

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

[October 10, 2018]

Contacts: St. Louis Symphony Orchestra: Eric Dundon [ericd@slo.org](mailto:ericd@slo.org), 314-286-4134  
National/International: Nikki Scandalios [nikki@scandaliospr.com](mailto:nikki@scandaliospr.com), 704-340-4094

**STÉPHANE DENÈVE RETURNS TO CONDUCT FIRST CONCERT AS MUSIC DIRECTOR DESIGNATE OF THE ST. LOUIS SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA NOVEMBER 10-11**

**Denève, whose tenure as Music Director begins next season, leads a program of Berlioz' Selections from *Romeo and Juliet*, Wagner's Prelude to *Tristan and Isolde*, Scriabin's *Poem of Ecstasy*, and the SLSO premiere of Peter Lieberon's *Neruda Songs* with mezzo-soprano Kelley O'Connor**

**(October 10, 2018, St. Louis, MO)** – Stéphane Denève returns to St. Louis for the first time as Music Director Designate of the St. Louis Symphony Orchestra to conduct a program inspired by love on November 10-11.

Denève leads the SLSO for four weeks of concerts during the 2018/2019 season and will become the 13th Music Director of the SLSO starting with the 2019/2020 season.



**Stéphane Denève**

**Stéphane Denève, Music Director Designate of the SLSO**, said, “It is my great pleasure to continue a 15-year collaboration with this astounding orchestra. The St. Louis Symphony Orchestra is celebrated as one of the world’s finest and it is thriving because of the deeply engaged and supportive community in this wonderful city of St. Louis. I look forward to this next collaboration with my extraordinary SLSO colleagues, and to many, many more weeks of making music together.”

Viewing this season as an “engagement season” with the SLSO, Denève developed the November 10-11 program around the theme of love. The concert opens with Berlioz’ Selections from *Romeo and Juliet*, music set to one of the most famous love stories in literature. It is considered one of the composer’s finest works. **Mezzo-soprano Kelley O'Connor** returns for her eighth appearance with the SLSO to perform *Neruda Songs*, a set of songs by composer Peter Lieberon written as a gift for his wife, the late and beloved mezzo-soprano Lorraine Hunt Lieberon. Denève conducts the SLSO premiere of this work – one of 12 pieces introduced to the SLSO’s repertoire this season. The program continues with Wagner’s Prelude to *Tristan and Isolde*, a condensed version of Wagner’s enormously influential opera that tells the love story of a Cornish knight and an Irish princess. The final piece of the Nov. 10-11 program, Scriabin’s *Poem of Ecstasy*, explores the ascent of the spirit into a state of consciousness. By the end of the piece, the spirit has achieved a state of bliss.

On June 7, 2017, Denève was announced the new Music Director of the SLSO beginning with the 2019/2020 season. He has since worked with the SLSO artistic team to develop the SLSO's 18/19 and 19/20 classical seasons. Denève's long relationship with the SLSO began with concerts in 2003 and developed over seven additional weeks of concerts in subsequent seasons.

Denève will conduct three more classical programs in the 18/19 season. He leads the SLSO in a concert of Mozart's *Eine kleine Nachtmusik*, K. 525, Vaughan Williams' *The Lark Ascending* with David Halen on violin, Vaughan Williams' *Serenade to Music*, and Brahms' *Symphony No. 2* on February 8-10, 2019. On February 15-16, 2019, Denève conducts an all-Prokofiev line-up, including his own arrangement of the *Cinderella Suite*, Piano Concerto No. 2 with pianist Yefim Bronfman, and *Alexander Nevsky*, a cantata taken from Prokofiev's score to the namesake film, featuring the St. Louis Symphony Chorus. He also leads the SLSO in the final weekend of the classical season, conducting the SLSO premiere of Esa-Pekka Salonen's *Nyx*, Ravel's *Schéhérazade* with mezzo-soprano Rinat Shaham, and Berlioz' *Symphonie fantastique* on May 10-12, 2019. Additionally, he leads the SLSO at its Family Concert on Sunday, February 17, 2019, conducting his arrangement of Prokofiev's *Cinderella*.

