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Kansas City Symphony Announces 2013-14 Season

*Legendary soloists Leon Fleisher, Joshua Bell and André Watts
join Music Director Michael Stern and the Symphony*

(Kansas City, MO) – The Kansas City Symphony announced today their 2013-14 Classical season in the Kauffman Center for the Performing Arts. An impressive collection of distinguished guest artists will join the Symphony and Music Director Michael Stern, performing innovative and diverse repertoire designed to showcase the Symphony as well as the acoustics and state-of-the-art technical capabilities of their performance home, Helzberg Hall.

Music Director Michael Stern said, “We have put together a season replete with great guest artists and extraordinary music, and I trust you will be as excited as I am. Extraordinary violinists like Stefan Jackiw and Joshua Bell return to our series, and I am delighted to collaborate with our brilliant concertmaster Noah Geller, who will make his Classical Series solo debut in Beethoven's Violin concerto. Similarly, beloved pianist André Watts will be back, along with returning guests Alon Goldstein, Bezhod Abduraimov, and the incomparable Yuja Wang -- but I am also thrilled that Andrew Tyson, a prodigiously gifted young pianist fresh from his success at various international competitions, will make his debut with us. An emotional and musical high point of the season will come with the return of the legendary pianist Leon Fleisher, who at 85 years young will participate not only in our weekend concerts but also in various other events during his week with us. It will be a fascinating and memorable visit with one of this country's greatest musicians, and I am proud to have him in our season.”

Another highlight of the season is the return of virtuoso percussionist Martin Grubinger, who had a triumphant debut on the Symphony's season several years ago. Returning guest conductors Bernard Labadie, Jun Markl, and Carlos Miguel Prieto will be joined by the distinguished conductor Gilbert Varga, making his KCS debut.

The Symphony's classical season will include great works of Beethoven, Mozart, Mendelssohn, Dvorak, and Berlioz, plus music by Bartok, Prokofiev, Shostakovich, Rimsky-Korsakov, Rachmaninoff, and Mahler. American composers will be represented in music by Leonard Bernstein, Charles Ives, Steven Stucky, John Corigliano, and the world premiere of a new work commissioned by the KCS by the gifted young American composer Chris Rogerson. The Kansas City Symphony Chorus, under the direction of Charles Bruffy, will join the Symphony for the Requiems of Gabriel Faure and Giuseppe Verdi.

The 2013-14 season ticket renewal process will begin immediately. Current Symphony subscribers will receive renewal packets in the mail shortly, or may also renew online. New subscribers may purchase subscriptions beginning in late April. For more information, call 816.471.0400, Monday through Friday, 10am to 5pm, or visit www.kcsymphony.org

2013-14 CLASSICAL SERIES

The Symphony's classical series will feature fourteen programs, each presented in three performances at Helzberg Hall, beginning October 4-6, 2013.

Distinguished Soloists and Guest Conductors

The 2013-14 classical season will feature a stunning collection of guest artists and conductors who are sure to delight audiences, including **pianist Leon Fleisher playing Ravel's Piano Concerto; Joshua Bell returning to perform Lalo's *Symphonie espagnole*; and Beethoven's Piano Concerto No. 4 by beloved pianist André Watts.**

Other audience favorites will include conductors **Bernard Labadie and Carlos Miguel Prieto**; plus much loved programs such as ***Symphonie Fantastique*; Mahler's Ninth; and Rachmaninoff's *Symphonic Dances*.**

World Premiere

Michael Stern, entering his ninth season as Music Director, will introduce the world premiere of **composer Chris Rogerson's new work, commissioned by the KCS**. Only 23, Chris is already making a name for himself. He has received commissions and performances from ensembles such as the Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra, the Grand Rapids Symphony, the New World Symphony, the Cabrillo Festival Orchestra, the Curtis Symphony Orchestra, the Aspen Concert Orchestra, the New York Youth Symphony, and the JACK Quartet. His music has been performed in venues such as Carnegie Hall, the Library of Congress, the Kennedy Center, Lincoln Center, and Merkin Hall. Chris started playing the piano at age two and cello at eight. He studied at the Curtis Institute of Music and Yale University, where his primary teachers were Jennifer Higdon, Aaron Kernis, and Martin Bresnick. He has also studied composition with Robert Beaser, Richard Danielpour, and Christopher Rouse. He will be a Ph.D. candidate at Princeton University.

