

CONCERT PROGRAM
Friday, November 11, 2016, 8:00pm

Gemma New, conductor
Leonard Slatkin, conductor

ST. LOUIS SYMPHONY YOUTH ORCHESTRA

COPLAND *Fanfare for the Common Man* (1942)
(1900–1990)

GRIEG *Peer Gynt Suite No. 1, op. 46* (1875)
(1843–1907)

Morning
Åse's Death
Anitra's Dance
In the Hall of the Mountain King

WAGNER *Prelude to Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg* (1867)
(1813–1883)

Leonard Slatkin, conductor

INTERMISSION

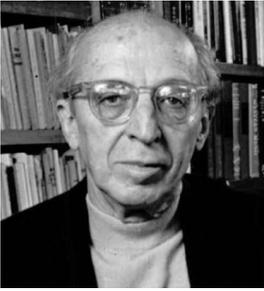
BEETHOVEN *Symphony No. 3 in E-flat major, op. 55, "Eroica"* (1804)
(1770–1827)

Allegro con brio
Marcia funebre: Adagio assai
Scherzo: Allegro vivace
Finale: Allegro molto

This concert is sponsored by Whole Foods Market.

The St. Louis Symphony Youth Orchestra is supported in part by the G.A., Jr. and Kathryn M. Buder Charitable Foundation.

The St. Louis Symphony Youth Orchestra is supported in part by Esco Technologies Foundation.



AARON COPLAND

Fanfare for the Common Man

BY ELI MENNERICK, TROMBONE

Born

November 14, 1900, in Brooklyn

Died

December 2, 1990, in North Tarrytown, New York

First Performance

March 12, 1943, Eugene Goossens conducting

YO Premiere

May 21, 2000, David Amado conducting

Most Recent YO Performance

November 21, 2003, Scott Parkman conducting

Scoring

4 horns
3 trumpets
3 trombones
tuba
timpani
percussion

Performance Time

approximately 3 minutes

To many, the works of Aaron Copland embody the American musical sound. During the 1930s and 1940s especially, Copland deliberately composed “populist” music accessible to the general public. Unsurprisingly, his most widely-known works come from this period, including *Appalachian Spring*, *Billy the Kid*, *Rodeo*, and *Fanfare for the Common Man*. These compositions are characterized by a lean, open sound, reflecting both American democratic ideals and the natural grandeur of the country. *Fanfare for the Common Man* provides a particularly good example of this unique style.

In 1942, during World War II, the conductor Eugene Goossens commissioned fanfares from multiple prominent American composers in order to encourage support for the war effort. The only one of these fanfares still in the active repertoire today is Copland’s *Fanfare for the Common Man*. Despite its brevity, the fanfare celebrates values at the very heart of American society including the ideal of democratic equality. The orchestration for only brass and percussion exaggerates Copland’s pure, vibrant sound, and enables an especially accessible mode of expression. The opening clashes of percussion set the majestic mood; trumpets soon enter in unison with the central melody of the fanfare—a perfect fourth followed by a perfect fifth, together spanning an entire octave. After more percussion, the trumpets are joined by horns, and later trombones. As each instrument joins in, the melody gains power through progressively more interesting harmonies and textures until the fanfare culminates in a series of massive chords from the brass.

Copland’s *Fanfare for the Common Man* does not celebrate any one individual hero. There is no general in battle, nor even a central protagonist. Instead, Copland aims at a broader story, painting every common person as heroic and celebrating the power found in all of us to change the world.

EDVARD GRIEG

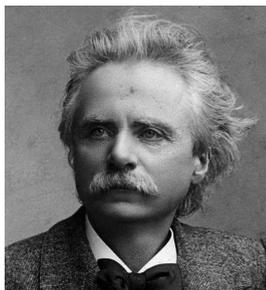
Peer Gynt Suite No. 1, op. 46

BY JANE WANG, FLUTE

Originally written for the play by Henrik Ibsen, Edvard Grieg's *Peer Gynt* Suite No. 1 captures everything from a gentle sunrise to a troll king.

