

CONCERT PROGRAM

Friday, October 28, 2016 at 10:30AM

Saturday, October 29, 2016 at 8:00PM

Jun Märkl, conductor

Jeremy Denk, piano

LISZT *Prometheus* (1850)
(1811–1886)

MOZART Piano Concerto No. 23 in A major, K. 488 (1786)
(1756–1791)

Allegro
Adagio
Allegro assai

Jeremy Denk, piano

INTERMISSION

BRAHMS/orch. Schoenberg
(1833–1897)/(1874–1951)

Piano Quartet in G minor, op. 25 (1861/1937)

Allegro
Intermezzo: Allegro, ma non troppo
Andante con moto
Rondo alla zingarese: Presto

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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

Jun Märkl is the Ann and Lee Liberman Guest Artist.

Jeremy Denk is the Ann and Paul Lux Guest Artist.

The concert of Saturday, October 29, is underwritten in part by a generous gift from Lawrence and Cheryl Katzenstein.

Pre-Concert Conversations are sponsored by Washington University Physicians.

Large print program notes are available through the generosity of The Delmar Gardens Family, and are located at the Customer Service table in the foyer.

CONCERT CALENDAR

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



Han-Na Chang

TCHAIKOVSKY 5: **Fri, Nov 4, 8:00pm | Sat, Nov 5, 8:00pm**

Han-Na Chang, conductor; Jan Mráček, violin

GLINKA *Ruslan und Lyudmila* Overture
PROKOFIEV Violin Concerto No. 1
TCHAIKOVSKY Symphony No. 5



Leonard Slatkin

SLATKIN CONDUCTS PORGY & BESS: **Fri, Nov 11, 10:30am | Sat, Nov 12, 8:00pm** **Sun, Nov 13, 3:00pm**

Leonard Slatkin, conductor; Olga Kern, piano

SLATKIN *Kinah*
BARBER Piano Concerto
COPLAND *Billy the Kid* Suite
GERSHWIN/arr. Bennett *Porgy and Bess: A Symphonic Picture for Orchestra*
Sponsored by Steinway Piano Gallery



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



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

BRAHMS REIMAGINED

BY RENÉ SPENCER SALLER

TIMELINKS

1786

MOZART

Piano Concerto No. 23
in A major, K. 488

The Marriage of Figaro
premieres in Vienna

1850

LISZT

Prometheus

Nathaniel Hawthorne
publishes *The Scarlet
Letter*

1861

BRAHMS

Piano Quartet in G
minor (original version)
Confederate forces
fire upon Fort Sumter,
sparking the Civil War

1937

BRAHMS/ orch. Schoenberg

Piano Quartet in G minor
Walt Disney premieres
*Snow White and the
Seven Dwarfs*, the first
animated feature film

The title of this program, “Brahms Reimagined,” refers to its second half: Arnold Schoenberg’s visionary orchestration of Johannes Brahms’s Piano Quartet No. 1 in G minor, op. 25. This posthumous collaboration is not quite Brahms, not quite Schoenberg. It’s a skittish hybrid of strange and familiar, Romantic and Modern, lush and angular. In his 1933 lecture “Brahms the Progressive,” Schoenberg praised the composer for his “developing variation,” a motivic procedure that Schoenberg identified as a precursor of his twelve-tone atonal technique. Similarly, in his 1937 arrangement of the Brahms quartet, Schoenberg simultaneously reimagines his predecessor as a proto-Schoenberg, and himself as the heir of Brahms.

But the other two works featured in this concert are also re-imaginings.

In *Prometheus*, Franz Liszt reinterprets a Greek myth and then translates the story into a purely musical language. Pictorial music—compositions with a literary or descriptive basis—existed long before 1854, when the Hungarian-born piano superstar coined the term *symphonische Dichtung*, or symphonic poem. Liszt wrote thirteen symphonic poems, inspiring a compositional craze that lasted at least 70 years. But he did more than assign a name to an existing genre. By refining and redefining it for his own purposes, he created a more interior, subjective form of program music that captured the Romantic imagination.

