ST. LOUIS SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA
STÉPHANE DENÈVE, MUSIC DIRECTOR

NEWS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
November 4, 2026

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THE ST. LOUIS SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA SHARES RESULTS OF ITS 2025/26 SEASON, HIGHLIGHTING ARTISTIC ACHIEVEMENTS, COMMUNITY IMPACT, AND THE CELEBRATED OPENING OF THE JACK C. TAYLOR MUSIC CENTER

The SLSO celebrated the opening of the Jack C. Taylor Music Center in September 2025, which transformed the concert experience for audiences and artists and created a community hub

More than one million people experienced the SLSO through concerts, education programs, digital initiatives, and concert broadcasts

Eight trustees re-elected at November 4 annual meeting: Barry Beracha, Steve Finerty, Gayle Jackson, Kenneth Ludmerer, Marcela Manjarrez, Stephen M. Savis, Thelma Steward, and Peter Van Cleve

Double bassist Sarah Hogan Kaiser awarded the Mabel Dorn Reeder Honorary Chair

Read the 2025/26 season annual report here.

(November 4, 2026, St. Louis, MO) – Today at its annual meeting, the St. Louis Symphony Orchestra (SLSO) celebrated the results of its 2025/26 season, the institution's milestone 146th season that began with the reopening of its expanded venue, the Jack C. Taylor Music Center. With the renovated Powell Hall at its heart, the Jack C. Taylor Music Center welcomed hundreds of thousands of visitors to concerts and events and earned critical and audience acclaim in what *The New York Times* called "a transformative moment for the city." More than one million people experienced the SLSO through 250+ concerts, free events, and education and community programs; digital initiatives; and media broadcasts.

In its fiscal year ending on August 31, 2026, the institution posted a $274,000 operating surplus on a budget of more than $38 million, representing strong fiscal management. The financial success includes a record-setting year for philanthropic giving: the SLSO's contributed revenue exceeded $11.3 million. The extraordinary community support was also reflected in the conclusion of the Music for All Campaign—the institution's most significant fundraising effort in its history—to support the expansion and renovation project and boost the SLSO's endowment, realizing $175 million and surpassing its $155 million goal by $20 million.

Members of the corporation re-elected eight trustees for an additional three-year term: **Barry Beracha** (formerly of Sara Lee Bakery Group), **Steve Finerty** (Argent Capital Management), **Gayle Jackson** (Energy Global Inc.), **Kenneth Ludmerer** (Washington University), **Marcela Manjarrez** (M Strategic Communications), **Stephen M. Savis** (ESCO Technologies), **Thelma Steward** (community volunteer), and **Peter Van Cleve** (Bryan Cave Leighton Paisner).

The Board elected the following officers: **Rex Sinquefield** (Vice Chair), **David Steward** (Vice Chair), **Elizabeth Mannen Berges** (Secretary), **Sherry Sissac** (Assistant Secretary), and **Susan Eickhoff** (Assistant Treasurer).

New trustees **Ken Cella** (Edward Jones), **Chris Haffenreffer** (Enterprise Mobility), **David Heimburger** (Saint Louis University), **Paul Lewis** (Commerce Trust), **Lynn Phillips** (Reinsurance Group of America), and **Paul Shaughnessy** (BSI Constructors) were elected at the Board's October 20 meeting.

Double bassist **Sarah Hogan Kaiser** was named the Mable Dorn Reeder Honorary Chair, an honor bestowed every five years to a musician demonstrating exemplary orchestra citizenship and deep investment across the SLSO's portfolio of activity.

The full 25/26 Annual Report is available at slso.org/impact.

Nancy Galvin, Chair of the SLSO Board of Trustees, said, "I congratulate the entire SLSO institution on an extraordinary year. The 2025/26 season was unlike any other in the orchestra's history, and the opening of the Jack C. Taylor Music Center is a defining moment in our 147-year story. The community's investment in our home has made the SLSO more accessible, turning our concert home into a thriving music center and creative hub for our region. I am grateful to all who have supported the SLSO in a banner year."

