



KANSAS CITY
SYMPHONY

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Kansas City Symphony Announces 2011-12 Season

Internationally acclaimed soloists join Music Director Michael Stern and the Symphony to show off the state-of-the-art capabilities of the new Helzberg Hall in the Kauffman Center for the Performing Arts

January 14, 2011 (Kansas City, MO) – The Kansas City Symphony announced today their inaugural season in the new Kauffman Center for the Performing Arts. An unprecedented collection of distinguished guest artists will join the Symphony and Music Director Michael Stern for the 2011-12 season, performing diverse programs designed to showcase the Symphony as well as their new performance home, Helzberg Hall. When it opens on September 16, 2011 Helzberg Hall will be one of the most technically and architecturally advanced concert halls in the nation, offering musicians and audiences alike an intimate and powerful listening experience. 360-degree seating – including behind and beside the musicians – will allow the audience to sit close to the performers and to feel as though they are among the orchestra. The Symphony’s classical, pops, and family series concerts will feature repertoire specifically selected to illustrate the dynamic range of the hall’s acoustics and state-of-the-art technical capabilities.

Music Director Michael Stern said, “Simply put, this is going to be the most exciting season that the Kansas City Symphony has ever presented. Our entire season is designed to show off our spectacular new home, and to celebrate the people of Kansas City who helped make it happen. Helping us to inaugurate this momentous achievement are some of the greatest artists in the world of music. The glorious design of Helzberg Hall and its acoustics will change our landscape, and redefine Kansas City as a national center for the performing arts. But the real glory will be the living performances from our stage that will give breath to this magnificent venue, and that will set a new standard for our audiences.”

In light of the dramatically new seating configuration in Helzberg Hall, the Symphony is extending the timeline for the 2011-12 season ticket renewal process. Beginning in February, the Symphony Box Office will contact subscribers in a sequence that ensures current subscribers adequate time to select new seats in Helzberg Hall. Groups of subscribers will be mailed information at intervals February

through April and will be offered specific periods to attend a group presentation or schedule a personal meeting with Symphony Box Office Staff. New subscribers and the general public may purchase subscriptions beginning in early May. For more information, call 816.471.0400, Monday through Friday, 10am to 5pm, or visit www.kcsymphony.org

2011-12 CLASSICAL SERIES

The Symphony's classical series will feature fourteen programs, each presented in three performances at Helzberg Hall. Highlights of the season designed to showcase the new hall include **Respighi's *The Pines of Rome*** featuring antiphonal brass musicians strategically placed in the hall; three large-scale choral masterpieces which will make use of the hall's expansive choir loft, including **Brahms' *German Requiem***, **Mahler's *Symphony No. 2***, and **Beethoven's *Symphony No. 9***; and, utilizing the hall's brand new, custom-designed Casavant Frères pipe organ, **Saint-Saëns *Symphony No. 3***. The Symphony will be joined in the choral works by the **Kansas City Symphony Chorus**, which is led by Grammy Award-winning director Charles Bruffy. Other audience favorites will include **Mozart's *Symphony No. 41 (Jupiter)***; **Dvorak's *Symphony No. 9 (From the New World)***, and **Tchaikovsky's dramatic *Sixth Symphony***.

"We have three primary goals in our opening season: showcase the orchestra, showcase the magnificent new Helzberg Hall, and thrill the audience," said Symphony Executive Director Frank Byrne. "We will do this by presenting great masterworks of the repertoire, artfully paired with world premieres and works that have not previously been performed by the Kansas City Symphony." Twenty-eight percent of the repertoire on the Symphony's classical season is a combination of both new and old works that have never been performed by the orchestra. Among the works being presented by the KCS for the first time include world premieres by **Chen Yi, Dan Kellogg, and Stephen Hartke**; a Kansas City premiere by **Jake Heggie**, and a collection of works from composers as diverse as J.C. Bach and Haydn to Stravinsky and Messiaen. "Michael Stern's innovative programming brings fresh perspectives and insights to our concerts, and in these spectacular acoustics the experience will become even more vivid and exciting," said Byrne.

World Premieres: KCS Celebrates the City of Fountains

Michael Stern, entering his seventh season as Music Director, will introduce three world premieres, two commissioned by the Kansas City Symphony, and one by local composer Chen Yi, commissioned by the Muriel McBrien Kauffman Foundation in 2009 as part of the UMKC Conservatory of Music and Dance's "East Meets West" Crescendo Gala.

