CONCERT PROGRAM
Friday, April 7, 2017 at 10:30AM
Friday, April 7, 2017 at 8:00PM
Saturday, April 8, 2017 at 8:00PM
Sunday, April 9, 2017 at 3:00PM

David Robertson, conductor Kirill Gerstein, piano

## MILHAUD La Création du monde (The Creation of the World), op. 81

(1892–1974)

Overture -

The chaos before creation -

The slowly lifting darkness, the creation of trees, plants, insects. birds, and beasts –

Dance of Created Beings - Man and woman created -

The desire of man and woman – The man and woman kiss – Coda

## **GERSHWIN** Rhapsody in Blue (Original Jazz Band Version)

(1898–1937)

Kirill Gerstein, piano

INTERMISSION

## **BERNSTEIN** Three Dance Variations from Fancy Free

(1918–1990)

Variation I (Galop) Variation II (Waltz) Variation III (Danzon)

# **GERSHWIN** Concerto in F ed. Campbell-Watson

Allegro

Andante con moto Allegro agitato

Kirill Gerstein, piano

#### **ACKNOWLEDGMENTS**

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

David Robertson is the Beofor Music Director and Conductor.

Kirill Gerstein is the Robert R. Imse Guest Artist.

The concert of Friday, April 7, 8:00pm, is underwritten in part by a generous gift from Karen and Bert Condie.

The concert of Friday, April 7, 8:00pm, is underwritten in part by a generous gift from Mary Ann Lee.

The concert of Sunday, April 9, is underwritten in part by a generous gift from Marjorie M. Ivey.

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.

#### CONCERT CALENDAR

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



John Storgårds

## RACH 3 Fri, Apr 21, 10:30am | Sat, Apr 22, 8:00pm Sun, Apr 23, 3:00pm

John Storgårds, conductor; Nikolai Lugansky, piano

SILVESTROV *Hymne* – 2001 RACHMANINOFF Piano Concerto No. 3 BARTÓK Concerto for Orchestra

Presented by Mercy Sponsored by The Thomas A. Kooyumjian Family Foundation



David Robertson

## CAPRICCIO ITALIEN Fri, Apr 28, 8:00pm

David Robertson, conductor; Julie Thayer, horn; Gerard Pagano, bass trombone

WEBER *Der Freischütz* Overture STEPHENSON *The Arch* (Trombone Concerto) WALTON *Crown Imperial* (*Coronation March*) MENDELSSOHN *The Hebrides* (*Fingal's Cave*) DEBUSSY *Clair de lune* F. STRAUSS *Nocturno* for Horn and Orchestra TCHAIKOVSKY *Capriccio italien* 

Presented by The Whitaker Foundation



Augustin Hadelich

## 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

Presented by The Thomas A. Kooyumjian Family Foundation



# THE FLYING DUTCHMAN Thurs, May 4, 8:00pm | Sat, May 6, 8:00pm

David Robertson, conductor;

Alan Held, bass-baritone (The Dutchman); Marjorie Owens, soprano (Senta); Teddy Tahu Rhodes, baritone (Daland); Rodrick Dixon, tenor (Erik); Joy Boland, soprano (Mary); Paul Appleby, tenor (A Steersman); St. Louis Symphony Chorus, Amy Kaiser, director; S. Katy Tucker, visual design

WAGNER The Flying Dutchman

Presented by Mary Pillsbury

# JAZZ AMBITIONS

BY EDDIE SILVA

#### **TIMELINKS**

1923

#### **MILHAUD**

La Création du monde (The Creation of the World), op. 81 Egyptologist Howard Carter opens the inner chamber of Tutankhamun's tomb and discovers the Pharaoh's iconic sarcophagus.

1924

#### **GERSHWIN**

Rhapsody in Blue (Original Jazz Band Version)

Edwin Hubble announces his discovery of other galaxies.

1925

#### **GERSHWIN**

Concerto in F F. Scott Fitzgerald publishes *The Great Gatsby* and Virginia Woolf publishes *Mrs Dalloway*.

