CONCERT PROGRAM
Friday, April 15, 2016, 8:00pm
Saturday, April 16, 2016, 8:00pm

Yan Pascal Tortelier, conductor
Louis Lortie, piano

**DUKAS**

*Polyeucte Overture* (1891)

(Yan Pascal Tortelier, conductor)

**SAINT-SAËNS**

*Piano Concerto No. 5 in F major, op. 103, “Egyptian”* (1896)

(1865-1935)

Louis Lortie, piano

**INTERMISSION**

**MUSSORGSKY/orch. Ravel**

*Pictures at an Exhibition* (1874/1922)

(1835-1921)

Performed without pause

(1839-1881)/(1875-1937)

Promenade—
Gnomus—
Promenade—
The Old Castle—
Promenade—
Tuileries—
Bydlo—
Promenade—
Ballet of the Chicks in Their Shells—
Samuel Goldenberg and Schmuyle—
The Market at Limoges—
Catacombs (Sepulchrum romanum)—
Cum mortuis in lingua mortua—
The Hut on Fowl’s Legs (Baba-Yaga)—
The Great Gate at Kiev

Perform without pause
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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

These concerts are presented by the Thomas A. Kooyumjian Family Foundation.

Yan Pascal Tortelier is the Blackwell Sanders Peper Martin Guest Conductor.

Louis Lortie is the Carolyn and Jay Henges Guest Artist.

The concert of Friday, April 15, is underwritten in part by a generous gift from Mr. and Mrs. James von der Heydt.

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
Call 314-534-1700 or visit stlsymphony.org for tickets

STORYTELLING: April 29
David Robertson, conductor; Celeste Golden Boyer, violin

BERNSTEIN  Candide Overture
PONCHIELLI  Dance of the Hours
VITALI  Chaconne
HUMPERDINCK  Hansel and Gretel Prelude
DUKAS  The Sorcerer’s Apprentice
FREUND  Cyrillic Dreams
WAGNER  Ride of the Valkyries

Presented by the Whitaker Foundation
Supported by University College at Washington University

SCHUBERT “GREAT”: April 30-May 1
David Robertson, conductor; Shannon Wood, timpani

KRAFT  Timpani Concerto No. 2, “The Grand Encounter”
SCHUBERT  Symphony No. 9, “The Great”

Presented by the Thomas A. Kooyumjian Family Foundation

THE PLANETS: May 6-8
David Robertson, conductor; Christine Brewer, soprano; Kathleen Mattis, viola; St. Louis Symphony Chorus; Amy Kaiser, director

VAUGHAN WILLIAMS  Flos campi (Flower of the Field)
BERG  Altenberg Lieder
HOLST  The Planets

Presented by Mary Pillsbury

POKÉMON: SYMPHONIC EVOLUTIONS: May 14-15

The STL Symphony presents the live orchestral performance featuring music from the popular video-game series with synchronized visuals on the big screen at Powell Hall.
“For me art is form,” Camille Saint-Saëns wrote. “Expression and passion seduce the amateur... for the artist it is different. An artist who is not fully satisfied by elegant lines, harmonious colors, and beautiful harmonic progressions has no understanding of art.” Because Saint-Saëns made many such declarations, it’s tempting to place him on the absolute music side of the so-called War of the Romantics. This ongoing debate polarized European concert-music culture during the second half of the 19th century. Sure, from a 21st-century perspective, it seems silly to hate Brahms because we love Wagner, or vice versa. Who gets into bitter arguments these days about sonata form and musical pictorialism? But ours is a tribal species. We fight about other, equally stupid stuff. (If you don’t know what I’m talking about, you probably have the good sense to stay off the Internet.)

