



KANSAS CITY SYMPHONY

Classical Series

Sunday, June 6, 2021 at 5:00 p.m.
Helzberg Hall, Kauffman Center for the Performing Arts
Michael Stern, *Music Director and conductor*
Jason Seber, *David T. Beals III Associate Conductor*

IGOR STRAVINSKY

Octet

- I. Sinfonia – Allegro
- II. Tema con variazioni
- III. Finale

[Jason Seber](#), conductor, *David T. Beals III Chair*

[Kayla Burggraf](#), flute

[Raymond Santos](#), clarinet, *Bill and Peggy Lyons Chair*

[Ann Bilderback](#), bassoon, *Barton P. and Mary D. Cohen Chair*

[Maxwell Pipinich](#), bassoon

[Julian Kaplan](#), trumpet, *James B. and Annabel Nutter Chair*

[Steven Franklin](#), trumpet

[Porter Wyatt Henderson](#), trombone

[Adam Rainey](#), bass trombone

CLAUDE ARRIEU (LOUISE MARIE SIMON)

Wind Quintet in C

- I. Allegro
- II. Andante
- III. Allegro scherzando
- IV. Adagio
- V. Allegro vivace

[Kayla Burggraf](#), flute

[Alison Chung](#), oboe

[Raymond Santos](#), clarinet, *Bill and Peggy Lyons Chair*

[Ann Bilderback](#), bassoon, *Barton P. and Mary D. Cohen Chair*

[David Sullivan](#), horn

ANTONÍN DVOŘÁK

Serenade in D Minor, op. 44

- I. Moderato quasi marcia
- II. Menuetto – Trio: Presto
- III. Andante con moto
- IV. Finale: Allegro molto

[Michael Stern](#), conductor

[Kristina Fulton](#), oboe, *Shirley Bush Helzberg Chair*

[Alison Chung](#), oboe

[Raymond Santos](#), clarinet, *Bill and Peggy Lyons Chair*

[John Klinghammer](#), clarinet

[Ann Bilderback](#), bassoon, *Barton P. and Mary D. Cohen Chair*

[Maxwell Pipinich](#), bassoon

[Thomas DeWitt](#), contrabassoon

[David Sullivan](#), horn

[Stephen Multer](#), horn

[David Gamble](#), horn

[Susie Yang](#), cello, *Richard Hill Chair*

[Jeffrey Kail](#), double bass

The 2020/21 Season is generously sponsored by

SHIRLEY AND BARNETT C. HELZBERG, JR.