Grieg was introduced to music at the age of six when his mother taught him how to play the piano. Then he was recommended at age 15 for the Leipzig Conservatory, where he enrolled. In 1867 Ibsen wrote his play *Peer Gynt* but didn't intend for it to be staged. He changed his mind, however, in 1874 and asked Grieg to compose music for the production. Composing the piece was not easy for Grieg, as he stated in a letter to his friend in 1874, "*Peer Gynt* progresses slowly." Grieg, however, was drawn into the play and was intrigued with the drama. A year after his death, the full score of *Peer Gynt* was compiled and published, with 23 movements and 90 minutes of music.

In the *Peer Gynt* Suite No. 1, there are four movements: *Morning*, *Åse's Death*, *Anitra's Dance*, and *In the Hall of the Mountain King*. *Morning* is a sunrise translated into music. It begins with woodwind solos that carry into the entire orchestra, then the feeling of the breadth and relief of a sunrise moves through the strings and the full orchestra. The second and third movements are just for the strings. However, *Åse's Death* has a slow dramatic melodic line that is passed throughout the string section and continuously fades, just like the slow ending of a life. *Anitra's Dance* has a lighter tone. It has a faster melody and a moving, active line. And then there is *In the Hall of the Mountain King*. It is almost impossible not to enjoy this tune and be excited during the movement with its familiar and exciting ending. This movement is definitely the one that gets everyone to the edge of their seats.



Born

June 15, 1843, in Bergen, Norway

Died

September 4, 1907, in Bergen, Norway

First Performance

February 24, 1876, with Grieg conducting

YO Premiere

This performance

Scoring

2 flutes
piccolo
2 oboes
2 clarinets
2 bassoons
4 horns
2 trumpets
3 trombones
tuba
timpani
percussion
strings

Performance Time

approximately 15 minutes



RICHARD WAGNER

Prelude to *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg*

BY JONAS MONDSCHHEIN, HORN

Born

May 22, 1813, Leipzig

Died

February 13, 1883, Venice

First Performance

June 21, 1868, in Munich, Hans von Bülow conducting

YO Premiere

March 12, 1976, Gerhardt Zimmermann conducting

Most Recent YO Performance

February 8, 2006, Scott Parkman conducting

Scoring

2 flutes
piccolo
2 oboes
2 clarinets
2 bassoons
4 horns
3 trumpets
3 trombones
tuba
timpani
percussion
harp
strings

Performance Time

approximately 9 minutes

Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg is Richard Wagner's hit opera premiered in 1868. Written concurrently with the monolithic, incestuous romp that is the Ring Cycle, *Die Meistersinger* was everything that Wagner actually said he hated about opera: heartfelt, funny, and tuneful. It tells the story of the German Meistersinger guild, a medieval institution that established rules and traditions for writing songs. Members of this guild called themselves "mastersingers," and it took years of study and practice to earn that title. The travelling knight named Walther von Stolzing knows none of this, however, when he falls in love at first sight with a goldsmith's daughter named Eva Pogner. Unfortunately for these two, it is Midsummer's Eve, and Eva's father has already pledged Eva as the prize for winning the Meistersinger songwriting contest the following day. Determined to win Eva, Walther enlists the help of mastersinger extraordinaire Hans Sachs to teach him the ins and outs of the craft, but, being the iconoclast he is, Walther ignores the rules in favor of his own musical instinct. In the end, it is this instinct that wins Walther the contest and consequently Eva's hand.

The overture to *Die Meistersinger* is overflowing with the same kind of sincerity and good humor found in the rest of the four-and-a-half-hour opera. It opens with a chorale in C major and goes on to establish a whole slew of themes, those of the ancient majesty of the mastersingers, of the self-conscious chirps of their apprentices, of the sinewy, insistent existentialism of Walther's prize song. The overture alone features 12 of the 40 leitmotifs that appear throughout the opera; no matter how light the subject matter, Wagner always manages to build many layers of musical meaning into his works.