1944

#### **BERNSTEIN**

Three Dance Variations from Fancy Free
Casablanca wins three
Academy Awards
including Outstanding
Motion Picure, Best
Director, and Best
Screenplay.

A shift in rhythm, the body adapts to the change. Is the beat on the one or the two? That small adjustment in timing changes the movement on the dance floor, it changes how individual couples and the mass of bodies relate. Whether the dance form is the waltz, the Charleston, the twist, or twerking, a change in rhythm alters the culture as a whole. Watch Fred Astaire or Michael Jackson, you learn a lot about the times in which they lived.

The Jazz Age was an altogether audacious moment in history. The post-World War I "lost generation" found how to live again after an incomparable period of violence and death. Jazz was the new spring of life, and the composers you hear in these concerts sought it out and reworked it for themselves and their audiences. They were making the world anew, which takes hubris, which is another word for youth. You hear works by these composers when they were young men, audacious and unbound. You hear optimism.

Darius Milhaud wrote an exoticized creation myth, supposedly of African origins—the appropriation of African forms and styles was significant to Modernism—and used jazz as his narrative device. George Gershwin belongs to the Jazz Age foundation myth; his *Rhapsody in Blue* changed people's minds about what belonged in high culture. The composer Leonard Bernstein and choreographer Jerome Robbins were determined to write an American ballet out of American rhythms, styles, movement, and narrative—it might not be jazz, but it's jazzy. Gershwin, in his piano concerto, took the classical game and showed what a jazzer could do with it.

#### **DARIUS MILHAUD**

La Création du monde (The Creation of the World), op. 81

Darius Milhaud was a musical wunderkind. By age 17 he left his boyhood home of Aix-en-Provence to study at the Paris Conservatory. "In France, it's either Paris or the provinces," the eminent music writer Michael Steinberg said of Milhaud's inevitable artistic migration. He hit town when the city was hot. He witnessed Stravinsky and the Ballet Russes's success de scandal, The Rite of Spring; he saw Debussy's Pelléas et Mélisande at the Paris Opera; and he mixed with the notable literary figures of the time, especially the poet Paul Claudel.

His first experience of jazz was in London, hearing an American band. In 1923 he made his first trip to the United States and soon made his way to Harlem. By the time he heard such artists as Willie "The Lion" Smith, Duke Ellington, and Bessie Smith in an uptown nightclub, jazz was it, the way, the new beginning.

Milhaud returned to Paris to write music for the Swedish Ballet's *La Création du monde*, with a scenario by the poet Blaise Cendrars and sets and costumes by Fernand Leger. The production was an evocation of an African creation myth, meaning it was a European fantasy based on exoticism.

Milhaud's music is jazzy, bluesy, and hauntingly baroque, with a saxophone the moody center of a small 17-piece orchestra. The trombone, sax, and trumpet engage in jazzy hijinks—you'll hear similar sounds in Bernstein later—united in a joyous celebration of rhythm. The strings serve as the ground to the lively figurations, disputes, and harmonies and disharmonies of the sax, horn, and a soulful oboe.

Milhaud evokes the pulsation of life with flutter-tongued flutes, a clarinet cry comparable to the opening wail of Gershwin's *Rhapsody*, and that underscoring saxophone "embedded in a cloud of string tone," as Steinberg described it.



**Born** September 4, 1892, Marseilles, France

## Died

June 22, 1974, in Geneva

#### **First Performance** October 25, 1923, Théâtre des Champs-Élysées, Paris

**STL Symphony Premiere** November 11, 1955, Vladimir Golschmann conducting

### Most Recent STL Symphony Performance

April 28, 2001, Hans Vonk conducting

#### Scoring

2 flutes piccolo oboe 2 clarinets alto saxophone bassoon horn 2 trumpets trombone timpani percussion piano 2 violins cello bass

#### **Performance Time**

approximately 16 minutes



**Born** September 26, 1898, New York

# **Died**July 11, 1937, Los Angeles

# **First Performance**February 12, 1924, New York, held by Paul Whiteman and his band Palais Royal

#### **STL Symphony Premiere** November 27, 1977, Mitch Miller conducting

#### Most Recent STL Symphony Performance

November 30, 2014, Kirill Gerstein was the soloist with David Robertson conducting