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart’s Piano Concerto No. 23 proves that the best epiphanies occur not when our expectations are met but when they’re fulfilled in previously unimaginable ways. Mozart delivers beauty in all its stupefying weirdness: we hear dissonance as sweet and sour and unreasonably delicious.

FRANZ LISZT

Prometheus

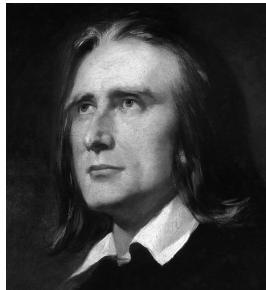
MIND MUSIC Beyond telling stories, Liszt wanted his symphonic poems to enact the subjective consciousness: a shifting matrix of mood and mind. In the preface to a published edition of his symphonic poems, he wrote:

The poorest of apprentice landscape painters could give with a few chalk strokes a much more faithful picture than a musician functioning with all the resources of the best orchestras. But if these same things are subjected to dreaming, to contemplation, to emotional uplift, have they not a kinship with music, and should not music be able to translate them into its mysterious language?

FIRE STEALER Prometheus was the ultimate Romantic hero. The Titan steals fire and shares it with humanity; to punish him, Zeus chains him to a rock and compels an eagle to eat his liver, which grows back daily so the eagle can keep eating it. But instead of simulating every grisly chomp and slurp, Liszt's symphonic poem focuses on the emotions behind the opposing forces: defiant Prometheus against the fugal machinations of fate. In his preface, Liszt identifies the mythic themes as "boldness, suffering, endurance, and redemption."

Prometheus begins with a brutal salvo of dissonant chords: a harbinger of the hero's grisly sentence. "The underlying premise of this fable," Liszt explained, "lends itself only to a stormy, we might say dazzling, expression." He began working on *Prometheus* in 1847, when, at age 35, he took a break from his grueling schedule as a touring virtuoso and accepted a job at court. During his 14 years in Weimar, he composed a dozen symphonic poems.

The first version of *Prometheus* consisted of a symphonic overture, eight choruses, and incidental music for a revival of Johann Gottfried von Herder's play *Prometheus Bound*. It was premiered in 1850 at a Weimar festival celebrating Herder's centennial. Liszt's assistant, Joachim Raff, orchestrated the score. In 1855 Liszt reconfigured the work as a symphonic poem, streamlining its



Born

October 22, 1811, Raiding (Doborján), Hungary

Died

July 31, 1886, Bayreuth

First Performance

August 24, 1850, in Weimar, Liszt conducted

STL Symphony Premiere

This week

Scoring

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

Performance Time

12 minutes

**Born**

January 27, 1756. Salzburg

Died

December 5, 1791. Vienna

First Performance

Almost certainly March 1786 in Vienna, with Mozart playing the solo part and conducting from the keyboard

STL Symphony Premiere

February 1924, Rudolf Ganz conducted and Ethel Leginska was soloist

Most Recent STL Symphony Performance

February 8, 2008, David Robertson conducted and Radu Lupu was soloist

Scoring

flute
2 clarinets
2 bassoons
2 horns
strings

Performance Time

26 minutes

structure and overhauling Raff's orchestration. The profusion of contrasting motives derives from a few simple ideas that evolve over time, a thematic transformation similar to the "developing variation" technique that Schoenberg identified in Brahms.

WOLFGANG AMADEUS MOZART

Piano Concerto No. 23 in A major, K. 488

MARVELS AND MIRACLES In a 2013 interview, tonight's soloist, Jeremy Denk, said "a very important part of playing a Mozart concerto is the wonder of each moment ... part of the wonder is the sense that it might turn at any time."

By March of 1786, when Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart completed his Piano Concerto No. 23, he was the undisputed master of such wondrous turns. Never merely pretty, the Concerto in A major gratifies only to gobsmack. The simplicity of a few plinked notes sends us hurtling into an elaborate fugue. An unassuming melody turns richly contrapuntal, only to unravel before our ears. We smile with delight, then gape in mute astonishment.