As a horn player, I am thrilled to play this piece. Interspersed throughout the overture are moments of horn quartet glory, all four cylinders firing away.

LUDWIG VAN BEETHOVEN

Symphony No. 3 in E-flat major, op. 55, “Eroica”

BY CURTIS SELLERS, OBOE

Beethoven’s “Eroica” Symphony allows us to hear the full range of emotions in the orchestra: from mourning in the second movement, to eccentricity in the third movement, to sentimentality and longing in the fourth movement.

This is a truly revolutionary symphony, pun intended. It marks the birth of the Romantic era, and Beethoven originally named it “Bonaparte” in honor of Napoleon. But when Napoleon declared himself emperor, Beethoven’s initial hero became a villain. The composer was so angry that he tore his manuscript scratching out “Bonaparte.” He replaced the title with “Eroica.”

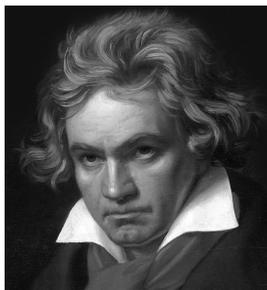
We get the sense of the heroic in the opening power chords. Then we have the bright, optimistic interplay between the strings and the oboes, flutes, and clarinets. Extreme dynamics are particularly present in this movement. There are some moments where the audience may need to lean forward and others where they will be blown away by the *fortissimos* that Beethoven wrote.

The second movement, which is a funeral march, features the oboe playing a very serious theme that is carried throughout the orchestra in different sections. The middle of the movement, *Maggiore*, is a relief from the emotionally heavy introduction. This could symbolize hope, even in the face of death. We finally return to the theme when the string sections play moving sixteenth notes. In the end, the funeral procession moves by as everyone decrescendos until the final measures.

The third movement changes character entirely. It is very fast-paced and energetic with a driving scherzo. There are moments of interplay between violin and woodwinds. The horns take over with hunting calls in the trio.

The fourth movement overall is a powerful, high-energy finale. It starts with a theme and variations that continues until the end. The *Poco andante* in the middle brings a sense of longing from an otherwise joyful movement. By the *presto*, the entire orchestra is playing together in full force.

The symphony is not only symbolic of change in musical form, but includes changes within the piece itself: at first, a heroic, hopeful beginning, a somber second movement, a lively third, and strong, heroic, ending. It reflects the changing times in which it was created and changes within Beethoven himself. Beethoven’s “Eroica” represents revolution and evolution of humankind through music.



Born

December 16, 1770, Bonn

Died

March 26, 1827, Vienna

First Performance

April 7, 1805, in Vienna, with Beethoven conducting

YO Premiere and Most

Recent YO Performance

March 13, 1996, Mark Russell Smith conducting

Scoring

2 flutes
2 oboes
2 clarinets
2 bassoons
3 horns
2 trumpets
timpani
strings

Performance Time

approximately 47 minutes



GEMMA NEW

RESIDENT CONDUCTOR AND DIRECTOR OF THE
ST. LOUIS SYMPHONY YOUTH ORCHESTRA

Sought after for her insightful interpretations and dynamic presence, New Zealand-born conductor Gemma New was recently appointed the St. Louis Symphony's Resident Conductor and Director of the St. Louis Symphony Youth Orchestra. She also holds the position of Music Director for the Hamilton Philharmonic Orchestra in Ontario, Canada, while maintaining a close relationship with the New Jersey Symphony Orchestra and Chamber Orchestra of San Antonio. New also enjoys guest engagements this season with the Malmö SymfoniOrkester in Malmö, Sweden, Orlando Philharmonic Orchestra, and the Manitoba Chamber Orchestra in Winnipeg, Canada.

In St. Louis, New leads education, family, community, and Live at Powell Hall performances, covers for Music Director David Robertson and guest conductors, and directs the Youth Orchestra. Robertson said of her appointment, "I'm very happy that Gemma New will be joining us in St. Louis. She stood out as a musician of great insight when we worked together a few years ago at Carnegie Hall. From the first moment in our audition, New opened a clear line of deep communication with our musicians, who responded to her clarity and passion. Her dedication to music education will be a true gift to the organization and the St. Louis community."

