



**St. Louis Symphony
Orchestra**

stéphane denève : music director



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**ST. LOUIS SYMPHONY YOUTH ORCHESTRA CELEBRATES ITS MILESTONE
50TH ANNIVERSARY SEASON; OPENS WITH FIRST OF THREE CONCERTS ON NOVEMBER 17**

(November 4, 2019, St. Louis, MO) – This season, the St. Louis Symphony Youth Orchestra, part of the St. Louis Symphony Orchestra family, celebrates its milestone 50th anniversary. The anniversary celebration includes concerts, special events, and a nationally-broadcast radio program featuring the ensemble.

Founded in 1970 by the SLSO's then assistant director Leonard Slatkin, the YO is an audition-only ensemble that draws more than 100 of the most talented musicians aged 12 to 22 within a 150-mile radius of St. Louis, representing more than 40 schools each season. The YO performs three concerts of professional-level repertoire each season at Powell Hall, led by SLSO Resident Conductor Gemma New, who has been the Music Director of the YO since the 2016/2017 season.

Marie-Hélène Bernard, President and CEO of the St. Louis Symphony Orchestra, said, "The entire SLSO family congratulates the Youth Orchestra on its 50th anniversary. The YO is a proven training ground for the next generation of great musicians, but is also a productive platform to develop the region's next leaders. YO alumni have gone on to lead successful careers both within and outside the music industry and we are proud of all of their accomplishments."

The anniversary season begins on Sunday, November 17, 2019, when the YO performs works by Rossini, John Adams, Debussy, and Shostakovich, led by New. SLSO Music Director Stéphane Denève will share the podium with New at the March 15, 2020, concert, culminating in a performance of Rachmaninoff's *Symphonic Dances*. On May 31, 2020, the YO performs its final concert of the season, joined by pianist Lara Downes and *From the Top*, a nationally-syndicated program on National Public Radio that showcases talented young musicians. *From the Top* will record the concert for future release, including performances with Downes, soloists, a chamber ensemble, and the entire YO premiering a new work composed by Conductor Laureate and YO founder Leonard Slatkin. Tickets are available now for the concerts. Free tickets are available, some restrictions apply.

Also, during the 50th season celebration, the YO will partner with many of its more than 2,000 alumni for a play-in rehearsal, open house, and free community concert on January 11, 2020, with works by Shostakovich, Sibelius, Brahms, and John Williams. The celebration continues with birthday cake and a champagne toast.

Started as an avenue for young people to mature musically, the ensemble was quickly appreciated for



its high level of talent. K.G. Schuller of the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch* wrote following its inaugural concerts with works by Bach, Milhaud, and Copland in 1970, "The orchestra showed amazing strength for such a youthful and inexperienced organization." In the years following the first concert, the YO embarked on a tour of Europe, performed for President Jimmy Carter, hosted student musicians from around the globe, and continued to draw capacity crowds to Powell Hall. Six former members of the YO are currently musicians with the St. Louis Symphony Orchestra: Erin Schreiber, assistant concertmaster; Kristin Ahlstrom, associate principal second violin; Becky Boyer Hall, violin; Sarah Hogan Kaiser, double bass; Mark Sparks, principal flute; and Felicia Foland, bassoon.

In addition to three concerts each season, the YO offers its student musicians a well-rounded musical experience to develop participants into lifelong musicians. Youth musicians receive regular coaching and mentoring from the world-class musicians of the SLSO. Select YO members also participate in a peer-to-peer mentoring program, which pairs them with younger music students in the St. Louis area.

For more information about the St. Louis Symphony Youth Orchestra, or to reserve tickets to YO50 concerts, visit slo.org/en/edu/youth-orchestra/.