Since early childhood, when he toured the continent as a prodigy, and throughout his teens and early adulthood, when he joined his father as a court musician, Mozart had been a dutiful son. But in 1781, at age 23, he defied his father and left Salzburg for Vienna, the nexus of musical culture in Europe. Although he dreamed of writing operas, he focused at first on his more profitable career as a pianist and instrumental composer. This was mostly by necessity: He was chronically broke. But luckily, he was very prolific. Between 1784 and 1786 he cranked out over a dozen piano concertos, all magnificent.

CLOSE LISTENING Although it's certainly tricky and taxing, Mozart's Piano Concerto No. 23 is more than a virtuoso showpiece. The soloist must be an accompanist, too: a chamber musician, a close listener. The intimacy is heightened by the substitution of clarinets for oboes and the absence of trumpets and drums in the score.

The opening Allegro, in A major, begins with a radiant unison that generates two main thematic ideas: the first cheery, the second a delicate downward sigh. Taking up both themes by turn, the piano reimagines them and reveals new melodic angles. Traces of F-sharp minor emerge, hinting at the upcoming slow movement. Fluttering figuration and Bach-like counterpoint lead to a magnificent closing cadenza, which Mozart—contrary to his usual custom—fully transcribed.

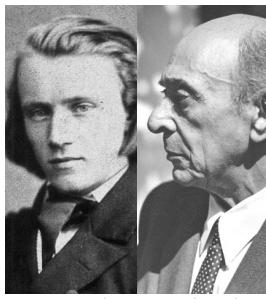
The central Adagio begins with a devastatingly fragile piano melody, which the strings somberly repeat. Flute and bassoon conspire in a bit of brightness, but the piano refuses to be soothed. As the Adagio ends, the piano perseverates on a single note against pizzicato strings: sorrow exalted to silence.

Puncturing the quiet, the Allegro assai erupts in a delirious rondo, returning to the home key and the brilliant back-and-forth of the orchestra and solo piano. Bring on the bliss!

JOHANNES BRAHMS/orch. Schoenberg

Piano Quartet in G minor, op. 25

BRAHMS AND SCHOENBERG In 1897, less than a month before Brahms died, Arnold Schoenberg composed his first string quartet. A mutual friend showed the score to Brahms and explained that the 22-year-old composer—the self-taught son of a Jewish tradesman—worked fulltime as a copyist and arranger. Brahms, whose gruff manner and frugal habits hid a generous heart, offered to subsidize the young man's conservatory training. Schoenberg was too proud to accept the stipend, but he never forgot Brahms's kindness. Thirty-six years later, in "Brahms the Progressive," he reclaimed the great Romantic as a proto-Modernist who moved "toward an unrestricted musical language." Brahms, Schoenberg declared, "would have been a pioneer if he had simply returned to Mozart, but he did not live on inherited fortune; he made one of his own." Although this argument struck many of Schoenberg's peers as hopelessly contrarian, it helped galvanize the 20th-century re-appraisal of Brahms.



Brahms

Schoenberg

Johannes Brahms

Born

May 7, 1833. Hamburg

Died

April 3, 1897. Vienna

Arnold Schoenberg

Born

September 13, 1874. Vienna

Died

July 13, 1951, Los Angeles

First Performance

1861 in Hamburg, with Clara Schumann as pianist (original version)

STL Symphony Premiere

February 5, 1966, Robert Craft conducted

Most Recent STL Symphony Performance

October 3, 2003, Jun Märkl conducted

Scoring

3 flutes
piccolo
3 oboes
English horn
3 clarinets
E-flat clarinet
bass clarinet
3 bassoons
contrabassoon
4 horns
3 trumpets
3 trombones
tuba
timpani
percussion
strings

Performance Time

43 minutes

FIRST IMAGININGS Brahms wrote his Piano Quartet No. 1 in the summer of 1861, while living in peaceful, pastoral Hamm. It was a charmed period for the 28-year-old composer. Blond, beardless, and handsome, he finally had enough money to leave his family's home, in nearby Hamburg. He spent his days sketching new compositions, his evenings making music with love-struck young disciples. The music flowed more easily than it ever had before or ever would again. To his most trusted collaborators, Clara Schumann and Joseph Joachim, he sent drafts of works in progress, including sections of the G-minor Piano Quartet.

