSO performances: September 25–27, 1992, Joseph Silverstein conducting; **Instrumentation:** 2 flutes, piccolo, 2 oboes, English horn, 2 clarinets, 2 bassoons, 2 horns, 2 trumpets, 2 trombones, tuba, timpani, percussion, harp, piano, harpsichord, strings

Knoxville: Summer of 1915



Samuel Barber

Born 1910, West Chester, Pennsylvania

Died 1981, New York City, New York

Inspiration and Resonance

In 1947, Samuel Barber returned home after serving in World War II to strife in his family, with both his father's and aunt's health failing. During this time, he came across James Agee's essay "Knoxville: Summer of 1915," later the preamble to Agee's Pulitzer Prize-winning novel, *A Death in the Family*. The essay resonated with Barber on a profoundly personal level.

The composer quickly wrote to his uncle saying, “It reminded me so much of summer evenings in West Chester and all of you are in it.” When soprano Eleanor Steber commissioned a new work from him, Barber knew instantly that he would set Agee’s story to music. Steber felt a similarly deep connection to Agee’s text, recognizing her own childhood in Wheeling, West Virginia.

Agee’s Essay

Agee’s essay is a dreamlike set of memories, shifting between adult reflection and the perspective of a young boy, recalling childhood summer evenings in Tennessee. He affectionately describes the young child, lying in the grass, listening to conversations among his relatives, and weaving in sensory details like the sounds of nearby cars and locusts buzzing in the hot evening air. However, the essay’s fond forays into nostalgia are complicated by a creeping sense of lost innocence, sorrow, and introspection.

Barber’s Music

At the heart of Barber’s expression of *Knoxville: Summer of 1915* is a gentle, rocking triplet figure used to conjure the comfort of home. This theme opens the work, reflecting the picturesque porch scene of people “rocking gently and talking gently.” A passing streetcar intrudes on the peaceful evening, its noisy arrival vividly depicted by the orchestra. Then, the music swells with intensity, as each relative is remembered, the warmth of Barber’s harmonies sharing a tender plea for their safekeeping. The music ultimately settles into a brooding calm, ending with a shift in perspective as the young child is tucked into bed. Suddenly alert to what Barber called “a child’s feeling of loneliness, wonder, and lack of identity in that marginal world between twilight and sleep,” the boy realizes that home and the people who make it so, “will not, not now, not ever; but will not ever tell me who I am.”

Emma Plehal © 2026

First performance: April 9, 1948, Serge Koussevitzky conducting the Boston Symphony Orchestra with Eleanor Steber as soloist; **First SLSO performance:** October 28, 1950, Vladimir Golschmann conducting, Judith Doniger as soloist; **Most recent SLSO performance:** December 7, 2014, Steven Jarvi conducting with Kiera Duffy as soloist; **Instrumentation:** piccolo, English horn, clarinet, bassoon, 2 horns, trumpet, percussion, harp, strings

Symphony No. 6

Joseph Karl Stieler



Ludwig van Beethoven

Born 1770, Bonn, Germany

Died 1827, Vienna, Austria

A Natural Composer

Beethoven's love of nature has been amply documented. "He loved to be alone with nature, to make her his only confidante," reported one of the composer's closer companions. Another acquaintance confirmed that he "had never met anyone who so ... thoroughly enjoyed flowers or clouds or other natural objects."

Beethoven completed his Sixth Symphony in the summer or early autumn of 1808. The composer himself devised both the title "Pastoral Symphony, or a recollection of country life" and the similarly evocative movement titles.

Beethoven evidently worried that listeners would give too much attention to pictorial elements such as using the music to convey bird calls, or a storm. He added a caveat to the title: "More an expression of feelings than tone painting." Nature clearly meant more to Beethoven than just a pleasing landscape or woodland sounds that could be imitated through clever musical imagery. It was, rather, a wellspring of purity and beauty, something to be held in reverence.

What to Listen For

- The expansive, unhurried first movement, whose repeating melodic figures impart a feeling of leisurely contemplation.
- In the "Scene by the brook" movement, the suggestion of bird calls from the woodwinds and violins becomes explicit in the final measures. Beethoven even identified his collaborators: a nightingale (flute), quail (oboe), and cuckoo (clarinet).
- An ominous rumbling in the low strings interrupts the "merry gathering" of the third movement, and the tempest of the fourth breaks out in full symphonic fury.

- The end of the storm is signaled by a call from clarinet and horn, which leads to a theme of gratitude and transcendent joy.

Adapted from a note by Paul Schiavo © 2015

First performance: December 22, 1808, the composer conducting at the Theater An Der Wien in Vienna; **First SLSO performance:** December 16, 1910, Max Zach conducting; **Most recent SLSO performance:** October 6, 2018, Bramwell Tovey conducting; **Instrumentation:** 2 flutes, piccolo, 2 oboes, 2 clarinets, 2 bassoons, 2 horns, 2 trumpets, 2 trombones, timpani, strings

Artists

For Music Director Stéphane Denève's bio, see page 4.

© Grant Legan



Julia Bullock is a Grammy Award-winning American classical singer who combines versatile artistry with a probing intellect and commanding stage presence. As well as headlining productions and concerts at preeminent arts institutions around the world, she has held positions as Artist-in-Residence of New York's Metropolitan Museum of Art, London's Guildhall School of Music and Drama, Berkeley's Cal Performances, and the San Francisco Symphony.

Bullock's operatic career spans repertoire from the Baroque canon to contemporary works written expressly for her voice. During the 2025/26 season, she premiered new works by Matthew Aucoin and Tania León. She has also performed in concert with leading orchestras in the US and around the world, including the Los Angeles and New York Philharmonics, Boston Symphony Orchestra, the Deutsches Symphonie-Orchester Berlin, and London's Philharmonia Orchestra. A prominent voice of social consciousness and activism, Bullock also won a Grammy Award for her debut solo album *Walking in the Dark*. These concerts mark Julia Bullock's SLSO debut.

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