

MASTER CHRONOLOGICAL CONCERT LISTING 2017-18 SEASON

POPS 1 | September 1, 2 (8 p.m.) September 3, 2017 (7:30 p.m.)

ELLA AT 100

Steven Reineke, conductor

Montego Glover, vocalist

Capathia Jenkins, vocalist

N'Kenge, vocalist

We're kicking off Steven's Inaugural Season with a program to celebrate one of his all-time favorite artists, Ella Fitzgerald. In honor of her 100th birthday, Steven has lined up three formidable vocal powerhouses. Together, Montego Glover (Tony® nominee), Capathia Jenkins and N'Kenge are delivering music that the world has come to cherish, such as "Dream a Little Dream of Me," "It Don't Mean a Thing (If It Ain't Got That Swing)" and "Summertime."

SPECIAL 2 | September 9, 2017 (7:30 p.m.)

OPENING NIGHT WITH SUSAN GRAHAM

Gustavo Gimeno, conductor

Susan Graham, mezzo-soprano

Hailed as "America's favorite mezzo" (*Gramophone Magazine*), opera star Susan Graham lends her lustrous voice to our 2017-18 Season's Opening Night Concert. Featuring arias from her signature stage roles and favorite showtunes, this delightful program will begin the season with gorgeous melodies and Graham's infectious "joy in her art" (*The Telegraph*).

CLASSICAL 1 | September 14, 16 (8 p.m.) September 17, 2017 (2:30 p.m.)

MAHLER & DVOŘÁK

Andrés Orozco-Estrada, conductor

Mojca Erdmann, soprano

Nicholas Brownlee, baritone

Houston Symphony Chorus

Betsy Cook Weber, director

DVOŘÁK *Te Deum*

MAHLER Symphony No. 4

Andrés Orozco-Estrada, conductor Our Classical Series begins with two visions of "The Heavenly Life." Imbued with the rhythms of Czech folk music, Dvořák's *Te Deum* evokes a rustic spirituality and features an electrifying ending. Mahler's Symphony No. 4 conjures a world of innocence and wonder, especially in its vocal finale. A child's vision of heaven, this song for soprano and orchestra features Mojca Erdmann, who has been praised for the "filigree delicacy" of her voice, which spins "a silver net of glittering jewels" (*Opera News*).

CLASSICAL 2 | September 22, 23 (8 p.m.) September 24, 2017 (2:30 p.m.)

ANDRÉS CONDUCTS SCHUMANN

Andrés Orozco-Estrada, conductor

Leticia Moreno, violin

SCHUMANN Symphony in G minor, *Zwickau*

JIMMY LÓPEZ *Aurora*, Concerto for Violin and Orchestra

Houston Symphony Commission/World Premiere

SCHUMANN Symphony No. 1

Andrés leads the orchestra in two Romantic symphonies by Schumann which frame an exciting World Premiere. Jimmy López, our new Peruvian-born, California-based Composer-in-Residence, unveils his *Aurora*, a concerto he specially composed for violinist Leticia Moreno and the Houston Symphony. Inspired by brilliant polar auroras, this new work is a feast for the eyes and ears.

SPECIAL 3 | September 25, 2017 (7:30 p.m.)
HOUSTON SYMPHONY PRESENTS GARRISON KEILLOR

Garrison Keillor

NPR veteran Garrison Keillor returns to Houston for the first time after stepping down from hosting *A Prairie Home Companion* following an incredible 42-season run. With his trademark storytelling and candid, observational comedy, Keillor captivates audiences using his unique blend of humor, charisma and wisdom for this one-night event. **NOTE:** *The orchestra will not appear on this program.*

CLASSICAL 3 | September 28, 30 (8 p.m.) October 1, 2017 (2:30 p.m.)
RUSSIAN MASTERS

Vassily Sinaisky, conductor

BORODIN Overture to *Prince Igor*

SHOSTAKOVICH Symphony No.1

TCHAIKOVSKY Symphony No. 1, *Winter Daydreams*

Representing the great Russian conducting tradition, Vassily Sinaisky makes his Houston Symphony debut with a thrilling, all-Russian program. Two astonishing first symphonies provide a study in contrasts: Shostakovich's irreverent wit is the perfect foil for Tchaikovsky's dreamy melodies. In the hands of Sinaisky, listeners will be "able not only to hear but almost to touch the music" (*Cleveland Plain Dealer*).