Later that autumn, Clara recounted in her diary a conversation that the two had about musical form. According to Brahms, she writes, the “old masters had the freest form, while modern compositions move within the stiffest and most narrow limits. He himself emulates the older generation, and Clementi in particular ranks high in his opinion, on account of his great, free form.”

Right away, the G-minor Piano Quartet proclaims this formal freedom, with a false repeat of the exposition and a deliberately obscured recapitulation. Brief melodic ideas evolve and converge; abrupt tonal shifts abound. Once you notice its structural oddities, its appeal to Schoenberg seems not so much perverse as inevitable.

SCHOENBERG SPEAKS Two years after he completed his orchestration of Brahms’s first piano quartet, Schoenberg sent a list of explanatory remarks to Alfred Frankenstein, the music critic at the *San Francisco Chronicle*. He said that he composed the arrangement because he liked the work and that “it is always very badly played, because the better the pianist, the louder he plays and you hear nothing from the strings. I wanted at once to hear everything, and this I achieved.” He also maintained that he had intended “to remain strictly in the style of Brahms and not go farther than he himself would have gone if he lived today.”

Schoenberg’s orchestration does more than flesh out Brahms, whose sumptuous sonorities require no fattening. Whether Schoenberg always adheres to the Brahmsian formula is debatable: He uses instruments that don’t appear in any Brahms scores: bass clarinet, E-flat clarinet, xylophone. Like Ravel’s arrangement of Mussorgsky’s *Pictures at an Exhibition*, Schoenberg’s version of Brahms’s quartet is a reinvention, an interpretive leap of faith.

FROM THE STAGE

Sarah Hogan Kaiser, bass: “Jun Märkl is one of my favorite conductors that comes to St. Louis, and I think a lot of members of the orchestra have the same sentiment. The reason is that he has a way of expressing his love of music through his conducting in a very sincere and humble way. Everything he does makes the music better, it’s not about anything except the music. He’s very gentle about it. It’s just a really positive spirit.”



Sarah Hogan Kaiser



Jun Märkl most recently conducted the STL Symphony in November 2014.

JUN MÄRKL

ANN AND LEE LIBERMAN GUEST ARTIST

Jun Märkl has long been known as a highly respected interpreter of the core Germanic repertoire from both the symphonic and operatic traditions. He has longstanding relationships at the state operas of Vienna, Berlin, Munich, and Semperoper Dresden, and has recently served as Music Director of the Orchestre National de Lyon and Principal Conductor to the Basque National Orchestra and the Pacific Music Festival in Japan. He has been a guest conductor with the Cleveland Orchestra, Philadelphia Orchestra, NHK Symphony Orchestra, Czech Philharmonic, Munich Philharmonic, Oslo Philharmonic, and Tonhalle Orchester Zürich. He has also frequently been invited by the orchestras of Atlanta, Baltimore, Cincinnati, Dallas, and Indianapolis.

In 2012 he was honored by the French Ministry of Culture with the *Chevalier de l'Ordre des Arts et des Lettres* in recognition of his achievements in Lyon, notably his hugely successful nine-disc Debussy cycle with the orchestra on Naxos. He also toured with the orchestra to Japan and major European halls and festivals such as the Salle Pleyel, Amsterdam Concertgebouw, BBC Proms, Bad Kissingen, Rheingau, and Luzern.