New moves to the St. Louis Symphony from her successful time with the New Jersey Symphony Orchestra as its Associate Conductor. In recent seasons, New has guest conducted several orchestras, including the Atlanta, Toledo, Long Beach, and Miami Symphonies in the United States, as well as the Christchurch Symphony and Opus Orchestras in New Zealand.

New holds a Master of Music degree in orchestral conducting from the Peabody Institute, where she studied with Gustav Meier and Markand Thakar. She graduated from the University of Canterbury, New Zealand with a Bachelor of Music (Honors) in violin performance.

ST. LOUIS SYMPHONY YOUTH ORCHESTRA 2016-2017

Violin I

Hava Polinsky
Co-Concertmaster

Aidan Ip
Co-Concertmaster

April Moon
Assistant Concertmaster

Theo Bockhorst

Grace Crockett

Leanne Dang

William Dong

Leah Haynes

Haydn Jones

Rebecca Lang

Selena Lee

Jason Martin

Josephine Moten

Luke Stange

Mary Xu

Stephanie Zhong

Violin II

Hannah O'Brien

Co-Principal

Rose Haselhorst

Co-Principal

Anna Zhong

Assistant Principal

Nathaniel Eulentrop

Cindy Geng

Charlie Hamilton

Julia Harris

Josh Jones

Michael Lu

Ethan Mayer

Rich Qian

Naaman Saad

Eva Shanker

Katherine Shaw

Ellie Tomasson

Hikari Umemori

Viola

Jerome Eulentrop

Co-Principal

Molly Prow

Co-Principal

Junyi Su

Assistant Principal

Safia Mayy Amerin

Rohan Bohra

Emily Crutchfield

Philip Duchild

Noah Eagle

Elizabeth Nguyen

Lauren Praiss

Will Schatz

Jordyn Sengl

Cello

Amy An

Co-Principal

Torri Weidinger

Co-Principal

Alex Cho

Assistant Principal

Daniel Diringner

Anna Groesch

Nathan Hsu

Claire Lin

Glen Morgenstern

Joel Rosen

Samuel Tillman

Daniel Tse

Adam Zhao

Double Bass

Pieter Boswinkel

Co-Principal

Abigail McCay

Co-Principal

Shannon Sagehorn

Assistant Principal

Dax Faulkingham

Joel Hsieh

Bridie Molen

Ben Moser

Lauren Wash

Harp

Sophie Thorpe

Flute

Gregory Bardwell

Chloe Descher

Taylor Poenicke

Jane Wang

Piccolo

Taylor Poenicke

Oboe

Gwyneth Allendorph

Brandon Hokeness

Curt Sellers

Walter Thomas-Patterson

English Horn

Curt Sellers

Clarinet

Zachary Foulks

Melissa Frisch

Asher Harris

Evyn Levy

E-flat Clarinet

Zachary Foulks

Bassoon

Helen Bednara

Autumn Chuang

Joshua Guehring

Emily Schaper

Horn

Sai Allu

Dana Channell

Jonas Mondschein

Kelsey Moore

Ethan Wang

Trumpet

Tory Greenwood

Philip Gurt

Charles Prager

Lyle Simpson

Trombone

Joshua Adams

Jacob Melsha

Elijah Mennerick

Bass Trombone

Alex Mullins

Tuba

Nicholas Jarvis

Percussion

Abigail Foehrkolb

Anurag Goel

Miles Kim

Sean Schuchman

Aaron Zoll

Keyboard

Michael Lu

CONCERT CALENDAR

For tickets call 314-534-1700, visit stlsymphony.org, or use the free STL Symphony mobile app available for iOS and Android.



