



Kansas City Symphony to Read 3 UMKC Student Compositions

KANSAS CITY, Mo. | March 3, 2014 — Like an Oscar-winning director reviewing a budding screenwriter’s script or a James Beard award-winning chef giving notes to a promising culinary student, the professional musicians of the critically acclaimed Kansas City Symphony have selected to play through the works of three deserving doctoral composition students from the University of Kansas City-Missouri Conservatory of Music and Dance.

The composition readings will occur 10 a.m., Monday, March 17 in Helzberg Hall at the Kauffman Center for the Performing Arts. While the event is free and open to the public, [reservations](#) are required. Parking in the Arts District garage for this event is \$7.

These selected composition students have the invaluable opportunity to hear their works performed live by a professional orchestra in the acoustically superb setting of Helzberg Hall. The students also will receive feedback from Associate Conductor Aram Demirjian. This is not only a wonderful opportunity for the students but also a chance for the Symphony to read through new music.

Music Director Michael Stern says he is thrilled about the continued partnership between the Symphony and the UMKC Conservatory of Music and Dance. While the Symphony and Conservatory have coordinated efforts on various programs in the past, the two organizations formalized their partnership in fall of 2010 when Stern conducted the first Conservatory Orchestra concert that fall. The first composition reading session took place in spring 2011 at the White Recital Hall on the UMKC campus. Organizers moved the composition readings to Helzberg Hall in spring 2012 during the Symphony’s first season in the Kauffman Center.

“This possibility of allowing young composers the chance to hear their music professionally rehearsed, played, and critiqued is a unique and extraordinarily gratifying concept,” Stern says. “I think for these young and talented composers to work with this caliber of musicians, from Aram Demirjian to all the players, is a great opportunity. It also highlights our core values and many of the goals towards which we are continually striving to achieve and improve. I am proud of our mission at the Symphony, for many reasons. More than just playing concerts, we want to be the engine of music in our city and the entire region, in order to contribute to the musical and artistic life of the entire community, in all sorts of ways, with all different kinds of repertoire, and for as many constituencies as possible.”

Stern notes that the Symphony has an ongoing commitment to nurturing and championing music for “our time.”

“We want to elevate the artistic life of the city,” he says. “We believe in young people and the talent they can develop to make great things happen. And above all, we believe in the power of music and the arts to make our world better. This project reflects all of those aspects, and we are all thrilled to make it an ongoing success.”

Associate Conductor Aram Demirjian will conduct the Symphony in the following student works:

Brian Lynn, *Resident 1*

Joseph Kern, *Stählammerung*

Phil DeWalt, *Ignatius Wishes He Could Dance*

To learn more about the Symphony's commitment to furthering music opportunities for students, visit the education page on the Symphony's website, www.kcsymphony.org. To learn more about the UMKC Conservatory of Music and Dance, visit www.conservatory.umkc.edu.

About the Kansas City Symphony

Founded in 1982, the Kansas City Symphony has established itself as a major force in the cultural life of the community. Praised for performances of uncompromising standard, the orchestra is the largest in the region and enjoys a national reputation under the artistic leadership of Music Director Michael Stern. The Kansas City Symphony performs more than 50 concerts each year, while also serving as the orchestra for the Kansas City Ballet and Lyric Opera of Kansas City, and often welcomes guests of international acclaim as part of its Classical and Pops subscription 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 more than 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" every summer. The Symphony has released three recordings on the Reference Recording label — Shakespeare's *Tempest*, the Grammy[®]-winning Britten's *Orchestra*, a recent Elgar/Vaughan Williams project plus an additional 20th century project highlighting composers Paul Hindemith, Sergei Prokofiev and Béla Bartók to be released in 2014 as well as a Saint-Saëns album for later release. The Symphony and Michael Stern also have recorded for the Naxos label. KCS performances 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.