#### Scoring

Orchestra

solo piano oboe **B-clarinet** E-flat clarinet bass clarinet soprano saxophone alto saxophone tenor saxophone baritone saxophone 2 horns 2 trumpets 2 trombones tuba timpani percussion piano celesta banjo violins

# **Performance Time** approximately 16 minutes

basses

#### **GEORGE GERSHWIN**

Rhapsody in Blue (Original Jazz Band Version)

Again on stage you see a chamber-size orchestra, similar in size as for *Le Création du monde*, but this time with the piano as the central instrument. This was the setup for the Paul Whiteman Orchestra, the jazz band that first performed *Rhapsody in Blue*, with Gershwin at the keyboard, for a program titled *An Experiment in Modern Music* at the Aeolian Hall in New York City in 1924. Whiteman's band of the 1920s was one of the few to employ strings; Gershwin put them to use. After the premiere and the subsequent Carnegie Hall debut changed the world, Ferde Grofé adapted the orchestration for symphony orchestras. Audiences clamored for it and most orchestras couldn't say no to a work so immediately popular.

The band size is appropriate for dance halls. The scale is intimate. You can see the body language of the musicians. In the '20s you may have seen them tapping their feet and demonstrably nodding appreciation for solos and any singular hot lick. The music hadn't been enshrined. You could see the musicians sweat and marvel at the cross-hand wizardry of the pianist.

Wherever *Rhapsody* is heard, the primal cry of the clarinet cuts right through the place. It yearns and aches. Another world awakens with that cry. It is the sound of the lone voice in the boisterous city—a city so frenetic it's remarkable that such a cry is heard. Which is one of the surprises of a great city—the sounds of the most profound humanity pierce through the din.

And are tossed aside. The rhythms of the Charleston, the pulsation of brass and woodwinds, the brush of a snare drum—these take hold instead. The pianist is a jazzman—which you feel in his full-to-the-brim soulfulness, the finesse that isn't quite showboating. *Rhapsody in Blue* is written for a night on the town, where the piano man is the focus, the star that lights the stage.

Rhapsody in Blue passes through a full range of human emotions in a few minutes. When the orchestra reaches its heart-awakening theme, the strings bowing deeply, the full orchestra expanding space through rich sonorities—you can hardly believe you've reached this moment. The sound wraps you in a full embrace, rising above the peaks of skyscrapers to the stars.

#### **LEONARD BERNSTEIN**

Three Dance Variations from Fancy Free

For those of you to whom Leonard Bernstein is at most a familiar name, for the generations before you he was ubiquitous. He was America's cultural guide and tutor—whether he was speaking on Mozart or the Beatles, he told us how music mattered and why it mattered. He seemed at ease with anyone or anywhere—whether with the Kennedys or the Black Panthers, whether on Broadway, in Hollywood, or in Carnegie Hall. Bernstein was a man of style and substance. He was cool and he was eloquent. And he was always inquisitive.

Before all that he was hungry. He was propelled by immense energy and ambition. We hear tonight how some of that early ambition began to come to fruition. The choreographer Ierome Robbins, with much the same hunger as Bernstein-such folks find each other-wanted to make a ballet for American dancers with American movement telling American stories. He enlisted Bernstein for the music. Fancy Free would tell the story of three sailors on shore leave. In these concerts you hear three of the dance variations written for the latter part of the ballet. Titled Galop, Waltz, and, and Danzon, it sounds like a music for a great race or a circus, a kind of waltz reinterpreted by kids hitting the downtown bars, with hints of a Spanish cabaret. As the title of the ballet suggests, it's really about Bernstein flinging off forms, swinging fluidly and exuberantly. It's an American style all right, one honed by Gershwin and Aaron Copland and pushed even further along by Bernstein.