**Saturday, November 10, 2018, 8:00pm**  
**Sunday, November 11, 2018, 3:00pm**  
**Powell Hall, 718 N. Grand Blvd., St. Louis, MO**

Stéphane Denève, conductor  
Kelley O'Connor, mezzo-soprano

**BERLIOZ** Selections from *Romeo and Juliet*  
**LIEBERSON** *Neruda Songs*  
**WAGNER** Prelude to *Tristan and Isolde*  
**SCRIABIN** *Poem of Ecstasy*

Attend the free Pre-Concert Conversation at 7:00pm Saturday, and 2:00pm Sunday in the auditorium. This week, pianist Peter Henderson will lead the conversation.

Tune in to St. Louis Public Radio on Saturday, November 10, at 8:00pm for the live broadcast of the performance. Listen on air (90.7 FM KWMU) or online (<http://www.stlpublicradio.org/listen.php>).

Tickets are on sale now and can be purchased by visiting [slo.org](http://slo.org) or calling the Box Office at 314-534-1700.

### **Stéphane Denève, Music Director Designate**

Stéphane Denève currently is Music Director Designate for the St. Louis Symphony Orchestra, Music Director of the Brussels Philharmonic, Principal Guest Conductor of The Philadelphia Orchestra, and Director of the Centre for Future Orchestral Repertoire (CffOR). He will become Music Director of the St. Louis Symphony Orchestra in the 2019/2020 season.

Recognized internationally for the exceptional quality of his performances and programming, Denève regularly

appears at major concert venues with the world's greatest orchestras and soloists. He has a special affinity for the music of his native France, and is a passionate advocate for music of the 21st century. A gifted communicator and educator, he is committed to inspiring the next generation of musicians and listeners, and has worked regularly with young people in the programs such as those of the Tanglewood Music Center, New World Symphony, the Colburn School, and the Music Academy of the West.

He is a frequent guest with leading orchestras such as the Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra, Orchestra Sinfonica dell'Accademia Nazionale di Santa Cecilia, The Cleveland Orchestra, Los Angeles Philharmonic, San Francisco Symphony, New York Philharmonic, Toronto Symphony, Orchestre National de France, Vienna Symphony, DSO Berlin and NHK Symphony. The 18/19 season will also see him lead a major US tour with the Brussels Philharmonic.

In the field of opera, Stéphane Denève has led productions at the Royal Opera House, Glyndebourne Festival, La Scala, Deutsche Oper Berlin, Saito Kinen Festival, Gran Teatro de Liceu, Netherlands Opera, La Monnaie, Deutsche Oper Am Rhein, and at the Opéra National de Paris.

As a recording artist, he has won critical acclaim for his recordings of the works of Poulenc, Debussy, Ravel, Roussel, Franck and Honegger. He is a triple winner of the Diapason d'Or of the Year, has been shortlisted for Gramophone's Artist of the Year Award, and has won the prize for symphonic music at the International Classical Music Awards. His most recent releases include discs of Prokofiev suites and the works of Guillaume Connesson with Brussels Philharmonic, as well as recordings with Lucas and Arthur Jussen and the Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra, all for Deutsche Grammophon.

For further information, please visit [www.stephanedeneve.com](http://www.stephanedeneve.com).

### **About the St. Louis Symphony Orchestra**

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 139th year with the 2018/2019 season. Widely considered one of the world's finest, 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 50 years, the orchestra is an integral part of the diverse and vibrant St. Louis community, presenting free education programs and performances throughout the region each year. It presents St. Louis Symphony Live at the Pulitzer, a four-program series at the Pulitzer Arts Foundation. The SLSO also serves as the resident orchestra for Opera Theatre Saint Louis, with this season marking the 42nd year of their 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. Denève, who has been a frequent guest conductor with the orchestra since 2003, begins his tenure as Music Director with the 19/20 season, following this season as Music Director Designate. For more information, visit [slo.org](http://slo.org).

# # #