JAN FROM

David Robertson

MOZART REQUIEM

**Fri, Nov 18, 8:00pm | Sat, Nov 19, 8:00pm |
Sun, Nov 20, 3:00pm**

David Robertson, conductor; Caitlin Lynch, soprano; Michelle DeYoung, mezzo-soprano; Nicholas Phan, tenor; Kevin Thompson, bass; St. Louis Symphony Chorus, Amy Kaiser, director; The St. Louis Children's Choirs, Barbara Berner, artistic director

IVES *The Unanswered Question*

ADAMS *On the Transmigration of Souls*

MOZART Requiem, K. 626



SHANE CANNETT-CARRIE

Stephen Hough

BEETHOVEN'S EMPEROR

**Fri, Nov 25, 8:00pm | Sat, Nov 26, 8:00pm
Sun, Nov 27, 3:00pm**

Robert Spano, conductor; Stephen Hough, piano

SIBELIUS *Pohjola's Daughter*

RESPIGHI *Fountains of Rome*

BEETHOVEN Piano Concerto No. 5, "Emperor"

Presented by The Thomas A. Kooyumjian Family Foundation



DEVON CRIS

Ward Stare

SELECTIONS FROM THE NUTCRACKER

**Fri, Dec 2, 8:00pm | Sat, Dec 3, 8:00pm |
Sun, Dec 4, 3:00pm**

Ward Stare, conductor; David Halen, violin;

Webster University Leigh Gerding College of Fine Arts, visuals

BORODIN *Prince Igor Overture*

TCHAIKOVSKY Violin Suite from *Sleeping Beauty*

and *Swan Lake*

TCHAIKOVSKY Act II from *The Nutcracker*



Richard Smallwood

A GOSPEL CHRISTMAS WITH RICHARD SMALLWOOD Thu, Dec 8, 7:30pm

Richard Smallwood, vocalist;

St. Louis Symphony; IN UNISON Chorus;

Kevin McBeth, director

Supported by Monsanto Fund

CONCERT PROGRAM

Friday, November 11, 2016, 10:30am

Saturday, November 12, 2016, 8:00pm

Sunday, November 13, 2016, 3:00pm

Leonard Slatkin, conductor

Olga Kern, piano

LEONARD SLATKIN

(b. 1944)

Kinah (2015)

Karin Bliznik, trumpet and flugelhorn

Heidi Harris, violin

Frederick Zlotkin, cello

BARBER

(1910–1981)

Piano Concerto, op. 38 (1962)

Allegro appassionato

Canzone: Moderato

Allegro molto

Olga Kern, piano

INTERMISSION

COPLAND

(1900–1990)

Billy the Kid Ballet-Suite (1939)

The Open Prairie –

Street in a Frontier Town –

Mexican Dance and Finale –

Prairie Night (Card Game at Night) –

Gun Battle –

Celebration (after Billy's Capture) –

Billy's Death –

The Open Prairie Again

**GERSHWIN/
arr. Bennett**

(1898–1937)

Porgy and Bess: A Symphonic Picture for Orchestra (1935/1942)

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

These concerts are part of the Wells Fargo Advisors Orchestral Series.

These concerts are sponsored by Steinway Piano Gallery.

Leonard Slatkin is the Monsanto Guest Artist.

Olga Kern is the Mr. and Mrs. Whitney R. Harris Guest Artist.

The concert of Friday, November 11, is underwritten in part by a generous gift from Ann S. Lux.

The concert of Saturday, November 12, is underwritten in part by a generous gift from Mr. and Mrs. Michael F. Neidorff.

Pre-Concert Conversations are sponsored by Washington University Physicians.

Large print program notes are available through the generosity of Bellefontaine Cemetery and Arboretum, and are located at the Customer Service table in the foyer.