In 2014 Naxos released two Hosokawa discs recorded by Jun Märkl with Royal Scottish National Orchestra. While in Lyon he made live recordings for Altus of Strauss, Beethoven, and Mahler to complement his Naxos discs of Debussy, Ravel, and Messiaen. With MDR Symphony he recorded Brahms symphonies and Schoenberg on Altus, and Mendelssohn and d'Albert for Naxos. He has also recorded the complete Schumann symphonies live with the NHK Symphony.

Born in Munich, his German father was a distinguished concertmaster and his Japanese mother a solo pianist. Märkl studied violin, piano, and conducting at the Musikhochschule in Hanover, going on to study with Sergiu Celibidache in Munich and with Gustav Meier in Michigan.

JEREMY DENK

ANN AND PAUL LUX GUEST ARTIST

Jeremy Denk is one of America's foremost pianists—an artist *The New York Times* hails as someone "you want to hear no matter what he performs." Winner of a MacArthur "Genius" Fellowship, the Avery Fisher Prize, and *Musical America's* Instrumentalist of the Year award, he returns frequently to Carnegie Hall and has appeared at the BBC Proms with Michael Tilson Thomas. In the United States, he has performed recently with the Chicago Symphony, New York Philharmonic, and Cleveland Orchestra, as well as on tour with Academy St. Martin in the Fields.

In 2016–2017, Denk embarks on a recital tour of the U.K., including a return to Wigmore Hall, and he will make his debut at the Philharmonie in Cologne. He appears on tour in recital throughout the United States, including Chicago Symphony Hall and at Lincoln Center's White Light Festival in a special program that includes a journey through seven centuries of Western music. He also tours with the St. Paul Chamber Orchestra to New York, and returns to the National Symphony. He will release a solo recording, *The Classical Style*, of music by Haydn, Mozart, and Beethoven, and joins his longtime musical partners Joshua Bell and Steven Isserlis in a recording of Brahms's Trio in B major. Future projects include a U.S. tour of the Ives Violin Sonatas with Stefan Jackiw and a new Piano Concerto commissioned by the St. Paul Chamber Orchestra.

Denk has toured frequently with violinist Joshua Bell, and their Sony Classical album, *French Impressions*, won the 2012 Echo Klassik award. He also collaborates regularly with cellist Steven Isserlis, and has appeared at numerous festivals, including the Italian and American Spoleto Festivals, and the Verbier, Ravinia, Tanglewood, Aspen Music, and Mostly Mozart Festivals.



Alan Ross

Jeremy Denk most recently performed with the STL Symphony in October 2011.

IF YOU LIKED THIS...

If you love the music you hear in this concert, come back for this concert later in the season.

BRAHMS VIOLIN CONCERTO:

Sat, Apr 29, 8:00pm | Sun, Apr 30, 3:00pm

David Robertson, conductor; Augustin Hadelich, violin

ELGAR Serenade in E minor

LENTZ *Jerusalem* (after Blake)

BRAHMS Violin Concerto

Full of intensity, drama and soaring lines, Brahms' deeply expressive Violin Concerto will enchant you from start to finish with a mesmerizing performance by Augustin Hadelich. Featuring mobile phones for those who were not able to make their final calls, the St. Louis Symphony gives the U.S. premiere of Lentz's haunting *Jerusalem*, a piece dedicated to those lost in the disappearance of Malaysian Flight MH370.



Augustin Hadelich

PLAYING BRAHMS... REIMAGINED:

SARAH HOGAN KAISER, BASS

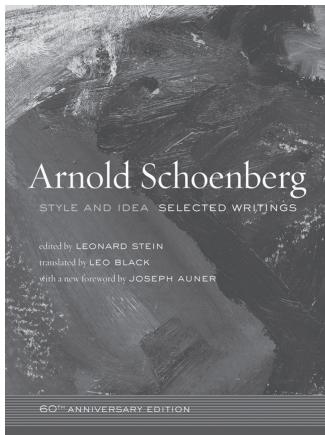
“How I feel about orchestrations depends a little on who’s doing the arranging versus the composing. I haven’t played this piece before, but hearing that Schoenberg arranged the Brahms Piano Quartet makes me a little curious!”