Additional support provided by



The Classical Series is sponsored by

M U R I E L M c B R I E N
KAUFFMAN FOUNDATION

R. CROSBY KEMPER JR. FUND

Orchestra Roster

MICHAEL STERN, *Music Director*

JASON SEBER, *David T. Beals III Associate Conductor*

FIRST VIOLINS

Sunho Kim, *Acting Concertmaster*

Miller Nichols Chair

Stirling Trent,

Acting Associate Concertmaster

Chiafei Lin,

Acting Assistant Concertmaster

Gregory Sandomirsky ‡,

Associate Concertmaster Emeritus

Anne-Marie Brown

Betty Chen

Anthony DeMarco

Susan Goldenberg*

Tomoko Iguchi

Dorris Dai Janssen

Vladimir Rykov

Alex Shum*

SECOND VIOLINS

Tamamo Someya Gibbs, *Principal*

Kristin Velicer, *Acting Associate Principal*

Minhye Helena Choi,

Acting Assistant Principal

Nancy Beckmann

Mary Garcia Grant

Kevin Hao ‡

Kazato Inouye

Rena Ishii

Stephanie Larsen

Francesca Manheim

VIOLAS

Matthew Sinno, *Acting Principal*

Jessica Nance, *Acting Associate Principal*

Duke Lee, *Acting Assistant Principal*

Kent Brauningner

Sean Brumble

Marvin Gruenbaum

Jenifer Houck

Jesse Yukimura

CELLOS

Mark Gibbs, *Principal*

Robert A. Kipp Chair

Susie Yang, *Associate Principal*

Richard Hill Chair

Alexander East, *Assistant Principal*

Maria Crosby

John Eadie

Lawrence Figg

Rung Lee*

Meredith McCook

Allen Probus

DOUBLE BASSES

Jeffrey Kail, *Principal*

Evan Halloin, *Associate Principal*

Brandon Mason ‡

Caleb Quillen

Richard Ryan

Nash Tomey

FLUTES

Michael Gordon, *Principal*

Marylou and John Dodds Turner Chair

Shannon Finney, *Associate Principal*

Kayla Burggraf

PICCOLO

Kayla Burggraf

OBOES

Kristina Fulton, *Principal*

Shirley Bush Helzberg Chair

Alison Chung, *Associate Principal*

CLARINETS

Raymond Santos, *Principal*

Bill and Peggy Lyons Chair

Silvio Guitian, *Associate Principal*

John Klinghammer

E-FLAT CLARINET

Silvio Guitian

BASS CLARINET

John Klinghammer

BASSOONS

Ann Bilderback, *Principal*

Barton P. and Mary D. Cohen Chair

Thomas DeWitt, *Associate Principal*

Maxwell Pipinich

CONTRABASSOON

Thomas DeWitt

HORNS

Alberto Suarez, *Principal*

Landon and Sarah Rowland Chair

David Sullivan, *Associate Principal*

Elizabeth Gray

David Gamble

Stephen Multer,

Associate Principal Emeritus

TRUMPETS

Julian Kaplan, *Principal*

James B. and Annabel Nutter Chair

Steven Franklin, *Associate Principal*

Brian Rood ‡

TROMBONES

Roger Oyster, *Principal*

Porter Wyatt Henderson,

Associate Principal

Adam Rainey

BASS TROMBONE

Adam Rainey

TUBA

Joe LeFevre, *Principal*

Frank Byrne Chair

TIMPANI

Timothy Jepson, *Principal*

Michael and Susan Newburger Chair

PERCUSSION

Josh Jones^, *Principal*

David Yoon, *Associate Principal*

HARP

Katherine Siochi, *Principal*

LIBRARIANS

Elena Lence Talley, *Principal*

Fabrice Curtis

* Non-Rotating Musician

^ New Member

‡ On Leave of Absence

IGOR STRAVINSKY
Octet (1952 revision)
15 minutes

Igor Stravinsky's Octet, or Octuor in French, is a masterful work by a brilliant composer. It was written in a style that completely mystified audiences at the time and later earned the appellation "neoclassicism." Its nature was deeply influenced by the era's milieu and some very practical considerations. In the near century since its premiere, the Octet has inspired many composers, generated dozens of recordings, and served as the subject for doctoral dissertations and scholarly articles. The tale of how it came to be is somewhat convoluted. Through it all, the music remains fascinating and compelling on many different levels.

The wild success of Stravinsky's music for Sergei Diaghilev's Ballets Russes — *The Firebird*, *Pétrouchka*, and *The Rite of Spring* — was truncated by the outbreak of World War I. With large-scale performances limited by wartime considerations, Stravinsky's royalty income was decimated. The Russian Revolution of 1917 ended any hope of reliance on family assets located there so his financial circumstance was strained at best. Added to that was the post-war societal reaction against German music and the romanticism that it seemingly typified. In response to this



situation, Stravinsky took the path of composing a small theatrical work that might tour and generate some income, but *L'histoire du soldat* (The Soldier's Tale) was slow to achieve acceptance, none the least by virtue of the influenza epidemic that raged worldwide immediately after its premiere. Touring was out of the question. It was in this complex zeitgeist that Diaghilev asked Stravinsky to orchestrate some 18th-century music thought to be composed by Giovanni Pergolesi. The result was a ballet called *Pulcinella*, a work that Stravinsky called his "discovery of the past, the epiphany through which the whole of my late work became possible."

With this emphasis on small-scale ensembles and newfound appreciation for the formal musical language of past eras, Stravinsky was primed for the next stylistic approach in his oeuvre: neoclassicism. Broadly defined as a return to the precepts of classicism — order, balance, clarity and restraint — neoclassicism may have been an organizing principle in Stravinsky's music but everything was filtered through the lens of his unique mind, and the end result was jarring despite the superficially familiar trappings of traditional approaches. The Octet makes use of well-known Classical forms — sonata, theme and variations and rondo — but they offer slim connection to the past as Stravinsky employs somewhat irreverent approaches to harmony, rhythm and structure.