AMERICAN SOUL

BY RENÉ SPENCER SALLER

TIMELINKS

1935

GERSHWIN

Porgy and Bess

Babe Ruth retires

1939

COPLAND

Billy the Kid

John Steinbeck publishes
The Grapes of Wrath

1962

BARBER

Piano Concerto, op. 38

The Cuban Missile Crisis
brings the world to the
brink of nuclear war

2015

SLATKIN

Kinah

*Star Wars: The Force
Awakens* premieres

The son of distinguished Hollywood studio musicians, Leonard Slatkin is a quintessentially American artist. During his long career—including seventeen stellar seasons as music director of the St. Louis Symphony—he has faithfully championed 20th- and 21st-century American composers with sensitive, lucid interpretations. His recordings of works by Samuel Barber, Aaron Copland, and George Gershwin with the St. Louis Symphony not only secured our orchestra's global reputation but also elevated the discourse about American music in general. This program features works by these three American icons, prefaced by an intensely personal composition by Slatkin himself.



LEONARD SLATKIN

Kinah

A SON'S ELEGY *Kinah*, which means “elegy” in Hebrew, is Leonard Slatkin’s symphonic tribute to his late parents, Felix Slatkin and Eleanor Aller. Felix was concertmaster of the 20th Century Fox orchestra; Eleanor was principal cello of the Warner Brothers orchestra. They were scheduled to perform Brahms’s *Double Concerto*—a piece they enjoyed practicing at home but had never played together in public—when tragedy struck. Between rehearsal and the concert, Felix Slatkin suffered a heart attack and died.

In December 2015, a week before his late father’s 100th birthday, Slatkin presented the world premiere of *Kinah*, a single-movement exploration of grief, memory, love, and renewal. Motivic shards, based on four notes from the slow movement of the fateful Brahms concerto, pierce Slatkin’s atmospheric textures. The themes are fragmentary, evanescent. They reflect a partnership cut short.

At 72, Slatkin is now 25 years older than his father was when he died. *Kinah* negotiates the distance of loss, the immediacy of grief, the revelations of time. “This is an elegy to my parents,” Slatkin wrote, “easily the most personal piece I’ve written.” At the premiere last December, his brother, Frederick Zlotkin, played the offstage solo cello part on an instrument that belonged to their mother.

Born

September 1, 1944, in
Los Angeles

First Performance

December 6, 2015, in Detroit,
the Detroit Symphony with
Leonard Slatkin conducting

STL Symphony Premiere

This week

Scoring

4 horns
trumpet
flugelhorn
percussion
harp
piano
celeste
solo violin
solo cello
strings

Performance Time

approximately 12 minutes

SAMUEL BARBER

Piano Concerto, op. 38

FIRST IN FORM Although he toiled over an earlier, unpublished piano concerto for more than three years while attending the Curtis Institute, Samuel Barber didn't attempt the form again for more than three decades. In 1959, the final year of his forties, he accepted a commission for a piano concerto honoring the upcoming centenary of the music publisher G. Schirmer, Inc.

Inspired by the muscular virtuosity of his chosen soloist, John Browning, Barber began working on the concerto the following spring. To reacquaint himself with the form, he pored over contemporary scores by Boulez, Copland, Webern, Berg, and Schoenberg. He finished the first two movements in 1960, but the finale remained in flux until only two weeks before the premiere, in September of 1962. Barber incorporated technical advice from both Browning and Vladimir Horowitz, who persuaded him that the third movement was unplayable at the original tempo. The piano concerto earned Barber a Pulitzer Prize in 1963 and a Music Critics Circle Award in 1964. Browning made it his signature piece; by 1969 he had performed it nearly 150 times. In 1991 he recorded it with the St. Louis Symphony, led by Leonard Slatkin.

AARON COPLAND

Billy the Kid Ballet-Suite

A COWBOY BALLETT The first of Aaron Copland's so-called "cowboy ballets," *Billy the Kid* was commissioned in 1938 by Lincoln Kirstein, for Ballet Caravan and the dancer Eugene Loring, who also wrote the scenario. Its subject was the legendary outlaw William Bonney: tragic hero, violent misfit, and icon of the vanished Old West. Copland's music is a study in radical simplicity. At once immense and intimate, it evokes the vast expanses of the wild frontier and the raucous diversions of its inhabitants.