"As we celebrate our inaugural season in the Kauffman Center, we also celebrate Kansas City and its identity as the 'City of Fountains.' We will present three world premieres in our first

season, all inspired by the gorgeous fountains of our city. Just as Respighi wrote his stunning 'Fountains of Rome,' we will present three new works commissioned for our opening season by three American composers: Stephen Hartke, Dan Kellogg, and Kansas City's own Chen Yi. This will be a season-long salute to our home city and to these living works of art that so inspire Kansas Citians of all ages," said Stern.

Internationally Acclaimed Soloists

The 2011-12 classical season will feature the most stunning collection of guest artists and conductors who have ever appeared in a single Kansas City Symphony season. Soloists include the incomparable cellist **Yo-Yo Ma**, beloved piano virtuosi **Emanuel Ax** and **Yefim Bronfman**, superstar violinist **Joshua Bell**; and Gramophone Artist of the Year, Kansas City's own mezzo-soprano **Joyce DiDonato** will show off the nuances and inflections of Helzberg Hall's impeccable acoustics.

Distinguished Guest Conductors

The Symphony is thrilled to welcome one of the greatest conductors of our time, **Christoph von Dohnanyi** to the podium in March for his Kansas City debut, featuring music of Richard Strauss and Tchaikovsky, two composers with whom he has a special affinity. Maestro von Dohnanyi was music director of The Cleveland Orchestra for 20 years and is Honorary Conductor for Life of London's Philharmonic Orchestra.

Also making his first appearance on the Kansas City podium is **Carlos Miguel Prieto**, music director of the Orquesta Sinfonica Nacional de Mexico (National Symphony Orchestra of Mexico), in a program of Russian masters. Returning guest conductors include Baroque and Classical music specialist **Bernard Labadie**, music director of Canada's Les Violins du Roy; and **Asher Fisch**, former music director of the Vienna Volksoper and the Israeli Opera, who will also make his debut as a pianist leading Mozart's Piano Concerto No. 17, K.453 from the keyboard.

KCS Debuts

We celebrate the Kansas City introduction of brilliant young violinist **Benjamin Beilman**, Bronze Medal winner of the Indianapolis International Violin Competition, whose appearance in Kansas City is made possible by the Almy Legacy Fund – a program which makes it possible each season to feature one of the most promising young talents from the prestigious Curtis Institute of Music in Philadelphia (the alma mater of Music Director Michael Stern).

We also welcome pianist **Behzod Abduraimov**, 2009 winner of the London International Piano Competition, violinist **Tianwa Yang** and pianist **Arnaldo Cohen**.

POPS, FAMILY AND HOLIDAY CONCERTS

Under the baton of Associate Conductor Steven Jarvi, the Symphony's four concert Pops Series moves from one to two nights, giving audiences the option of attending on Friday *or* Saturday evenings. This popular series boasts a range of musical styles from **Steve Lippia's** lounge-style classics of the Rat Pack, music from the biggest and best science fiction television and movies in **the Sci-Fi Spectacular** with special guest George Takei (Mr. Sulu of Star Trek fame), to the big band rocking rhythms of the 1940's from **Big Bad VooDoo Daddy**. The pops series also features the **Magical Music of Walt Disney**, a tuneful program that has thrilled audiences of all ages throughout the nation.

The Kansas City Symphony's Family Series introduces children the world's greatest music through light-hearted, shorter programs including the ever-popular Classical Kids presentation of **Tchaikovsky Discovers America**, a tale of Russian's most famous composer's travels in America; a special family series presentation of the **Magical Music of Walt Disney**, featuring songs from classic cartoons and movies; and a KCS exclusive performance with Kansas City phenomenon **Jim Cosgrove** (aka "Mr. Stinky Feet") in a program with full orchestra.

The holidays would not be complete without **Handel's Messiah**, now with three performances to choose from, featuring the Symphony Chorus and the Independence Messiah Choir; and the return of **Christmas Festival**, Kansas City's grandest holiday concert of classic Christmas carols and songs of the season.

ALL KCS SERIES NOW AT THE KAUFFMAN CENTER

In a demonstration of the Symphony's commitment to the success of the new Kauffman Center for the Performing Arts, all KCS series performances will be presented there starting in the 2011-12 season.