Out of *Fancy Free* he and Robbins made their first Broadway hit, *On the Town*. Down the road they worked together again with a young lyricist named Stephen Sondheim. With *West Side Story* they made history—the words and melody "There's a place for us/Somewhere..." defining an America dream



#### Born

August 25, 1918, Lawrence, Massachusetts

#### Died

October 14, 1990, New York City, New York

#### **First Performance**

April 18, 1944, Metropolitan Opera House, New York

#### **STL Symphony Premiere**

August 2, 1970, Mississippi River Festival, Leonard Slatkin conducting

# Most Recent STL Symphony Performance

December 31, 1994, Leonard Slatkin conducting

#### **Scoring**

2 flutes piccolo

2 oboes

2 clarinets 2 bassoons

4 horns

3 trumpets

3 trombones tuba

timpani percussion piano

strings

## **Performance Time**

approximately 7 minutes

#### **First Performance**

December 3, 1925, New York, Gershwin performed as soloist with Walter Damrosch conducting

#### **STL Symphony Premiere**

March 1, 1936, Gershwin as soloist, Vladimir Golschmann conducting

#### Most Recent STL Symphony Performance

October 6, 2013, Jon Kimura Parker as soloist, David Robertson conducting

#### **Scoring**

solo piano 2 flutes piccolo 2 oboes English horn 2 clarinets bass clarinet 2 bassoons 4 horns 3 trumpets 3 trombones tuba

timpani

percussion strings

#### **Performance Time**

approximately 31 minutes

#### **GEORGE GERSHWIN**

Concerto in F

Gershwin was taking a hiatus from the rigors of composing when he stopped in St. Louis for a gig with the Symphony at Kiel Auditorium in March 1936. He conducted a suite from his new opera, *Porgy and Bess*, and took to the keyboard to play his Concerto in F. He was 37, already a star and a legend. Gershwin, a Post-Dispatch reporter wrote in the lingo of the day, "came from Brooklyn slums to pound out ragtime as a song plugger in Tin Pan Alley" by age 15, and was writing musical comedy hits for Broadway before he was twenty. In 1924 his Rhapsody in Blue forced a seismic shift in attitudes regarding high and low art. With his librettist brother Ira he wrote some of the greatest songs of the American songbook for Broadway and Hollywood: "I Got Rhythm," "Oh, Lady Be Good," "Fascinating Rhythm," "Someone to Watch Over Me," and many more. They made George Gershwin rich and famous.

When he entertained reporters in his room at the Coronado Hotel, he cradled a pipe in the long, powerful fingers of a piano man. There was a piano in the room, with music by Ravel on the music stand. Gershwin posed for pictures in his dark tailored suit and his jaunty plaid tie, thumbing through the 572-page score of *Porgy and Bess*.

He talked about *Rhapsody*: "I was just trying to express life around me in 1924," he said, "it was written to put jazz in a more serious form."

He contrasted the newness of his music to that of Stravinsky's. Gershwin's music was new without baffling popular understanding. "I'm trying mainly to be American in the feeling of my music." Reporters were taken aback by how Gershwin spoke of W.C. Handy and J.S. Bach in the same sentence.

He talked about a new idea for an opera—something about cowboys. There was a play he was excited about adapting, *Green Grow the Lilacs*. Nearly ten years later, the play would be the source for Rodgers and Hammerstein's *Oklahoma!* 

Gershwin had an idea for a new musical comedy as well. When a reporter suggested that the composer must be enjoying the chance to take a break with less challenging material, Gershwin responded sharply. "Musical comedy isn't any easier than anything else. It takes just as much work to do a tune like 'I Got Rhythm' as to do anything in *Porgy*."

Gershwin played Concerto in F with the St. Louis Symphony on March 1, a piece that owes as much to African-American composer James P. Johnson's "The Charleston" as it does to Ravel. Gershwin received mixed reviews from the St. Louis press, but the audience responded with a lengthy ovation. A year later, Gershwin passed away at age 39 in Hollywood, his ambitions ended by a brain tumor.

# FROM THE STAGE

## Scott Andrews on Rhapsody In Blue and Création du monde:

"The original *Rhapsody in Blue* really sheds such a different light on the piece than the more lush orchestral version we're used to. Kirill Gerstein has a great touch with it, and as a bonus, we're playing Milhaud's *Creation of the World*, a ballet score inspired by the Harlem jazz he fell in love with while in New York during the '20s."