Stravinsky was living in Biarritz, France in late 1922 and offered this charming story about the Octet's origin and its unusual scoring:

The Octuor began with a dream in which I saw myself in a small room surrounded by a small group of instrumentalists playing some very attractive music. I did not recognize the music, though I strained to hear it, and I could not recall any feature of it the next day, but I do remember my curiosity — in the dream — to know how many the musicians were. I remember too that after I had counted them to the number eight, I looked again and saw that they were playing bassoons, trombones, trumpets, a flute and a clarinet. I awoke from this little concert in a state of great delight and anticipation and the next morning began to compose the Octuor, which I had had no thought of the day before, though for some time I had wanted to write an ensemble piece — not incidental music like *L'histoire du soldat*, but an instrumental sonata.

He finished the work in Paris in May 1923 and conducted the premiere on October 18, 1923 at the Paris Opera house, noting that he was "extremely nervous about doing it." Composer Aaron Copland, then 22 years old, was present and summed up the audience's stunned silence at hearing such an uncharacteristic piece from Stravinsky:

Everyone was asking why Stravinsky should have exchanged his Russian heritage, and a neoprimitive style all his own, for what looked very much like a mess of 18th-century mannerisms. The whole thing gained Stravinsky the unanimous disapproval of the press.

Ever astute when it came to marketing, Stravinsky then published an article in a London arts magazine in January 1924 entitled "Some Ideas About My Octuor." The stern tone of the article belies the lithe and ironic music that it purports to define:

The reasons why I composed this kind of music for an octuor of [winds] are the following: First, because this ensemble forms a complete sonorous scale and

consequently furnishes me with a sufficiently rich register; second, because the difference of the volume of these instruments renders more evident the musical architecture. And this is the most important question in all my recent compositions. I have excluded from this work all sorts of nuances, which I have replaced by the play of these volumes. I have excluded all nuances between the forte and the piano; I have left only the forte and the piano. Therefore the forte and the piano are in my work only the dynamic limit which determines the function of the volumes to play.

...

This sort of music has no other aim than to be sufficient in itself. In general, I consider that music is only able to solve musical problems; and nothing else, neither the literary nor the picturesque, can be in music of any real interest. The play of the musical elements is the thing. ...

My Octuor is not an “emotive” work but a musical composition based on objective elements which are sufficient in themselves.

Practical considerations were again at the heart of Stravinsky’s revisions to many of his early works. The United States did not join the Berne Convention governing copyright until 1989 so most of Stravinsky’s music was not subject to those protections — and royalty provisions — when he became a U.S. citizen in 1945. He undertook relatively minor revisions to many early works in order to regain copyright protection under U.S. law at the time. The changes to the Octet were minimal, hardly obscuring its original clarity and insouciance.

While the Octet may not have secured great financial reward for its composer as intended, it has justly earned its place as a seminal work of the 20th century. *ETW*

IGOR STRAVINSKY (1882-1971)

One of the twentieth century’s most conspicuous and original composers, Igor Stravinsky helped provide the impetus for tectonic shifts in classical music. His compositions reflect the adept reinvention of himself to contend with changes in life circumstances across a lengthy career.

Stravinsky’s father was a bass with the Russian Imperial Opera in St. Petersburg and his mother was an excellent pianist. They often entertained artists and Igor grew up in a refined atmosphere. He began piano lessons at age 9 and regularly attended performances at the Mariinsky Theatre where his father performed. Despite this emphasis on music, his parents insisted Igor study law.



Among Stravinsky’s law school classmates was the son of renowned composer Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov. Accepting the invitation for a family visit, Stravinsky met and began studying with Rimsky-Korsakov. Becoming financially independent after the death of his father in 1902

allowed Stravinsky to concentrate on music rather than law. In 1906, he married his cousin, Catherine Nossenko, and they had four children.

Stravinsky's music came to the attention of Sergei Diaghilev, impresario of the Ballets Russes. Diaghilev asked Stravinsky to orchestrate music by Chopin and, impressed by the result, commissioned a ballet inspired by a Russian folktale. Premiering at the Paris Opera in 1910, *The Firebird* was a triumph for the 28-year-old composer and he was enthusiastically welcomed into Parisian artistic circles. This accomplishment was followed immediately by the highly successful 1911 premiere of his second ballet score, *Pétrouchka*.

The premiere of Stravinsky's third ballet, *The Rite of Spring*, on May 29, 1913 has become the stuff of legend. Unconventional music paired with raw choreography by Vaslav Nijinsky evoked a visceral response from the Paris audience. The extent of the outcry may be a matter of debate but it is incontrovertible that Stravinsky's score is one of the most important compositions of the 20th century.