Kansas City Symphony Board of Directors President, Shirley Bush Helzberg, said, "The Kauffman Center for the Performing Arts will transform what it means to experience the Kansas City Symphony in concert. Helzberg Hall, the new home of the Symphony, will offer brilliant acoustics and a level of comfort and amenities for the audience that we have only dreamed about. The innovative design features perfect sound and views of the performers no matter where you sit. For these reasons and more, the Kansas City Symphony board and administration have decided to present all Symphony performances at the Kauffman Center starting with the 2011-2012 season. While downtown Kansas City has been the Symphony's home base for decades, our performances at Yardley Hall and Church of the Resurrection in recent years produced memorable performances and cultivated a dedicated audience. To each of you we offer a most sincere invitation to join us as we open the new Kauffman Center for the

Performing Arts in the fall of 2011. We are confident you will find the experience in the new world-class venue to be unparalleled. We remain grateful for your love of great music and your ongoing support of the Kansas City Symphony. We look forward to greeting everyone in our new home.”

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About the Kansas City Symphony

Founded in 1982, the Kansas City Symphony is the region’s only full-time professional orchestra and is a major force in the cultural life of the community. Under the artistic leadership of Music Director Michael Stern, the Symphony’s eighty full-time musicians perform more than 50 concerts each year, and also serve as the orchestra for the Kansas City Ballet and Lyric Opera of Kansas City. Praised for performances of uncompromising standard, the ensemble often welcomes guest artists of international acclaim as part of their classical and pops subscriptions series.

Complementing its full schedule of concerts, the Symphony strives to enrich the lives of Kansas City residents by providing music education opportunities for children and adults, including “KinderKonzerts,” “Young People’s Concerts,” and an Instrument Petting Zoo. Highlights each season include a range of free master classes, events, and concerts reaching over 100,000 community members—including the annual “Celebration at the Station” concert each Memorial Day weekend and “Symphony in the Flint Hills” each summer. The Symphony has released two recordings on the Reference Recording label— *Shakespeare’s Tempest*, and the Grammy®-nominated *Britten’s Orchestra*—as well as recordings on the Naxos label, and can be heard locally each week on KCUR 89.3 FM, Kansas City’s NPR affiliate.

More information on the Kansas City Symphony is available at www.kcsymphony.org

About Helzberg Hall

Helzberg Hall, named in recognition of a \$10-million gift from Shirley B. and Barnett C. Helzberg, will host local, national, and international music performances of all genres and be the performance home of the Kansas City Symphony. Working closely with theater designer Richard Pilbrow and acoustician Yasu Toyota, architect Moshe Safdie designed the 1,600-seat venue to be oval in shape, with a vineyard-style seating configuration. The stage extends approximately one-third of the distance into the Hall, thus placing 40 percent of the seats alongside or behind the orchestra. This creates an intimate and immersive experience for both artists and

audiences and allows a portion of the audience to experience the musician's perspective during performance. The distance from the stage to Helzberg Hall's farthest seat is just over 100 feet.

The Hall will feature mechanical risers that allow the layout of the stage to be altered quickly and easily, greatly expanded backstage facilities, and acoustics which can be readily customized for solo concerts, chamber music, and full orchestra. Helzberg Hall will also enable the Kansas City Symphony to rehearse and perform in the same space, something it has been unable to do at its current home, the Lyric Theatre. The visual centerpiece of Helzberg Hall will be a Casavant Frères pipe organ, which will be one of the finest concert hall organs in the country. Quebec-based firm Casavant Frères has custom-designed the mechanical organ in the French romantic tradition, with 79 stops, 102 ranks, and 5,548 pipes.

About the Kauffman Center for the Performing Arts

The Kauffman Center for the Performing Arts, a new multi-venue center for music, opera, theater, and dance designed by Moshe Safdie will open in Kansas City in September 2011. The Kauffman Center seeks to enrich the lives of all Greater Kansas City residents by presenting vibrant performances, educational programming, and creating a tradition of the performing arts as a catalyst for Kansas City's civic, economic, and educational vitality. Three of the region's leading performing arts organizations—Kansas City Ballet, Kansas City Symphony, and Lyric Opera of Kansas City—will be in residence at the Kauffman Center. The Kauffman Center's two performance venues, the 1,600-seat Helzberg Hall and the 1,800-seat Muriel Kauffman Theatre, will offer audiences engaging and intimate experiences, while at the same time providing resident companies with dramatically enhanced performance capabilities. Serving as a cultural cornerstone for Kansas City's dynamic downtown, the Kauffman Center will bring a new spotlight to the region's performing arts community while simultaneously attracting some of the world's most talented performers and entertainers, further establishing Kansas City as a major cultural destination.

More information on the Kauffman Center for the Performing Arts is available at www.kauffmancenter.org