The burning question of taste for the culture warriors of the Romantic era: program music or absolute music? Simply put, program music tells a story by referring to something outside itself: a painting, a play, memories of an Egyptian vacation. Absolute music tells its own story, which, if you believe Saint-Saëns, is no story at all. To varying degrees, the three works on this program are all programmatic. They score a film that screens inside each listener’s head. They are all about something, something that any responsible program annotator is expected to mention in her notes. Absolute music, on the other hand, isn’t about anything except itself. A Haydn symphony, a Mozart concerto, or a Brahms quartet doesn’t require any extramusical support. It just is.

Of all the works on this program, Saint-Saëns’s Piano Concerto No. 5 comes closest to being absolute music, in that it loosely conforms to various classical forms and conventions. But within this structure the committed classicist found a place for musical pictorialism, creating a kind of aural travelogue. He translated stories into sonorities, and then he explained these orchestral effects in detailed program notes. Saint-Saëns
had a way of eluding simplistic categories like “Romantic” and “Classical,” and “absolute” and “programmatic,” but genius is a slippery thing. All dichotomies are false dichotomies in the end.

This concert presents three distinctive takes on late Romantic program music, from Russia and France. But the composers’ nationalities are ambiguous, too. The Russian Mussorgsky gets a Gallic makeover, thanks to Maurice Ravel’s opulent orchestration. The Frenchman Paul Dukas indulges in Orientalist Wagneriana. Saint-Saëns takes us on a sea voyage that flits from Egypt to Indonesia to Spain in the space of a single movement. This music knows no borders.

**PAUL DUKAS**  
*Polyeucte* Overture

**KNOWN UNKNOWN**  
Studious, reserved, and mercilessly self-critical, Paul Dukas destroyed all but a dozen of his compositions. Even so, these surviving works are so exceptional that he ranks among France’s finest composers. In 1901 his former classmate at the Paris Conservatory, Claude Debussy, praised his old friend’s “brain of steel” and “cold, blue, unbending will,” which, Debussy predicted, would ensure Dukas’s “influence on the 20th century, both now and later.” But unless you’re a devotee of the pipe organ, you might know Dukas only by his 1897 symphonic showpiece *The Sorcerer’s Apprentice*, the soundtrack to the scariest scene in Walt Disney’s *Fantasia*. (How many nightmares were fueled by that feral broom alone?) Debussy was right about the enduring importance of Dukas. Although influence is impossible to quantify, Dukas taught Olivier Messiaen at the Paris Conservatory and was admired by Richard Strauss. If his name is less familiar than his music, then so be it. He would have preferred it that way.

In 1891, after graduating from the Conservatory and completing his mandatory military service, Dukas made his public debut as a composer with the concert overture *Polyeucte*. Like so many other young Romantics, the 25-year-old Parisian was mesmerized by Richard Wagner’s sensuous soundworld, and it shows. The overture is based

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**Born**  
October 1, 1865, Paris

**Died**  
May 17, 1935, Paris

**First Performance**  
January 23, 1892, the composer conducted the Orchestre Lamoureux in Paris

**STL Symphony Premiere**  
January 16, 1920, Max Zach conducting the only previous performance

**Scoring**  
2 flutes  
2 oboes  
English horn  
2 clarinets  
bass clarinet  
3 bassoons  
4 horns  
2 trumpets  
3 trombones  
tuba  
timpani  
harp  
strings

**Performance Time**  
approximately 15 minutes
on a 17th-century tragedy by Pierre Corneille. Set in ancient Armenia, the story involves an ancient Roman nobleman, Polyeucte, who converts to Christianity, experiences holy visions, tears up edicts, smashes idols, and refuses to renounce his new religion despite the pleas of his loving wife, Paulina. Imprisoned and tortured by Emperor Valerian’s minions, the martyr is beheaded. St. Polyeuctus, as he’s usually called today, is venerated by the Roman Catholic and Eastern Orthodox faithful as the patron saint of vows and treaties.

Disregard Corneille’s story if you like. The music works just fine without it.