The outbreak of World War I forced Stravinsky and his family into exile in Switzerland. Losing his property as a result of the Russian Revolution forced Stravinsky to begin building a new life. Other than a brief visit in 1962, he would never return to Russia.

With limited resources now available, Stravinsky began writing for smaller ensembles. Among the works were *L'histoire du soldat* and *Pulcinella*, the latter his adaptation of 18th-century music that embraced the growing neoclassical movement. Moving from Switzerland in 1920, Stravinsky settled in France, becoming a French citizen in 1934. He also began touring as a conductor and piano soloist.

Stravinsky lost his eldest daughter, his wife, and his mother during a particularly difficult time in 1938-39. The outbreak of World War II prompted Stravinsky and his second wife, Vera de Bosset, to move to the United States, settling in Los Angeles with other composer emigres such as Arnold Schoenberg, Erich Korngold, Miklós Rózsa and Max Steiner. He became an American citizen in 1945.

Exploring a wide range of new projects, Stravinsky wrote a neoclassical opera, *The Rake's Progress*, and then began using serial composition techniques in the 1950s. He also embarked on an effort to record the vast majority of his oeuvre. In declining health, he moved to New York in 1969, where he died in 1971. **ETW**



CLAUDE ARRIEU (LOUISE MARIE SIMON)

Wind Quintet in C (1955)

11 minutes

Claude Arrieu's Wind Quintet in C Major, composed in 1955, is a thoroughly engaging glance back at a musical school of thought that embraced tonality and melody — unconventional at the time and frowned on in academic circles, but winsome and quite charming. Each of the five brief movements quickly establishes a mood that offers pleasant contrasts and an overall feeling of amiability. The opening Allegro is filled with an undercurrent of propulsive notes that keeps this genial movement streaming forward, its jaunty air sure to bring a smile to your face. The second movement emanates a relative sense of calm as the winds amble along, the relaxed melody washing away the day's stress. The sprightly and carefree atmosphere returns fleetingly in the third movement before a slightly melancholy reverie holds sway in the next movement, soon resolving in a sunny major chord. In the final movement, an energetic flurry of notes dance about with more than a dash of comic flair before the work comes to a flirtatious conclusion.

Pierre Schaeffler, a radio broadcasting colleague of Arrieu's, noted, "...she delivered emotion through an impeccable technique and a spiritual vigilance, finding the path to the heart."



Arrieu once commented that the keys of C and G major "are like the sun. My music is easy to listen to, but difficult to play. Once a composer has finished a work, it belongs to the performers." It is delightful indeed, to bask in Arrieu's musical sunshine through the virtuosity of Kansas City Symphony musicians. *ETW*

CLAUDE ARRIEU (LOUISE MARIE SIMON)

1903-1990

Louise Marie Simon (sometimes Anne Marie) was born in Paris, France, to Paul and Cécile Simon in 1903. Her mother was a pianist and composer, and doubtless served as a role model for her daughter's musical ambitions. With hope for a career as a virtuoso pianist, Simon entered the Paris Conservatoire, studying piano with Marguerite Long but also taking composition classes with Jean Roger-Ducasse and Paul Dukas. She progressed rapidly and received the Conservatoire's first prize for composition in 1932. Although she had a particular interest in the music of J.S. Bach and W.A. Mozart, her compatriots Gabriel Fauré, Claude Debussy and Maurice Ravel provided much inspiration. Igor Stravinsky also was a major influence along with a group of French composers dubbed *Les Six*: Francis Poulenc, Arthur Honegger, Darius Milhaud, Louis Durey, Georges Auric, and Germaine Tailleferre.

