



Upcoming 2023/24 Season is Michael Stern's Final Season as Music Director

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KANSAS CITY, Mo. | March 28, 2023 — Experience Michael Stern's unforgettable final season as music director of your Kansas City Symphony. Michael has pulled out all the stops, planning a season filled with powerhouse pieces and exciting new works. He'll be joined by superstars of orchestral music like Yo-Yo Ma, Joshua Bell, Kansas City's own Joyce DiDonato, Yefim Bronfman, Kelley O'Connor, Pamela Frank, Philippe Quint and more. You'll also hear KC Symphony co-commissions and world premieres by Chen Yi, Errollyn Wallen, Joel Thompson and Angel Lam, to name just a few.

In January, the Symphony announced its 2023/24 classical series and has been busy renewing existing season ticket holders, and is now selling season ticket packages to new buyers.

In addition to a special performance with Yo-Yo Ma, next season Michael will be conducting eight Classical Series performances that will include monumental works by Johannes Brahms, Richard Strauss, Gustav Mahler, Ludwig van Beethoven and more.

During Michael's impressive 19-year run as music director he has grown the Symphony to become one of the top 25 orchestras in the country. It's also become a champion of American composers, showcasing commissions, co-commissions and premieres of new works each season.

Reflecting on his time leading the KC Symphony, Michael says, “Making music matter in Kansas City has been a joyous mission for 20 years, and becoming part of the Kansas City Symphony family has been my honor. Making this season happen has been both bittersweet and a joyous labor of love. I intend to make every moment of it count, and I look forward to sharing it all with you, with all my gratitude.”

Danny Beckley, President and CEO of the Kansas City Symphony, adds, “The orchestra has flourished with Michael Stern as music director. At the beginning of Michael's tenure, this was a good regional orchestra. Now, near the end of his tenure, we rank among America's finest major ensembles. This is a testament to the power of his artistic vision and the alignment of forces in support of it. Now, Michael Stern has positioned this orchestra to leap forward in service to Kansas City.”

“For almost two decades, I have begun each new season announcing the programs, eagerly looking forward to the music ahead. This year is no different. And yet — it is,” says Stern. “I have always tried to look ahead, not back, and my highest priority has been to guide the Kansas City Symphony toward greater artistic heights. Yet as I launch into this last year of my tenure as music director, I find myself thinking back on our journey together since my first concert as a guest conductor in 2003. Auditions, meetings, rehearsals, concerts, recordings — there have been so many projects, and so much wonderful music.”

Stern continues, “In the end, what remains most important are not the events, but the deep connections with so many of you throughout our community, the friendships with our dedicated administrative staff and Board of Directors, and above all, the energized partnership with the extraordinary musicians of the KC Symphony. Their professionalism, integrity and profound musicianship have been unwavering. My heart is full of admiration and affection for them and for the sheer exuberance and excellence of their artistry.”

Michael Stern is particularly proud of the extensive catalogue of Gustav Mahler works performed by the Symphony throughout his tenure. “I could think of no better choices than Mahler’s ‘Songs of a Wayfarer’ and his monumental ‘Resurrection’ Symphony to highlight this last season. And above all, I wanted to put the spotlight on our musicians, highlighting their individual and collective virtuosity in masterpieces by Brahms, Bartók, Richard and Johann Strauss, Ginastera, Lutosławski, Ravel, Mendelssohn, Sibelius and so many more.”

Join us next season in celebrating the singular talent that is Maestro Michael Stern. Season tickets for Michael’s final season with the KC Symphony are selling fast, so don’t wait... get yours today!

To view our entire 2023/24 Classical Series of concerts, along with Pops and Family Series concerts plus holiday and special presentations, please visit kcsymphony.org/season.

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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 Symphony performs more than 130 concerts each year, reaching more than 250,000 community members. The Symphony welcomes guests of international acclaim as part of its Classical and Pops series and serves as the orchestra for the Kansas City Ballet and Lyric Opera of Kansas City.

Complementing its full schedule of concerts, the Symphony enriches the lives of Kansas City residents by providing music education opportunities for children and adults, such as KinderKonzerts, Young People’s Concerts, an instrument petting zoo and concert comments. The Mobile Music Box, a popup stage created by the Symphony during the COVID-19 pandemic, reaches thousands of audience members each season with dozens of chamber music concerts throughout the Kansas City metro area.

The Symphony has released nine highly praised CDs to date with Reference Recordings. The latest release features one-movement symphonies by Samuel Barber, Jean Sibelius and Alexander Scriabin. The Symphony and Michael Stern also have recorded for the Naxos label. Kansas City’s new classical music radio station, 91.9 ClassicalKC, broadcasts Kansas City Symphony performances each week. For more information on the Symphony, please visit kcsymphony.org.