Marie-Hélène Bernard, The Jack and Mary Jane Bodine President and CEO of the SLSO, said, "This season marked a long-awaited homecoming, and a year filled with celebration and deeply moving music. This achievement belongs to the entire community that brought it to life. I am truly grateful to our Board and current and former Chairs Nancy Galvin and Steve Finerty for their inspired leadership; Music Director Stéphane Denève and the extraordinary musicians of the orchestra, Symphony Chorus, and IN UNISON Chorus; and each member of the staff, Advisory Council, Symphony Volunteer Association, and our community who gathered with the SLSO to experience the power of music."

Institutional and Artistic Highlights

- **Welcoming audiences to Powell Hall at the Jack C. Taylor Music Center**

Following a two-year transformational expansion and renovation, Powell Hall at the new Jack C. Taylor Music Center opened in September 2025, welcoming longtime and new audiences from St. Louis and from across the country. Designed by the architecture firm Snøhetta, the national media called the expanded venue "worth a fanfare" (*The New York Times*) and "replete with multiplicity, like those who people it" (*Architectural Record*). The music center facilitated greater community connections

throughout the season with new amenities and gathering and education areas, as well as significantly improved services for local and visiting artists. From September 6 through November 8, the SLSO hosted various evets for the community marking the reopening. Throughout the season, more than 225,000 people experienced the SLSO live at the Jack C. Taylor Music Center and throughout the region. The opening concerts were led by Music Director Stéphane Denève and featured a world premiere by **Kevin Puts—***House of Tomorrow*, performed with mezzo-soprano **Joyce DiDonato** and the **St. Louis Symphony Chorus**—and the world premiere of *Fanfare for Universal Hope* to open the celebration, composed by **James Lee III.** A free **Community Day** centered the SLSO's place as a convener of people, welcoming thousands to the music center for the first time to experience performances from regional arts and culture institutions.

- **Expanding the artistic portfolio**

The SLSO launched several new artistic series. Pianists Víkingur Ólafsson and Isata Kanneh-Mason inaugurated a new **piano recital** series. **Concerts for Teens** joined the SLSO's popular Concerts for Kids series, designed specifically for teenaged audiences. **Powell Hall Presents,** a non-orchestral presentation series, kicked off with a nearly sold-out Simon and Garfunkel tribute concert and included jazz, bluegrass, and rock presentations. The SLSO revived its one-hour concert programs with **Playlist: Symphony Happy Hour**, funded by the William T. Kemper Foundation and designed to be an accessible entry point for the classical curious.

- **Championing today's voices**

The SLSO continued its long history of championing music of today, performing world premieres by Nathalie Joachim, James Lee III, and Composer in Residence Kevin Puts; a US premiere by Conductor Laureate Leonard Slatkin; and SLSO co-commissions by Jasmine Guo and Carlos Simon. SLSO musicians performed the world premieres of three new chamber music pieces as part of the Live at The Sheldon series. In total, 40 percent of pieces on classical programs were by living composers. Throughout the season, SLSO musicians performed nearly 50 pieces for the first time, including at Live at the Pulitzer and Live at The Sheldon chamber music concerts. More than 30 artists made their SLSO debuts.

- **New album**

The SLSO added to its expansive catalogue of recordings with an internationally acclaimed album of music by Kevin Puts, who also served as the SLSO's Composer in Residence throughout the season. The album included the inaugural recordings of Puts' Concerto for Orchestra, *Silent Night Elegy*, and *Virelai*.

- **Welcoming new audiences**

Access to music is at the core of the SLSO's mission. Forty percent (40%) of single ticket buyers were new the SLSO in 25/26, while thirty-three percent (33%) of subscribers were new to the institution. The SLSO welcomed new audiences through a partnership with **St. Louis City Library** and **St. Louis County Library**; a series of **community conversations** featuring guest artists; more than 1,400 free education concert tickets given to schools with financial need; and more than $50,000 in tickets given to clients of local social service agencies.