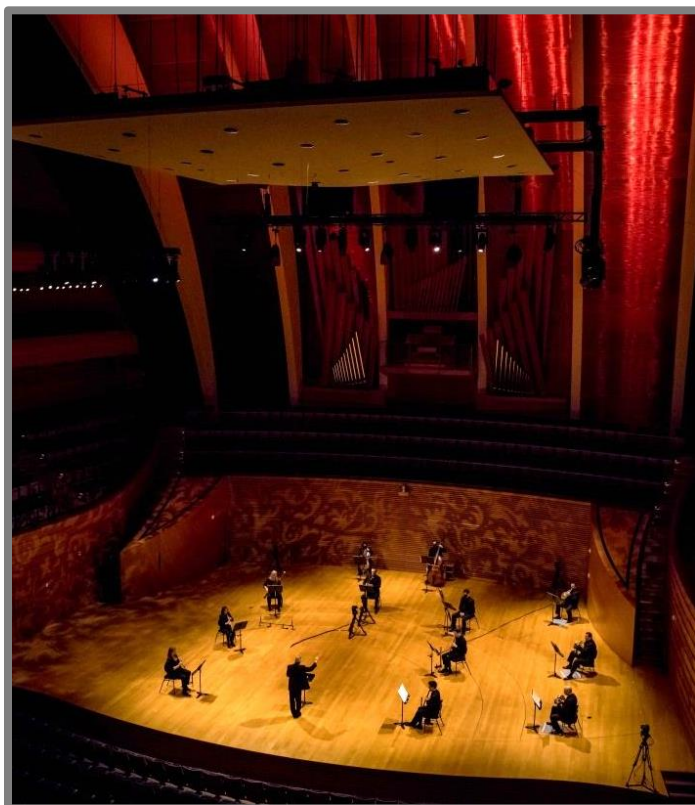
Employing a common response to the pervasive sexism that has hobbled women's careers across time, Louise Marie Simon adopted a pseudonym: Claude Arrieu. Although she did not hide her use of this pen name, it smoothed the path for publication of her music and facilitated professional advancement. Simon also joined the French Radio Broadcasting Program Service where she worked as a producer as well as in the sound effects department, which stimulated her interest in electronic music.

Drawing on this wide range of experiences, Simon composed prolifically, including at least 30 film scores, 40 radio scores, incidental music for stage, chamber music, concertos, operas, symphonic works and numerous vocal pieces. Writing in a lyrical and richly melodic style not favored in academic circles, she won plaudits for her emotive music spiced with sudden harmonic shifts and playful good humor. Simon died in 1990 but a substantial portion of her catalog remains in print today. *ETW*



ANTONÍN DVOŘÁK
Serenade in D Minor, op. 44 (1878)
23 minutes

One never knows when inspiration will strike, but in Antonín Dvořák's case it seems to have been a relatively frequent occurrence. In 1878, he was finally enjoying a degree of success and confidence engendered by receiving the Austrian State Prize for Composition three times along with warm encouragement from composer Johannes Brahms and influential critic Eduard Hanslick. In January, Dvořák attended a concert by the Vienna Philharmonic, which included a performance of Mozart's Serenade in B-flat Major for wind instruments. He was thoroughly enchanted and immediately set about composing his own wind serenade. The piece was completed two weeks later on January 18, 1878. (This was an especially prolific time in Dvořák's life; his first set of Slavonic Dances — the works that propelled him to international recognition



— were composed in March and April of the same year.) The premiere took place in Prague on November 11, 1878, with Dvořák conducting members of the Provisional Theatre orchestra.

Employing a very similar instrumentation to Mozart's Serenade, Dvořák omits basset horns but adds a cello and contrabassoon to reinforce the double bass, amplifying the lower register and providing a superb foundation for the sound of the ensemble. While the inspiration may have come from Mozart, this work is unquestionably the result of Dvořák's gift for melody.

The introductory march is by turns noble and sweetly rustic, exploiting the ensemble's full range of colors and textures. A minuet follows, certainly in homage to Mozart, but Dvořák's Czech spirit shines through the particularly vibrant trio section. The gentle ebb and flow of the third movement allows lyrical solo lines to emerge from the rich blend of sound. The vivacious finale will add a bounce to your step with its nimble woodwinds and regal horns traversing Dvořák's unabashed melodies. A restatement of the opening march theme brings the piece full circle before its rousing final chords. *ETW*

ANTONÍN DVOŘÁK (1841-1904)

Antonín Dvořák was born in Nelahozeves, Bohemia, then in the Austrian Empire, now in the Czech Republic. Dvořák's parents operated a tavern and his father also ran a butcher shop; neither business was especially profitable so Dvořák's upbringing was underprivileged. His father loved music and played the zither so young Antonín was exposed to a variety of music in the village, just a short distance from Prague. His early education took place in a one-room school with a limited curriculum but the teacher gave Dvořák violin and singing lessons. His musical talent was apparent and at age 12 he moved in with his aunt and uncle to pursue more formal studies, learning organ and piano. He dropped out of school though, eventually spending a year living with a German family in Česká Kamenice to learn German, which was essential to advance in the Austrian Empire.