Scott Andrews, principal clarinet



David Robertson

#### **DAVID ROBERTSON**

BEOFOR MUSIC DIRECTOR AND CONDUCTOR

David Robertson is celebrated worldwide as a champion of contemporary composers, an ingenious and adventurous programmer, and a masterful communicator whose passionate and compelling advocacy for the art form is widely recognized. A consummate and deeply collaborative musician, Grammy Award-winner Robertson is hailed for his intensely committed and exacting music making. With an extensive orchestral and operatic repertoire that spans from the classical to the avant-garde, Robertson has forged close relationships with major orchestras around the world through his exhilarating music-making and stimulating ideas. This marks Robertson's 12th season as Music Director of the storied 137-year-old St. Louis Symphony. He also serves as chief conductor and artistic director of the Sydney Symphony Orchestra in Australia.

As Music Director of the STL Symphony, Robertson has solidified the orchestra's standing as one of the nation's most enduring and innovative. His established relationships with artists and composers is deeply rooted, and is evidenced by the STL Symphony's strong relationship with composer John Adams. Their 2014 release of *City Noir* (Nonesuch Records)—comprising works by Adams performed by the STL Symphony with Robertson—won the Grammy Award for Best Orchestral Performance.

Highlights of Robertson's 2016–2017 season with the STL Symphony include a Carnegie Hall performance of Adams's *The Gospel According to the Other Mary* as part of a celebration of the composer's 70th birthday. Robertson and the Symphony are holding a season-long celebration of Adams, highlighted by Leila Josefowicz's performance of the composer's Violin Concerto at Powell Hall. This performance was also recorded by Nonesuch, and combined with *Scheherazade*.2, will offer two of Adams's most significant works for solo violin and orchestra, scheduled for release in 2017.

#### KIRILL GERSTEIN

Kirill Gerstein recently debuted with the Vienna Philharmonic, Berlin Philharmonic, and Royal Concertgebouw Orchestras and appears this season with the BBC Symphony, the Gewandhaus Orchestra, the Deutsches Symphonie-Orchester Berlin, and WDR Sinfonieorchester Köln. A regular guest of all the major orchestras in the United States, this season Gerstein performs Busoni's Piano Concerto in C with the Boston Symphony, Schoenberg's Piano Concerto with the Cleveland Orchestra, and Tchaikovsky's First Piano Concerto with the New York Philharmonic.

Gerstein records for Myrios Classics and his world premiere recording of Tchaikovsky's First Piano Concerto in the composer's final 1879 version was released in 2015, winning an ECHO Klassik Award for Concerto Recording of the Year. Prior to this, his first solo recording of works by Schumann, Liszt, and Oliver Knussen was chosen by the *New York Times* as one of the best recordings of 2010.

Born in Voronezh, Russia, Gerstein studied piano at a special music school for gifted children. He was 14 when he moved from Russia to the United States to become the youngest student to attend Boston's Berklee College of Music. In 2001, he won First Prize at the 10th Arthur Rubinstein Competition, and in 2010, was awarded the prestigious Gilmore Artist Award which allowed him to commission new works from Timo Andres, Chick Corea, Alexander Goehr, Oliver Knussen, and Brad Mehldau.



Kirill Gerstein

## IF YOU LIKED THIS...

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

# THE FLYING DUTCHMAN THURS, MAY 4, 8:00PM | SAT, MAY 6, 8:00PM

David Robertson, conductor
Alan Held, bass-baritone (The Dutchman);
Marjorie Owens, soprano (Senta);
Teddy Tahu Rhodes, baritone (Daland);
Rodrick Dixon, tenor (Erik);
Joy Boland, soprano (Mary);
Paul Appleby, tenor (A Steersman)
St. Louis Symphony Chorus, Amy Kaiser, director
S. Katy Tucker, visual design



WAGNER The Flying Dutchman

Wagner's stormy tale of obsession, passion and drama awaits! Be transfixed by the musical journey of a shipwrecked captain banished to the seas for eternity unless he can find a faithful love. Don't miss this extraordinary season finale with an outstanding vocal cast joining the STL Symphony and an innovative lighting projection by renowned visual artist S. Katy Tucker.