- **Media broadcast expansion**

The broadcast of SLSO classical concerts continued for a 16th year on **St. Louis Public Radio**. In 25/26, a media partnership with **Classical Kansas City** brought concert broadcasts to the Kansas City metro area, resulting in a forty percent (40%) increase in radio audiences.

Community and Education Impact

- **Community partnerships**

The SLSO advanced key partnerships including a collaboration with **St. Louis CITY SC** to present a show-stopping tribute to Tina Turner; a cross-artistic performance with **Saint Louis Dance Theatre** on Igor Stravinsky's *Pulcinella* Suite; continued chamber music concerts in tandem with the **Pulitzer Arts Foundation**, **The Sheldon,** and the Contemporary Museum (CAM); an ongoing partnership with the **St. Louis Kaplan Feldman Holocaust Museum** in presenting stories and music by victims of the Holocaust; and partnership with the Center of Creative Arts (COCA) on Tiny Tunes concerts for the youngest audiences. In total, the SLSO collaborated with 150 partner organizations through ticket initiatives, artistic partnerships, outreach efforts, and more.

- **Prioritizing students and educators**

More than 200,000 students and 1,000+ teachers directly benefitted from SLSO programming in 44 states and nine countries. The SLSO reached 14,000 through its first **Education Concert livestream**, and more than 100 educators from Missouri and Illinois and as far away as Florida joined SLSO musicians on stage for **Extra Credit**. Filling a gap in programming for teenagers, the SLSO launched **Unpacked,** an education concert designed specifically for middle and high school students.

- **Opera Theatre of Saint Louis**

For the 49th season, the SLSO served as the resident orchestra at Opera Theatre of Saint Louis. This enduring partnership featured performances of Gilbert and Sullivan's *The Pirates of Penzance*, Adam Guettel's *The Light in the Piazza*, André Previn's *A Streetcar Named Desire*, and Charles Gounod's *Romeo and Juliet* in May and June 2026.

FY26 Financial Results

For the fiscal year ending on August 31, 2026, total operating revenue was $38.716 million, while operating expenses totaled $38.442 million, resulting in a cash operating surplus of $274,000. The institution's endowment ended the fiscal year at nearly $315 million, a 14.8 percent increase over the conclusion of fiscal year 2025.

At the end of 2025, the SLSO concluded Music for All, its fundraising campaign to support the expansion and renovation of Powell Hall and grow its endowment. At the end of the campaign, the largest in the institution's history, more than $175 million had been raised to the goal of $155 million.

Mabel Dorn Reeder Honorary Chair

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Double bassist Sarah Hogan Kaiser received the Mabel Dorn Reeder Honorary Chair for 2026–2031. Kaiser, who has performed with the SLSO since 2004, grew up in the St. Louis area and also performed in the St. Louis Symphony Youth Orchestra.

The position was established by the Mabel Dorn Reeder Foundation in July 2010. It is awarded, based on excellence in artistry and leadership within the orchestra and community, to a member of the SLSO for a five-year period and is accompanied by a one-time stipend for professional development. Foundation trustee Mabel Purkerson, Reeder's goddaughter, said that the award is a way to support both the SLSO and individual musicians, especially the orchestra members' commitment to the St. Louis community.

Kaiser was selected to receive the honorary chair for her extraordinary contributions as a musician and her deep commitment to the SLSO's education and community program, and in particular her investment in the student experience in the Youth Orchestra. Purkerson presented Kaiser with a medal and photographs during the annual meeting. Prior honorees include clarinetist Tina Ward (now retired), Associate Concertmaster Heidi Harris (now retired), and Associate Principal Second Violinist Kristin Ahlstrom.

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 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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