KCS Debuts

We celebrate the Kansas City introduction of **guitarist Jiyeon Kim**, whose appearance is supported 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).

Also making their KCS subscription debuts are **concertmaster Noah Geller, and pianist Andrew Tyson**.

"We are very excited about our third season in Helzberg Hall," said Symphony Executive Director Frank Byrne. "The season has something for everyone, and a collection of great works both old and new that will showcase the full capabilities of our orchestra and our magnificent concert hall. The 2013-2014 season was planned with great care, and will build on the great success that we have had to date. I am confident that we will reach even greater heights in the coming season, and we look forward to sharing this great music with our community."

POPS, FAMILY AND HOLIDAY CONCERTS

The Symphony's four concert **Pops Series** gives audiences the option of attending on Friday or Saturday evenings. This popular series boasts a range of musical styles from **saxophonist Kenny G; Sheena Easton** reliving the songs of the 1980's; crooner **Tony DeSare** performing a romantic valentine's weekend program; to the **Billboard hits of the 1960's**.

The Kansas City Symphony's Family Series introduces children the world's greatest music through light-hearted, shorter programs including **Dr. Seuss' Green Eggs and Ham; Classical Kids' Beethoven Lives Upstairs; and PROJECT Trio**. PROJECT Trio — Greg Pattillo (flute), Eric Stephenson (cello) and Peter Seymour (double bass) — is not your everyday young, classically trained chamber trio. One of the least likely trio combinations of all time, together with your Kansas City Symphony, explore some of your favorite tunes with a contemporary twist. Along with Rossini's classic Overture to *William Tell*, the program includes a beatbox tutorial and original pieces by Project Trio.

The holidays would not be complete without **Handel's Messiah**, 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.

CLASSICS UNCORKED, HAPPY HOUR AND ORGAN CONCERT SERIES

The Kansas City Symphony debuted three new series in Helzberg Hall last season to great success. These new weekday series, continuing in the 2013-14 season, offer more opportunities to enjoy great music in new settings and styles of performance.

Two of the series feature musicians of the Kansas City Symphony in performances at reduced or no cost to audiences. The **"Classics Uncorked"** series has an earlier start time, a shorter program without intermission, a more casual atmosphere, and a free glass of wine or champagne after the concert, along with the chance to socialize with Symphony musicians in the Brandmeyer Grand Lobby. The **"Symphony Happy Hour Chamber Music Series"** is designed as an after-work opportunity to enjoy chamber music by ensembles of KCS musicians. The "Happy Hour" concerts are FREE but reservations are required via the Symphony Box Office. Audience members can purchase drinks at a cash bar before and after the concerts.

The third new series **showcases the magnificent Julia Irene Kauffman Casavant Organ** that adorns the area behind the stage in Helzberg Hall. The Kansas City Symphony will present four master organists in concerts hosted by Michael Barone, host of American Public Media's "Pipedreams" which is broadcast around the nation and online.

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 masterclasses, events,

and concerts reaching over 100,000 community members—including the annual “Bank of America 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®-winning *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 is 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 – allows the audience to sit close to the performers and to feel as though they are among the orchestra.

Helzberg Hall, named in recognition of a \$10-million gift from Shirley B. and Barnett C. Helzberg, hosts local, national, and international music performances of all genres and is 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 features 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. The visual centerpiece of Helzberg Hall is a Casavant Frères pipe organ, 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 multi-venue center for music, opera, theater, and dance designed by Moshe Safdie, opened 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—are 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, 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 brings 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