Finally, at age 16, Dvořák moved to Prague and began studying at the Institute for Church Music. Following graduation in 1859, he applied for a position as church organist but did not get the job. In order to earn a living, he began playing viola in coffee houses and restaurants, eventually becoming principal violist of the new Provisional Czech Theatre. He served in that position for nine years, performing many works by his compatriot, Bedřich Smetana, as well as the standard repertoire of the era.

Dvořák's early years in Prague were challenging. Because there was little money, he lived with relatives and taught piano lessons to supplement scanty wages as a violist. Despite his impoverished circumstances, he wrote music prolifically yet was completely unknown as a

composer. Among his piano students were the sisters Josefina and Anna Čermáková. Dvořák fell in love with Josefina but it was not reciprocal. Contending with this lack of affection, he then married Anna, and by all indications, they had a happy marriage.

Dvořák left his position in the theater orchestra in order to have more time for composition. Although he started to receive modest recognition, having new family responsibilities dictated that he take a steady job as church organist. To supplement this small income, he then applied for a grant offered by the Austrian government to support poor but talented artists. He received the first of several such grants in 1875 and came to the notice of influential Viennese music critic Eduard Hanslick and the composer Johannes Brahms. Both promoted his works and Brahms connected Dvořák with his own publisher, Fritz Simrock, who commissioned a set of Slavonic dances that quickly secured Dvořák's international popularity. Over time, Simrock would publish a substantial number of Dvořák's compositions, although the relationship was sometimes rocky.

The ensuing years were marked by growing success and financial security. Dvořák began traveling to conduct his works, with several extended trips to England. Plied with numerous commissions, his range of compositions encompassed symphonies, chamber music, operas, concertos, choral music, songs and keyboard works.

The 19th century witnessed a surge in nationalism, musically as well as politically. Dvořák, while proud of his Czech heritage, did not wade into the fray with his music. Despite entreaties from Brahms and other supporters to move to Vienna, Dvořák stayed in Prague and sought to avoid the public debate over nationalism. One place of calm refuge for Dvořák was the village of Vysoká where Anna's sister Josefina and her husband lived. Dvořák bought a residence there and the family spent most summers in the pastoral setting.

International acclaim for Dvořák's music continued to build. At Tchaikovsky's invitation, Dvořák traveled to Moscow and St. Petersburg in 1890 to conduct some of his orchestral works. He also returned to England for conducting engagements and to receive an honorary doctorate from Cambridge University. Perhaps the academic honor motivated his next step: becoming a teacher at the Prague Conservatory in 1891. Shortly thereafter another teaching offer arrived, a post at the National Conservatory of Music of America in New York City. The proposed annual salary was \$15,000, nearly \$450,000 in today's dollars. Even with such a lucrative salary offer, Dvořák hesitated, finally accepting the contract at Anna's insistence in 1892.

Dvořák's teaching duties in America did not seem to impede his compositional output. Among the works completed during this stretch were his Cello Concerto, the "American" String Quartet, and most famously, the "New World" Symphony, which premiered at Carnegie Hall. His enthusiasm for music from the Black community ignited a racial debate played out in the press and academic journals, but he was unequivocal: "It is my opinion that I find a sure foundation in the negro *[sic]* melodies for a new national school of music."