Sarah Hogan Kaiser

YOU TAKE IT FROM HERE

If these concerts have inspired you to learn more, here are suggested source materials with which to continue your explorations.



**Oliver Hilmes,
Franz Liszt: Musician, Celebrity, Superstar**
Yale University Press

A new biography of the pianist-composer.

Maynard Solomon, Mozart: A Life
Harper Perennial

The standard biography.

**Arnold Schoenberg,
Style and Idea: Selected Writings**
University of California Press

Includes Schoenberg's essay
“Brahms the Progressive.”

Brahms Piano Quartet in G minor, Op. 25

(original version)

[youtube.com/watch?v=nHYbMW8tpOA](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nHYbMW8tpOA)

Read the program notes online, listen to podcasts, and watch the St. Louis Symphony musicians talk about the music. Go to stlsymphony.org. Click “Connect.”

The St. Louis Symphony is on



CLASSICAL CONCERT: MOZART REQUIEM

David Robertson



Friday, November 18, 8:00pm

Saturday, November 19, 8:00pm

Sunday, November 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*

JOHN ADAMS *On the Transmigration of Souls*

MOZART Requiem, K. 626

The STL Symphony and Chorus and the St. Louis Children's Choirs perform Adams' haunting work reflecting upon the events of 9/11. *On the Transmigration of Souls* is partnered with Mozart's Requiem: Both are elegies for eternal peace and comfort.

COMMUNITY CONCERT: SYMPHONY IN THE CITY ST. LOUIS SCIENCE CENTER PLANETARIUM



Christian Woehr

Mon, Dec 4, 7:00pm

STL Symphony musicians Christian Woehr, Asako Kuboki, Rebecca Boyer Hall, Alvin McCall, Christopher Carson, Thomas Stubbs, Deborah Bloom, Nicolae Bica, and Kathleen Mattis perform at the St. Louis Science Center Planetarium. Free and open to the public.

St. Louis Science Center Planetarium
5050 Oakland Ave
St. Louis, Missouri

DONOR SPOTLIGHT

CORA MUSIAL AND PHOEBE WEIL

“Cora Musial and Phoebe Weil are quite simply two of the most wonderful people I’ve ever encountered,” says Allegra Lilly, principal harp with the St. Louis Symphony. Cora and Phoebe recently had the opportunity to provide special philanthropic support to the STL Symphony toward the purchase of a new concert harp.

“Similar to owning a piano, it’s pretty standard for an orchestra of our size to have its own harp,” explains Allegra, who joined the STL Symphony in 2013. “Cora and Phoebe fulfilled a great need.”

A long-time subscriber and leadership donor, Cora was thrilled to play a part in the project. For nearly 20 years, she commuted 378 miles roundtrip from Urbana, Illinois, to Powell Hall for every Saturday subscription concert. Now semi-retired from her career as an infectious disease physician and clinical microbiologist, she is happy to be back in St. Louis and closer to the orchestra. “The St. Louis Symphony just gives me so much happiness and joy,” she said. “The work done with young people is also very important because music can have such a positive impact that carries through one’s entire life. I’ve experienced that myself.”

Resettled in St. Louis following her work as an art conservator and professor at Smith College, Phoebe has also demonstrated an extraordinary commitment to the STL Symphony and currently serves on the board of trustees. “I’ve had the pleasure of rediscovering the wondrous gifts this city has to offer. At the top of my list is the Symphony—the programming and professional caliber of which can hardly be equaled anywhere.”

To select just the right instrument for the STL Symphony, Allegra traveled to Lyon & Healy Harps in Chicago. “We’re really fortunate to have found a phenomenal instrument, with a clarity of sound that’s perfectly suited for Powell Hall,” she said. I’m just deeply honored to be one of the beneficiaries of Cora and Phoebe’s incredible gift to the orchestra.”

To learn more about the many ways you can support the STL Symphony, please visit stlsymphony.org/donate or call 314-286-4184.



Allegra Lilly, principal harp, with Cora Musial and Phoebe Weil