The overture opens with a threnody of low strings and moody woodwinds. Out of this luxuriant gloom, violins scurry; timpani rumble and roar. Piercing silences puncture orchestral swells. Plangent winds hint at the tragedy’s romantic subplot. The subtle harmonic shifts and haunting timbres make the Wagner comparisons inevitable, but who cares? Fin-de-siècle Wagneriana doesn’t get any better than this.

CAMILLE SAINT-SAËNS
Piano Concerto No. 5 in F major, op. 103, “Egyptian”

PRODIGAL APPLES Want to sabotage your self-esteem? Try comparing yourself to Camille Saint-Saëns. The renowned composer and teacher was also a virtuoso pianist and organist, as well as a travel writer, poet, and playwright. He had a photographic memory and spoke several languages fluently. He demonstrated perfect pitch at two years old and started composing at four. At ten he made his formal debut in Paris, performing works by Mozart, Bach, and Beethoven. He wrote his first two symphonies during adolescence and continued to dazzle as an adult. At 72, he became the first major composer to score a film. By the time he died, at 86, he had completed more than 200 musical works, in virtually every genre, and was still getting gigs as a concert pianist. “I produce music the way an apple tree produces apples,” he famously declared. It ain’t bragging
if it’s true, but it’s still highly irritating. Regular people struggle. Saint-Saëns, freakishly, did not.

When Saint-Saëns finished his fifth and final piano concerto, early in 1896, he was 60 years old. He needed a dazzling new showpiece for a celebration later that year marking the 50th anniversary of his debut as a performer (at 10—the jerk!). Although it had been 20 years since his last piano concerto—Saint-Saëns composed relatively little for the instrument, surprisingly—his apple-tree analogy remained apt. The work’s nickname, “Egyptian,” didn’t originate with Saint-Saëns, but it seems inevitable. He composed most of it while on vacation in Luxor, and, at least for him, it’s unusually programmatic. Explaining that the concerto represented a “sea voyage,” he provided many picturesque details to support his claim. But rather than strictly portraying a single country, the “Egyptian” compiles a world-traveler’s far-flung impressions.

SYMPHONIC POSTCARDS The opening Allegro animato subjects a simple melody to increasingly intricate formal procedures, with vaguely modal harmonies hinting at exotic destinations. Rippling piano textures and pulsing orchestration remind us that we travel by sea.

To quote the composer, the second movement “takes us... on a journey to the East and even, in the passage in F-sharp, to the Far East.” Here Saint-Saëns refers to the pentatonic melody picked out by the piano, a startling bit of proto-Minimalism that brings to mind a Javanese “Chopsticks.” With its hypnotic, chiming overtones and gamelan allure, it almost eclipses the main theme, which Saint-Saëns described as “a Nubian love song.” He claimed to have scribbled the tune on one of his sleeves after hearing it sung by boatmen on the Nile. As the Andante closes, Spanish-inflected dance rhythms subside in a nocturne of chirping crickets, croaking frogs.

The remarkably brief Allegro molto brims over with a madcap energy. Jazzy syncopation vies with sweeping bravura gestures. Coloristic effects describe everything from motorized propellers to restless trade winds. Saint-Saëns explained that the finale expresses “the joy of a sea crossing,” but this is clearly a hectic, queasy kind of joy. In fact, the notoriously tricky solo part was later used as an examination piece for aspiring pianists at the Paris Conservatory.
MODEST MUSSORGSKY/orch. Maurice Ravel
Pictures at an Exhibition

POSTHUMOUS PICTURES An alcoholic who died at 42, Modest Mussorgsky published very little: just a few songs and the vocal score to the opera Boris Godunov. If not for his former roommate Nikolay Rimsky-Korsakov, who “corrected” his work before its posthumous publication, Mussorgsky might have languished in obscurity. His most famous work, Pictures at an Exhibition, was probably never performed publicly during the composer’s lifetime. Maurice Ravel, whose orchestration is used for this performance, never even saw Mussorgsky’s original score. Ravel worked from Rimsky’s heavily revised version. It’s not quite a collaboration: Collaborations imply consent, and Mussorgsky had been dead for years.