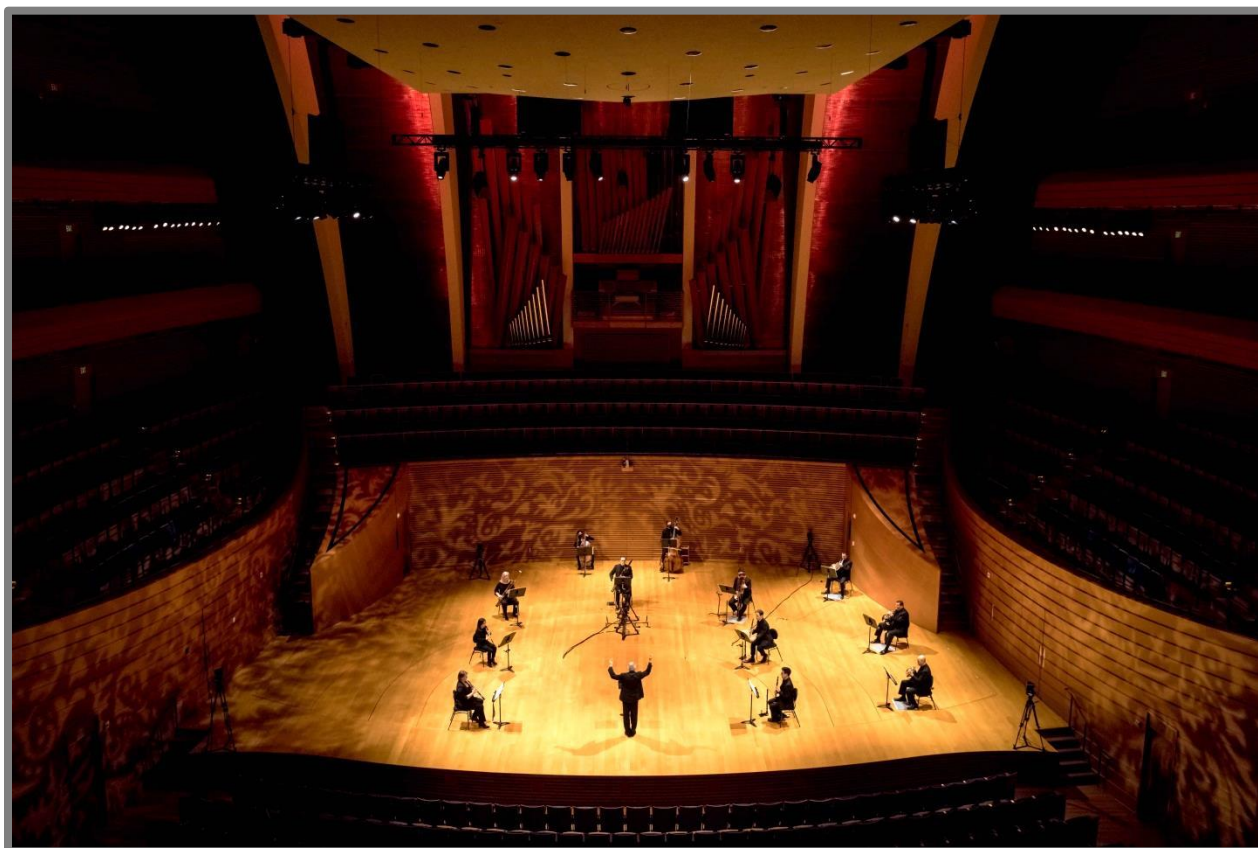
The Dvořák family spent the summer of 1893 in Spillville, Iowa, a village with many Czech immigrants. His travels that year also included visits to Omaha, Minneapolis/St. Paul, Chicago and Niagara Falls. Homesickness eventually set in and the family returned to Prague in 1895 to stay. Dvořák resumed teaching at the Prague Conservatory and composing.

His final years were marked by the bestowal of honors — Emperor Franz Josef appointed him a member of the Austrian House of Lords — and a withdrawal from public life. He stopped conducting and rarely traveled. There was a huge outpouring of sorrow at his death at age 62 in 1904.

Dvořák's compositions are filled with lively dance rhythms and Slavic folk elements that sounded fresh and vibrant to refined audiences in European capitals. Despite his embrace of these stylistic elements, Dvořák almost never used actual folk melodies in his music. Oft described as a Czech composer, he did not seek the label and is perhaps better characterized as cosmopolitan, adopting features from various nations that suited his true gift for melody. *ETW*



Program notes written by AJ Harbison (AJH) and Eric T. Williams (ETW).



MUSIC DIRECTOR

MICHAEL STERN

Music Director Michael Stern is in his 16th season with the Kansas City Symphony, hailed for its remarkable artistic ascent, original programming, organizational development and stability, and the extraordinary growth of its varied audiences since his tenure began. Stern and the orchestra have ushered in a new era and have performed to critical acclaim and sold-out audiences in their performance home, Helzberg Hall at the Kauffman Center for the Performing Arts.

To date, Stern and the Kansas City Symphony have successfully partnered with award-winning audiophile label Reference Recordings to produce nine albums: Shakespeare's *Tempest*, the Grammy® Award-winning *Britten's Orchestra*, an Elgar/Vaughan Williams project, *Miraculous Metamorphoses*, an all-Saint-Saëns CD featuring the magnificent *Organ Symphony*, the music of contemporary American composer Adam Schoenberg (nominated for two Grammy Awards), Holst's *The Planets*, the world premiere recordings of Jonathan Leshnoff's *Symphony No. 3* and *Piano Concerto* and, scheduled for a summer 2021 release, a recording featuring one-movement symphonies by Barber, Scriabin, and Sibelius. A live recording of works by Johannes Brahms is slated for future release.