"I felt it was worth the effort to see if I couldn't say what I had to say in the simplest possible terms," the composer wrote. "As I see it, music



Born

March 9, 1910, in West Chester, Pennsylvania

Died

January 23, 1981, in New York

First Performance

September 24, 1962, in New York, John Browning was the soloist with Erich Leinsdorf conducting the Boston Symphony Orchestra

STL Symphony Premiere

December 16, 1966, John Browning was the soloist with Eleazar de Carvalho conducting

Most Recent STL Symphony Performance

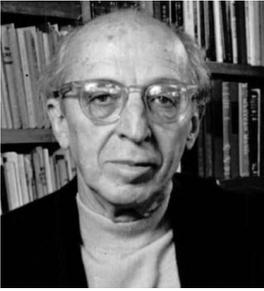
July 25, 1992, John Browning was the soloist with Leonard Slatkin conducting

Scoring

3 flutes
piccolo
2 oboes
English horn
2 clarinets
bass clarinet
2 bassoons
4 horns
3 trumpets
3 trombones
timpani
percussion
harp
strings

Performance Time

approximately 26 minutes

**Born**

November 14, 1900, in
Brooklyn

Died

December 2, 1937, in
North Tarrytown, New York

First Performance

May 24, 1939, in New York,
Fritz Kitzinger conducting
(full ballet)

STL Symphony Premiere

January 29, 1944, Harry
Farbman conducting

**Most Recent STL Symphony
Performance**

April 29, 2001, Murry Sidlin
conducting

Scoring

2 flutes
2 piccolos
2 oboes
2 clarinets
2 bassoons
4 horns
3 trumpets
3 trombones
tuba
timpani
percussion
harp
piano
strings

Performance Time

approximately 20 minutes

that is born complex is not inherently better or worse than music that is born simple.”

Kirstein gave Copland an assortment of cowboy songs, and he wove at least six of them into his score: “Great Granddad,” “Git Along Little Dogie,” “The Old Chisholm Trail,” “Goodbye, Old Paint,” “The Dying Cowboy,” and “Trouble for the Range Cook.” In 1940 Copland extracted a concert suite from the ballet.

Copland wrote his own summary of *Billy the Kid*:

The ballet begins and ends on the open prairie. The first scene is a street in a frontier town. Cowboys saunter into town, some on horseback, others on foot with lassoes; some Mexican women do a *jarabe*, which is interrupted by a fight between two drunks. Attracted by the gathering crowd, Billy, a boy of twelve, is seen for the first time, with his mother. The brawl turns ugly, guns are drawn, and in some unaccountable way, Billy’s mother is killed. Without an instant’s hesitation, in cold fury, Billy draws a knife from a cowhand’s sheath and stabs his mother’s slayers. His short but famous career has begun. In swift succession we see episodes in Billy’s later life—at night, under the stars, in a quiet card game with his outlaw friends; hunted by a posse led by his former friend, Pat Garrett; in a gun battle. A celebration takes place when he is captured. Billy makes one of his legendary escapes from prison. Tired and worn out in the desert, Billy rests with his girl. Finally, the posse catches up with him.

GEORGE GERSHWIN

Porgy and Bess: A Symphonic Picture for Orchestra

AN AMERICAN FOLK OPERA Until his death at 38, from a brain tumor, George Gershwin cranked out music like a Jazz-Age Mozart. *Porgy and Bess*, his self-described “American folk opera,” contains some of his most enduring melodies. Although his brother Ira helped out with some lyrics, the opera’s librettist, DuBose Heyward, who also wrote the novel on which it was based, supplied many of its greatest lines. “Summertime,” the opening aria, might be the most recognizable melody in

20th-century musical theater. Pulsing through all three acts, the languorous lullaby is the opera's lifeblood. Gershwin began writing it in 1933, a full two years before the show's premiere.

For *Porgy and Bess*, Gershwin adopted an African-American musical vernacular, with a South Carolina accent. Hoping to make the music sound as authentic as possible, he lived on an island outside of Charleston while composing the score. He and Heyward stipulated that all the major roles go to black performers, a brave and unprecedented move in an era of strict racial segregation.