Mussorgsky composed the original piano suite in June of 1874 as a tribute to a friend, the painter Victor Hartmann, who had died unexpectedly the previous year. Out of the hundreds of works he’d seen at a recent memorial exhibition, Mussorgsky focused on 10 canvases: fanciful watercolors, elaborate doodles, exotic vistas. He worked quickly and confidently. “Ideas, melodies come to me of their own accord,” he boasted in a letter. “I can hardly manage to put it all down on paper fast enough.”

GALLERY TOUR To connect the movements inspired by each artwork, Mussorgsky used an introductory theme titled “Promenade.” In the composer’s words, the theme finds the viewer “roving through the exhibition—now leisurely, now briskly—in order to come close to a picture that has attracted his attention.” Initially voiced by trumpets, the promenade theme evolves throughout the suite, signaling subtle shifts of mood.

The cycle is rich in contrast and color. “Gnomus,” the first movement, is a hodgepodge of erratic leaps and uncanny harmonies. “The Old Castle,” based on two sketches of medieval French castles, features one of Ravel’s most brilliant innovations: an alto saxophone, which carries the Russian folk-infused main melody.
(Although patented in 1846, the saxophone was still a novelty in 1922, when Ravel completed his orchestration.) “Tuileries,” light-glazed and lively, celebrates the charming mayhem of children romping in a formal French garden. “Bydlo” plunges forward in an oxen-driven cart. The clucking, skittery “Ballet of Chicks in Their Shells” was inspired by Hartmann’s sketch of a young dancer in a canary costume clasping an eggshell shield. “Samuel Goldenberg and Schmuyle” unleashes stuttering 16th-notes from a muted trumpet. “Market at Limoges” depicts the chatter of Frenchwomen and the cheerful clamor of village life. In “Catacombs,” the promenade theme resurfaces, shadowy and dissonant. “The Hut on Fowl’s Legs” is a frenzied retelling of a famous Russian folk-tale. Finally, in “The Great Gate at Kiev,” the promenade theme finds its gleaming apotheosis, as Ravel’s ringing bells, crashing cymbals, and jubilant tam-tam propel the suite to its euphoric conclusion.

Program notes © 2016 by René Spencer Saller
Karin Bliznik, Principal Trumpet, on *Pictures at an Exhibition*: “For people who don’t go to the symphony, I suggest this concert and *The Planets*. There is so much imagery, and so much that fits within the theme of the season: Music Tells the Story.

“I’ve performed this with the Atlanta Symphony when I was associate there, with Miguel Harth-Bedoya conducting. It’s a nerve-wracking piece for trumpet players because it contains two important audition excerpts, including the opening ‘Promenade.’ You almost always play it in the first round of auditions so they can get a feel of the trumpet player’s sound.

“The piece begins with the trumpet, and preparing for it is basically a mental game, like playing the opening to the Mahler 5. You have to know what you want it to sound like and then you have to create it. Then you can’t change it, or have it morph throughout the piece.

“It’s tuneful. You can walk around with it, which is why it’s a ‘Promenade.’”

Karin Bliznik
YAN PASCAL TORTELIER
BLACKWELL SANDERS PEER MARTIN GUEST CONDUCTOR

Yan Pascal Tortelier began his musical career as a violinist and, at 14, won first prize for violin at the Paris Conservatoire, making his soloist debut with the London Philharmonic Orchestra shortly afterward. Following general musical studies with Nadia Boulanger, Tortelier studied conducting with Franco Ferrara at the Accademia Chigiana in Siena, and from 1974-83 he was Associate Conductor of the Orchestre National du Capitole de Toulouse. Further positions since then have included Principal Conductor and Artistic Director of the Ulster Orchestra (1989-92) and Principal Guest Conductor of the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra (2005-08). He was also Principal Conductor of the São Paulo Symphony Orchestra from 2009-11, and currently holds the position of Guest Conductor of Honor, in which capacity he returns to the orchestra regularly. Following his outstanding work as Chief Conductor of the BBC Philharmonic between 1992 and 2003, including annual appearances at the BBC Proms and a very successful tour of the United States to celebrate the orchestra’s 60th anniversary season, he was given the title of Conductor Emeritus and continues to work with the orchestra regularly. He also holds the position of Principal Guest Conductor at the Royal Academy of Music in London, and from the 2016-17 season will take up the position of Principal Conductor of the Iceland Symphony Orchestra.