Stern is also the founding artistic director and principal conductor of IRIS Orchestra in Germantown, Tennessee. This unique group, now in its second decade, has been widely praised for its virtuosity and programming, and has produced a string of recordings and acclaimed commissioned new works by American composers. Other positions include a tenure as the chief conductor of Germany's Saarbrücken Radio Symphony Orchestra (the first American chief conductor in the orchestra's history) and as Permanent Guest Conductor of the Orchestre National de Lyon in France, a position which he held for five years, and a stint as the Principal Guest Conductor of the Orchestre National de Lille, France. He was recently appointed Music Director of the Stamford (CT) Symphony and the National Repertory Orchestra in Breckenridge, Colorado.

Stern has led orchestras throughout Europe and Asia, including the Budapest and Vienna radio symphonies, the Helsinki, Israel, London, Moscow and Royal Stockholm philharmonics, London Symphony, National Symphony of Taiwan, Orchestre de Paris and Tokyo's NHK Symphony, among many others.



In North America, Stern has conducted the Atlanta, Baltimore, Chicago, Cincinnati, Houston, Indianapolis, National (Washington, D.C.), Montreal, Pittsburgh, St. Louis, Seattle and Toronto symphonies, the Cleveland and Philadelphia orchestras, and the New York Philharmonic. He also appears regularly at the Aspen Music Festival and has served on the faculty of the American Academy of Conducting at Aspen.

Stern received his music degree from the Curtis Institute of Music in Philadelphia, where his major teacher was the noted conductor and scholar Max Rudolf. Stern co-edited the third edition of Rudolf's famous textbook, "The Grammar of Conducting," and also edited a new volume of Rudolf's collected writings and correspondence. He is a 1981 graduate of Harvard University, where he earned a degree in American history.

DAVID T. BEALS III
ASSOCIATE CONDUCTOR
JASON SEBER

Jason Seber is celebrating his fifth year with the Kansas City Symphony, beginning as Assistant Conductor in the 2016-17 season and being promoted to Associate Conductor in the 2017-18 season. In this position he has built a strong rapport with the Kansas City community, leading the Symphony in over 70 concerts each season on the Classics Uncorked, Pops, Family, Film + Live Orchestra, Young People's Concerts, KinderKonzerts, and Link Up series, as well as Christmas Festival, Symphony in the Flint Hills and many other programs. In October 2019, he made his debut on the Classical Series, and led another Classical Series program in the spring of 2021. He also serves as a co-host for the Symphony's podcast "Beethoven Walks into a Bar."



Prior to his appointment with the Kansas City Symphony, Seber served as Education and Outreach Conductor of the Louisville Orchestra from 2013 to 2016 and Music Director of the Louisville Youth Orchestra from 2005 to 2016. He has also served as Assistant Conductor of the Cleveland Pops Orchestra and the National Repertory Orchestra. Seber has guest conducted many leading North American orchestras, including the Charleston Symphony, Cleveland Pops, Colorado Symphony, Houston Symphony, Indianapolis Symphony, National Symphony, St. Louis Symphony and Windsor Symphony.



A passionate advocate of music education, Seber recently conducted the 2019 National Repertory Orchestra at concerts in Breckenridge and as part of the Bravo! Vail Music Festival. He returns to lead the NRO in July 2021. He has led the Honors Performance Series Orchestra in performances at Royal Festival Hall in London (2019), Carnegie Hall (2018) and the Sydney Opera House (2017). In November 2019 he led the APAC Honors Festival Orchestra in Seoul, South Korea. He served as the Missouri All-State Orchestra Conductor in 2020 and will be the Pennsylvania All-State Conductor in 2022.

Seber has performed with classical artists Jinjoo Cho, Paul Jacobs, Conrad Tao, and Joyce Yang, and a diverse range of pops artists including Patti Austin, Andrew Bird, Boyz II Men, Melissa Etheridge, Ben Folds, Renee Elise Goldsberry, Lyle Lovett, Brian Stokes Mitchell, My Morning Jacket, Leslie Odom, Jr., Aoife O'Donovan, Pink Martini, Doc Severinsen, Bobby Watson and Wynonna. He earned his master's degree in orchestral conducting from the Cleveland Institute of Music and his bachelor's degrees in violin performance and music education from Baldwin Wallace University.