Presented by Mary Pillsbury

## 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.



#### Rhapsody in Blue (1945 film)

A fictionalized Gershwin biopic, starring Robert Alda, including a reenactment of the Rhapsody in Blue premiere led by reallife band leader Paul Whiteman (playing himself). Available on DVD in the Warner Archive Collection

#### Cargo

Milhaud's La Création du monde, choreographed by Mark Morris, and performed in an arrangement for piano quintet.

vimeopro.com/mmdg/ fas-arts-management/video/152736746

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









# COMMUNITY CONCERT: MUSIC WITHOUT BOUNDARIES



STL Symphony quintet performing at the International Institute

#### Mon, Apr 24, 11:00am

The Strings of Arda (Asako Kuboki and Becky Boyer Hall, violins; Christian Woehr, viola; Alvin McCall, cello; Christopher Carson, bass; and Thomas Stubbs; percussion) perform a welcome concert of music from countries around the world—Somalia, Syria, Palestine, Bosnia, Congo, Cuba, and more—for students at the International Institute.

Please join us for this free concert that is open to all.

International Institute of St. Louis 3401 Arsenal Street St. Louis

Music Without Boundaries is underwritten in part by MetLife Foundation

# ST. LOUIS SYMPHONY YOUTH ORCHESTRA:



## Fri, May 26, 8:00pm Gemma New. conductor

The STL Symphony Youth Orchestra captivates audiences with their energetic and spirited performances—join them in the finale of their 47th season. Don't miss your chance to hear the most talented young musicians from across the region live at Powell Hall.

FISHER *Rainphase*TCHAIKOVSKY Violin Concerto in D major
TCHAIKOVSKY Piano Concerto No. 1 in B-flat minor (1st movement)
MUSSORGSKY, arr. Ravel *Pictures at an Exhibition* 

Free admission with a \$1 per ticket service fee. www.stlsymphony.org/youthorchestra

Sponsored by Whole Foods Market With support from the G.A., Jr. and Kathryn M. Buder Charitable Foundation and the ESCO Technologies Foundation



#### **HOWARD WITSMA**

In more than four decades as a fan of the St. Louis Symphony, Howard Witsma has developed a closeness with the orchestra, his seat mates, and the music.

You could call Howard "the mayor of the third row." As a subscriber, he became a fixture in his seat three rows back from the Powell Hall stage—just feet away from the musicians, guest artists, conductors, and the intensity of incredible music-making.



Howard Witsma

"There have been some unbelievable evenings when I have left emotionally drained, when I was right there and the conductor and the orchestra knew exactly what

the other wanted from the performance. It's fantastic," Howard reflected.

He particularly favored this vantage point for the performances of pianist André Watts, who is known for humming and excitedly stomping his feet with the music. After a concert featuring Watts, Howard waited outside Powell Hall near the stage door discussing the performance with some friends. "I remember saying, I wish I could tell André how much joy his performances have brought into my life. I felt a hand on my shoulder and heard a voice: 'there's no time like the present."

The voice was retired STL Symphony violinist Darwyn Apple, who took Howard backstage to meet Watts—an experience he says he'll never forget. Darwyn and Howard are now friends, just one of many friendships Howard has developed with current and former members of the orchestra. From his seat Howard was known to signal a nod, a thumbs up, and for a particularly good performance, a smile, to friends on stage.

Howard also developed a kinship with patrons seated nearby. Sean Cullen attended a concert 15 years ago and happened to sit near Howard for a performance of Beethoven's Ninth Symphony. As the audience roared at the concert's conclusion, Howard turned to Sean and said, "If everyone who enjoyed the concert this much tonight gave \$10 that would bring in \$25,000 to help the Symphony." A college student at the time, Sean donated \$10 to the STL Symphony and has remained a donor and friend of Howard's ever since.

Howard has supported the STL Symphony generously over the years as both a subscriber and donor. He adds, "I love the immense beauty it has brought into my life. I want to know that the orchestra will be around for years and years."

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