Tortelier has collaborated with major orchestras including the London Symphony Orchestra, Orchestre de Paris, Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra, Czech Philharmonic, Oslo Philharmonic, Philadelphia Orchestra, Los Angeles Philharmonic, Minnesota Orchestra, and the Boston and Chicago symphony orchestras.

Highlights of the 2015-16 season and beyond include return visits to North America to conduct the orchestras in Pittsburgh, Dallas, Montreal, San Francisco, and Baltimore; other return performances include the Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra, BBC Philharmonic Orchestra, and the Stavanger Symphony, as well as the Melbourne Symphony, Adelaide Symphony, and the Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra.
LOUIS LORTIE
CAROLYN AND JAY HENGES GUEST ARTIST

The brilliant and highly-esteemed French-Canadian pianist Louis Lortie has extended his interpretative voice across a broad range of repertoire rather than choosing to specialize in one particular style. The London Times has identified the artist’s “combination of total spontaneity and meditated ripeness that only great pianists have.”

He has recently performed with the Chicago Symphony, the Sydney Symphony, OSESP/São Paulo, the Royal Philharmonic, and toured with the Leipzig Gewandhaus, the La Scala Orchestra, and with the Beethoven Orchester Bonn. Upcoming engagements include the Warsaw Philharmonic, Boston Symphony, Philadephia Orchestra, Atlanta Symphony, Dallas Symphony, Montreal Symphony, and the Dresden Philharmonic.

Lortie has performed with the world’s leading conductors, including Riccardo Chailly, Jaap Van Zweden, Kurt Masur, Seiji Ozawa, Charles Dutoit, Neeme Järvi, Sir Andrew Davis, Emmanuel Krivine, Sir Mark Elder, Andrés Orozco-Estrada, and Osmo Vänskä. His play/conducting engagements are with great orchestras world-wide.

He has made more than 45 recordings for the Chandos label, covering repertoire from Mozart to Stravinsky, including a set of the complete Beethoven sonatas and the complete Liszt “Années de pèlerinage,” which was named one of the 10 best recordings of 2012 by The New Yorker. His recording of Lutosławski’s Piano Concerto with Edward Gardner and the BBC Symphony received high praise, as did a recent Chopin recording (he is recording all of Chopin’s solo piano music for Chandos), which was named one of the best recordings of the year by the New York Times.

Louis Lortie studied in Montreal with Yvonne Hubert (a pupil of the legendary Alfred Cortot), in Vienna with Beethoven specialist Dieter Weber, and subsequently with Schnabel disciple Leon Fleisher. In 1984, he won First Prize in the Busoni Competition and was also prizewinner at the Leeds Competition. He has lived in Berlin since 1997 and also has homes in Canada and Italy.
IF YOU LIKED THIS...

If you love the music you hear in this concert, try this program later in the season.

ST. LOUIS SYMPHONY YOUTH ORCHESTRA
Friday, June 3, 2016, 8:00pm
Steven Jarvi, conductor

BEETHOVEN  Symphony No. 5
BERLIOZ  Roman Carnival Overture
STRAVINSKY  The Firebird Suite (1919 version)

Berlioz and Stravinsky provide the opulent orchestral colors and Beethoven delivers that unforgettable opening—played by the second-best orchestra in the region. And it’s just a dollar.

