



## KC Symphony Announces Guest Conductors for Pops, Film + Live Orchestra, Family and Education Programs

**KANSAS CITY, Mo.** | October 9, 2023 — The Kansas City Symphony is excited to announce and welcome several guest conductors to the podium for its 2023/24 season. Newcomer Caleb Young will lead the orchestra in several programs and previous associate conductors Damon Gupton, Jason Seber and Gonzalo Farias also return to Kansas City.

**Caleb Young** enjoys a busy international conducting schedule and made his debut with the LA Phil at the Hollywood Bowl this past summer. His long-term work in Los Angeles with John Williams, as his assistant conductor, also takes Young to the Berlin and Vienna Philharmonic orchestras. Additional work throughout Europe (Denmark, Ireland, et al) and Canada has kept Caleb Young in demand across the globe. Young was handpicked to join the inaugural class of the highly selective two-year Lead! Artists program, where he received mentorship from legendary Finnish conductor Jukka-Pekka Saraste and other renowned conductors including Esa-Pekka Salonen, Hannu Lintu, and Sakari Oramo. As an alumnus of the LEAD! Foundation Academy's conductors' masterclass, Young was named part of "the next generation of leaders in classical music" by Finland's Fiskars Summer Festival, and was further awarded the honor of conducting the Finnish Chamber Orchestra alongside Saraste and Salonen, a performance which received glowing reviews.

Caleb first conducted the Kansas City Symphony in education programs last spring and his connection with the orchestra was immediately recognizable. This season Caleb will conduct one of Kansas City's favorite holiday traditions, "Christmas Festival," as well as "Heroes and Villains" and "Around the World in 80 Days" on the KC Symphony's family series. Caleb also will lead a special performance with Irish vocalist Cathie Ryan in March and sixteen total education concerts throughout the season.

"There is no better feeling as a conductor than having an immediate connection with an orchestra and I felt that chemistry right away last season in Kansas City," commented Young. "I'm extremely fortunate to be making music with such a generous group of world-class musicians, in one of the finest halls in the world. I couldn't be more excited for this upcoming venture together, on so many different programs, this season."

**Damon Gupton**, the Symphony's associate conductor during the 2006/07 season, made his Helzberg Hall debut with the orchestra at the end of September 2023 in concert with Tower of Power and the Kansas City Symphony. Damon will return to lead two performances of "A Muppet Christmas Carol" in December.

**Jason Seber** joins the Orchestra for "Simply the Best: The Music of Tina Turner" in April. Seber also conducts four film + live orchestra performances of Tim Burton's "The Nightmare Before Christmas," the annual Cabaret Concert and at the signature event of Symphony in the Flint Hills.

**Gonzalo Farias**, recently appointed assistant conductor of the Houston Symphony, returns to Kansas City this October for "Bond and Beyond" and in February for film + live orchestra performances of "The Goonies" and "Legend of the Northern Lights."

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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](http://kcsymphony.org).