



St. Louis Symphony  
Orchestra

stéphane denève : music director

19:20  
140th season

Jacomo Bairos, conductor  
Ben Folds, vocals

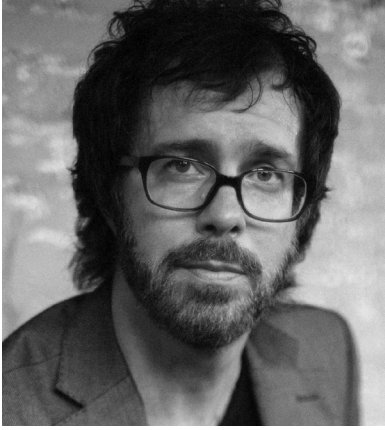
Thursday, February 13, 2020, at 7:30PM  
Friday, February 14, 2020, at 7:30PM

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## Ben Folds with the St. Louis Symphony Orchestra

Program to be announced from the stage.

*This concert will have one intermission.*



## **BEN FOLDS**

Ben Folds is widely regarded as one of the major music influencers of our generation.

He's created an enormous body of genre-bending music that includes pop albums with Ben Folds Five, multiple solo albums, and numerous collaborative records. His last album was a blend of pop songs and his Concerto for Piano and Orchestra that soared to #1 on both the Billboard classical and classical crossover charts.

For over a decade he's performed with some of the world's greatest symphony orchestras, and in 2017 was named as the first ever Artistic Advisor to the National Symphony Orchestra at the Kennedy Center.

In addition to touring, Folds has just written his first book—“*A Dream About Lightning Bugs – A Life of Music and Cheap Lessons*”—described as a collection of interrelated essays and anecdotes about art, life, and music.

He is also no stranger to TV and film, from scoring soundtracks to having been featured for five seasons as a judge on NBC's critically acclaimed a capella show “The Sing Off.” He has also continued to appear in cameo and recurring roles on cable and network TV shows.

An avid photographer, Folds is a member of the prestigious Sony Artisans of Imagery, completed an assignment in 2017 as a photo editor for National Geographic, and was recently featured in a mini-documentary by the Kennedy Center's Digital Project on his photographic work.

An outspoken champion for arts education and music therapy funding in our nation's public schools, in 2016 Ben held the distinction as the only artist to appear at both national political conventions advocating for arts education, and has continually served for over five years as an active member of the distinguished Artist Committee of Americans For The Arts, is on the Board of its Arts Action Fund, and is Chairman of its ArtsVote2020 campaign initiative.



## JACOMO BAIROS

Portuguese-American conductor Jacomo Bairos continues to redefine what a conductor can be in the 21st century. He challenges the preconceptions of orchestral repertoire, blurs the lines of genres, and integrates the orchestra into the broader community in new, holistic, and organic ways. Bairos is the 17th Music Director of the Amarillo Symphony, Co-Founder and Artistic Director for Miami's Nu Deco Ensemble, and performs regularly as a guest conductor with some of the world's finest orchestras. Bairos' performances have been described as "thrilling" (*Providence Journal*), "inspirational and highly communicative" (*Singapore Straits Times*), and having a "splendid sense of musicality" (*Knoxville Mercury*).

In the 2019/2020 season, Bairos makes debuts with the Seattle Symphony and Cincinnati Pops, returns to the Symphonies of San Francisco, Houston, Atlanta, and Sarasota, and releases his first studio album with Nu Deco Ensemble. Bairos will make his operatic debut with Britten's *Turn of the Screw* in collaboration with Illuminaris Miami.

This year marks Bairos' seventh season as the Amarillo Symphony's 17th Music Director. His imaginative and inclusive tenure has fueled tremendous fiscal and artistic growth, fusing classical orchestral traditions with diverse programming and dynamic guest artists from Classical, Jazz, Middle Eastern, Country, Dance, and Multi-Media worlds. Bairos has overseen the creation of captivating outreach initiatives such as Class Act, SymphonyKids, the Happy-Holiday Pops, and established a composer residency with young American Chris Rogerson.

Bairos has also appeared with the Detroit, Atlanta, Grand Rapids, Fort Worth, Charleston, Knoxville, Alabama, North Carolina, and Singapore Symphonies, the Rhode Island and Louisiana Philharmonics, Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra, and directed the National Symphony Orchestra's acclaimed DeClassified Series along with multiple Pops programs. Bairos has made numerous returns to the San Diego, Florida, Jacksonville, Charlotte Symphony Orchestras, and recently curated new music performances in Grand Rapids mentoring emerging composers in collaboration with the American Composers Orchestra's Earshot program. International engagements include Malaysian Philharmonic Orchestra, Leipzig and Oaxaca Symphony Orchestras, and Orquesta Sinfónica do Porto Casa da Música (Portugal).

Bairos' Classical collaborators include renowned pianists Jeremy Denk, Garrick Ohlsson, Jennifer Koh, and mezzo-soprano J'Nai Bridgesto. Additionally, Bairos closely collaborates with some of today's most groundbreaking artists such

as: Academy-Award winning composer Bryce Dessner, Grammy-winning artists Wyclef Jean, Jacob Collier, Angélique Kidjo, Gregory Porter, Kishi Bashi, Danay Suarez, Seu Jorge, Bilal, Aaron Diehl, Cory Henry, and Jon Batiste. Since 2014, Bairos has worked on numerous projects and collaborations with multi-platinum singer-songwriter Ben Folds.

Bairos' musical mentors include the esteemed conductor pedagogue, Gustav Meier, and distinguished maestro Kurt Masur. From 2010-2013, Bairos studied, apprenticed, and mentored with Robert Spano at the Atlanta Symphony and worked closely with Jorma Panula. In 2012, Bairos was awarded the prestigious Felix Mendelssohn-Bartholdy Scholarship by the U.S. Mendelssohn Foundation and Kurt Masur. Bairos is an orchestral conducting alumnus of both the Peabody Institute and Aspen Music Festival.

A graduate of The Juilliard School, Bairos is an accomplished and award-winning tubist, having given masterclasses and concerts with major festivals and orchestras around the world. Bairos has toured, recorded, and concertized with the New York Philharmonic as well as with the symphony orchestras of Chicago, Cincinnati, and Seattle. He has held principal positions with orchestras in America and Spain, and from 2004-2007 Bairos was Principal Tuba for the Singapore Symphony Orchestra.

Born in Lisbon, Portugal, Bairos is also a Yoga teacher, practitioner of Vipassana Meditation, and works with and mentors underserved children throughout the South Florida and Panhandle-Texas region. He makes his home in Miami, Florida.