The St. Louis Symphony Youth Orchestra season is sponsored by St. Louis Children’s Hospital with additional support from the G.A., Jr. and Kathryn M. Buder Charitable Foundation and the ESCO Technologies Foundation.

PLAYING PICTURES:
KARIN BLIZNIK, PRINCIPAL TRUMPET

“However you set up the opening of the piece, your note lengths need to be the same, because the solo leads to the full brass. You need to make sure you’ve set the foundation for the rest of the brass.

“But the piece is challenging beyond the familiar motif. It’s a 10-movement piece with the most bombastic music of all waiting for you at the very end. The tempi change a lot, and then I have to pick up the piccolo trumpet, which is one of the most resistant of instruments—plus, it’s muted. It feels like you have nowhere to breathe. Then you’re joined by the second trumpet, and you need to have set a consistency for that player.”

Karin Bliznik
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.

Mary McAuliffe, *Dawn of the Belle Epoque: The Paris of Monet, Zola, Bernhardt, Eiffel, Debussy, Clemenceau, and Their Friends*  
Rowman and Littlefield Publishers  
Paul Dukas and Camille Saint-Saëns lived in a legendary time in Paris, a period in which a distressed city transformed into the cultural mecca of the world.

Camille Saint-Saëns, Roger Nichols (editor and translator),  
*Camille Saint-Saëns: On Music and Musicians*  
Oxford University Press  
Saint-Saëns had a lot to say in his music and he has a lot to say about music and the musicians around him. Roger Nichols offers a deft English translation.

David Brown, *Musorgsky: His Life and Works (Master Musicians Series)*  
Oxford University Press  
The always reliable Brown gives what the *New York Times* describes as “a no-holds barred biography” of the brilliant and deeply troubled, and troubling, composer.

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.”

Keep up with the backstage life of the St. Louis Symphony, as chronicled by Symphony staffer Eddie Silva, via stlsymphony.org/blog.

The St. Louis Symphony is on 😊👍🏼👍🏼👍🏼
Great friends of the orchestra, David and Thelma Steward, have generously pledged $150,000 to establish The Steward Family Challenge. Through June 30, the Stewards will match new or increased gifts of $75 or more to the St. Louis Symphony’s 2016 Annual Campaign—dollar for dollar up to $150,000. With your help, the STL Symphony can meet this special challenge and continue to enrich lives through performances at Powell Hall as well as hundreds of free community and music education programs throughout the region.

Deeply committed to our community, David and Thelma both serve on the STL Symphony’s Board of Trustees, co-chaired the orchestra’s gala event in 2012, and have received numerous awards for widespread civic and philanthropic involvement.

“We’re so blessed to have the musicians of the St. Louis Symphony in our community,” David and Thelma explain. “It’s our great honor to support music education programs with such a positive impact on the lives of area students.”

David Steward is chairman and founder of World Wide Technology, a market-leading provider of advanced technology solutions from 3,000+ manufacturers to the commercial, government, and telecom sectors. As a homemaker and registered nurse, Thelma’s commitment to caring also extends to community activities with organizations that enhance quality of life for all who call our region home.

To make your gift in support of The Steward Family Challenge, please call 314-286-4152 or visit stlsymphony.org/donate.
COMMUNITY CONCERT:
ON STAGE AT POWELL

Wednesday, May 18, 7:00pm
CORTANGO ORQUESTA

Cortango Orquesta returns to Powell Hall for an evening of music and dance. Cally Banham, English horn and oboe, Asako Kuboki, violin, Melissa Brooks, cello, David DeRiso, double bass, Adam Maness, piano and guitar, and Adam De Sorgo, piano, return to Powell Hall for an evening of tango with a professional tango dance duo. Bring your dancing shoes and learn the basics of tango with free dance lessons in the foyer starting at 6pm. Concert followed by a milonga and complimentary reception in the foyer. FREE

RSVP requested for planning purposes, but not required for entry. Visit stlsymphony.org Go to COMMUNITY then FREE COMMUNITY CONCERTS