In a 1926 essay, Gershwin defined the "voice of the American soul" as "jazz that is the plantation song improved and transferred into finer, bigger harmonies." The "American soul," he wrote, "is black and white ... all colors and all souls unified in the great melting pot of the world." But despite this ethos of assimilation, Gershwin doesn't make all his Americans sound alike. In *Porgy and Bess*, the black characters express themselves in operatic recitative—declamatory, poetic, quasi-musical speech—whereas the white characters are confined to drab, prosaic spoken dialogue.

AN ORCHESTRAL SNAPSHOT In 1942, five years after Gershwin's death, his associate Robert Russell Bennett arranged a medley for orchestra, at the request of the conductor Fritz Reiner. The resulting work, *Porgy and Bess: A Symphonic Picture*, is based on Gershwin's original orchestration, with a few tweaks for the concert-hall, such as the removal of piano. In addition to the aforementioned "Summertime," Bennett's symphonic medley incorporates the tunes for "It Ain't Necessarily So," a dope dealer's bluesy ode to skepticism, and "Bess You Is My Woman Now," Porgy's touching paean to his errant beloved. Other featured tunes are "A Woman Is a Sometime Thing," "I Got Plenty of Nuttin'," "Picnic Parade," and "O Lawd I'm On My Way."

**Born**

September 26, 1898, in New York

Died

July 11, 1937, in Los Angeles

First Performance

September 30, 1935, in Boston

STL Symphony Premiere

March 18, 1987, Richard Holmes conducting

Most Recent STL Symphony Performance

August 5, 1995, Harvey Felder conducting

Scoring

2 flutes
piccolo
2 oboes
English horn
2 clarinets
bass clarinet
2 alto saxophones
tenor saxophone
2 bassoons
4 horns
3 trumpets
3 trombones
tuba
timpani
percussion
2 harps
banjo
strings

Performance Time

approximately 24 minutes



DAVID COOK

Leonard Slatkin most recently appeared with the St. Louis Symphony in March, 2016

LEONARD SLATKIN

MONSANTO GUEST ARTIST

St. Louis Symphony Conductor Laureate Leonard Slatkin is music director of the Detroit Symphony Orchestra and the Orchestre National de Lyon. He also maintains a rigorous schedule of guest conducting and is active as a composer, author, and educator. He founded the STL Symphony Youth Orchestra in 1970.

During the 2016-2017 season he tours the U.S. and Europe with the ONL, conducts overseas with the WDR Symphony Orchestra Cologne and San Carlo Theatre Orchestra in Naples, and serves as chairman of the jury and conductor of the 2017 Cliburn Competition.

Slatkin has conducted virtually all of the leading orchestras in the world. He served as music director of the STL Symphony from 1979 until 1996, and has also held posts with the New Orleans Symphony, the National Symphony, and the BBC Symphony Orchestra.



DAVID BE

Olga Kern most recently appeared with the St. Louis Symphony in October, 2016

OLGA KERN

MR. AND MRS. WHITNEY R. HARRIS GUEST ARTIST

Russian-American pianist Olga Kern jumpstarted her U.S. career with her Gold Medal win at the Van Cliburn International Piano Competition. In the 2016–2017 season, Kern will appear with Pacific Symphony, Colorado Symphony, Seoul Philharmonic Orchestra, Stuttgarter Philharmoniker, and Copenhagen Philharmonic. Recital appearances include the Herbst Theatre in San Francisco, Scottsdale Center for the Arts, Virginia Arts Festival, Milan, and Glasgow.

Kern opened the Baltimore Symphony's 2015-2016 centennial season with Marin Alsop. Other season highlights included returns to the Royal Philharmonic with Pinchas Zukerman, Orchestre Philharmonique de Nice with Giancarlo Guerrero, Rochester Philharmonic and San Antonio Symphony, a month-long tour of South Africa for concerts with the Cape and KwaZulu Natal philharmonics, an Israeli tour with the Israel Symphony, and recitals with Renée Fleming in Carnegie Hall and Berkeley.