Calendar listings

Youth Orchestra Plays *La Mer*

Sunday, November 17, 2019, 3:00pm

Powell Hall, 718 N. Grand Blvd., St. Louis, MO

Gemma New, conductor

ROSSINI *Semiramide Overture*

John ADAMS *The Chairman Dances, Foxtrot for Orchestra*

DEBUSSY *La Mer*

SHOSTAKOVICH *Festive Overture*

YO50: Alumni Play-In Concert

Saturday, January 11, 2019, 3:00pm

Powell Hall, 718 N. Grand Blvd., St. Louis, MO

Kevin McBeth, conductor

SHOSTAKOVICH *Festive Overture*

SIBELIUS *Finlandia*

BRAHMS *Academic Festive Overture*

John WILLIAMS *Star Wars Suite (Main Title)*



Youth Orchestra Plays *Symphonic Dances*
Sunday, March 15, 2020, 3:00pm
Powell Hall, 718 N. Grand Blvd., St. Louis, MO

Gemma New, conductor
Stéphane Denève, conductor

RACHMANINOFF *Symphonic Dances*

Additional repertoire will be announced at a later date.

Youth Orchestra Plays *From the Top*
Sunday, May 31, 2020, 3:00pm
Powell Hall, 718 N. Grand Blvd., St. Louis, MO

Gemma New, conductor
Lara Downes, host and piano

This concert will be taped by From the Top for future broadcast. Repertoire will be announced at a later date.

Tickets are available now at slo.org or by calling the Box Office at 314-534-1700.

About the St. Louis Symphony Youth Orchestra

The St. Louis Symphony Youth Orchestra is an audition-only ensemble that draws 100 of the most accomplished young instrumentalists within 150 miles of St. Louis. Recognized nationally for its superb artistry, the St. Louis Symphony Youth Orchestra performs expert-level repertoire under the direction of Youth Orchestra Music Director and St. Louis Symphony Orchestra Resident Conductor Gemma New. Musicians in the St. Louis Symphony Youth Orchestra, aged 12 to 22, regularly receive coaching from the world-class musicians of the SLSO and also participate in a peer-to-peer mentorship program. Founded in 1970 by SLSO Conductor Laureate Leonard Slatkin, there are now more than 2,000 alumni of the St. Louis Symphony Youth Orchestra, many of whom have gone on to pursue careers in the music industry. Six current members of the SLSO participated in the St. Louis Symphony Youth Orchestra.

The St. Louis Symphony Youth Orchestra performs three free concerts each season at Powell Hall.

About the St. Louis Symphony Orchestra



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Celebrated as one of today's most exciting and enduring orchestras, the St. Louis Symphony Orchestra is the second-oldest orchestra in the country, marking its 140th year with the 2019/2020 season and its first with Music Director Stéphane Denève. Widely considered one of the world's finest orchestras, the SLSO maintains its commitment to artistic excellence, educational impact, and community connections – all in service to its mission of enriching lives through the power of music.

In addition to its regular concert performances at Powell Hall, which has been the permanent home of the SLSO for more than 50 years, the orchestra is an integral part of the diverse and vibrant St. Louis community, presenting dozens of free education and community programs and performances throughout the region each year. It has an ongoing commitment to championing music of our time, through commissions, a collaboration with the Mizzou New Music Initiative, and its popular St. Louis Symphony Live at the Pulitzer. The SLSO also serves as the resident orchestra for Opera Theatre Saint Louis, with the upcoming season marking the 43rd year of this unique partnership.

The Grammy Award-winning SLSO's impact beyond the St. Louis region is realized through weekly Saturday night concert broadcasts on St. Louis Public Radio, acclaimed recordings, and regular touring activity. A sought-after artistic partner by preeminent musicians and composers from across the globe, as well as by local and national organizations, the SLSO enjoys a long history of robust and enduring artistic collaborations that have developed and deepened over the years.

Today, the SLSO builds on the institution's current momentum on all fronts, including artistic, financial, audience growth, and community impact, and looks toward the future with Stéphane Denève. For more information, visit slo.org.

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