FAMILY 1 | October 7, 2017 (10 & 11:30 a.m.)
HOOK'D: PIRATES IN CONCERT

Robert Franz, conductor

Ahoy matey! 'Tis time to grab your parrot and walk the plank into Jones Hall with your little Jack Sparrow for a morning of heroic music. Let your imagination set sail with our pirate program that includes a medley from *Pirates of the Caribbean* and a selection from *The Flying Dutchman*. We're also inviting you on a magical journey with Peter Pan as we take the "Flight to Neverland" by John Williams.

POPS 2 | October 6, 7 (8 p.m.) October 8, 2017 (7:30 p.m.)
SUPERHERO SOUNDTRACK

Stuart Chafetz, conductor

Whether high-flying, wall-crawling or Batmobile-riding, superheroes always get the coolest capes, the coolest cars—and the coolest theme songs. Get ready to say, "Holy Houston Symphony, Batman!" as we bring you some of the most memorable superhero themes from blockbusters like *Superman*, *Batman*, *Spider-Man*, *Supergirl* and *X-Men: The Last Stand*. (Please note: this replaces the previously announced Totally '80s program)

CLASSICAL 4 | October {19} 20, 21 (8 p.m.) October 22, 2017 (2:30 p.m.)
MOZART'S JUPITER SYMPHONY

Matthew Halls, conductor

Johannes Moser, cello

SCHUBERT Symphony No. 5

HAYDN Cello Concerto No. 1

MOZART Symphony No. 41, *Jupiter*

Praised for his imagination and fresh insights, conductor Matthew Halls returns to Jones Hall with Viennese masterpieces by Haydn, Mozart and Schubert. Dynamic cellist Johannes Moser brings his virtuoso technique and innate musicality to Haydn's graceful Cello Concerto No. 1. Completing the concert is Mozart's final symphonic masterpiece, his dazzling Symphony No. 41, *Jupiter*. {**Note:** October 19 performance is part of the Sugar Land Series at Sugar Land Baptist Church.}

CLASSICAL 5 | October 26, 28 (8 p.m.) October 29, 2017 (2:30 p.m.)
BEETHOVEN & PROKOFIEV

Ludovic Morlot, conductor

Jonathan Biss, piano

MESSIAEN *The Forgotten Offerings*

BEETHOVEN Piano Concerto No. 4

PROKOFIEV Symphony No. 5

Ludovic Morlot, the Seattle Symphony's Grammy® Award-winning Music Director, makes his Classical Series debut with Prokofiev's epic Symphony No. 5. Composed in the midst of World War II, this symphony was conceived by Prokofiev "as glorifying the grandeur of the human spirit...praising the free and happy man—his strength, his generosity, and the purity of his soul." Returning to Jones Hall, musical polymath Jonathan Biss performs Beethoven's lyrical Piano Concerto No. 4.

SPECIAL 3 | October 27, 2017 (7:30 p.m.)

PSYCHO—FILM WITH LIVE ORCHESTRA

Francesco Lecce-Chong, conductor

What better way to celebrate Halloween than to scream along with Janet Leigh in the infamous shower scene of Alfred Hitchcock's supreme suspense thriller, *Psycho*? Every spine-tingling moment is more vivid with Bernard Herrmann's bone-chilling, iconic score performed in its entirety by the Houston Symphony.

POPS 3 | November 10, 11 (8 p.m.) November 12, 2017 (7:30 p.m.)

BROADWAY TODAY

Steven Reineke, conductor

Betsy Wolfe, vocalist

Join us for an exciting program of *Broadway Today* with the incredible Betsy Wolfe (Broadway's *Waitress*, *Falsettos*). She is helping us celebrate the best of the Great White Way, with songs from *The Phantom of the Opera*, *Once*, *Chicago*, *The Book of Mormon*, *Les Misérables* and the showstopper "Maybe This Time" from *Cabaret*.

CLASSICAL 6 | November 17, 18 (8 p.m.) November 19, 2017 (2:30 p.m.)

RACHMANINOFF'S RHAPSODY

Andrés Orozco-Estrada, conductor

Denis Kozhukhin, piano

IVES Symphony No. 3, *The Camp Meeting*

RACHMANINOFF Piano Concerto No. 4

RACHMANINOFF *Rhapsody on a Theme of Paganini*

BLACHER *Orchestral Variations on a Theme by Paganini*

Andrés and Denis Kozhukhin continue their exciting cycle of Rachmaninoff's works for piano and orchestra with the ever-popular *Rhapsody on a Theme of Paganini* and the Russian master's Piano Concerto No. 4. The orchestra explores Ives' quintessentially American music with his Symphony No. 3, *The Camp Meeting*.

CLASSICAL 7 | November 24, 25 (8 p.m.) November 26, 2017 (2:30 p.m.)

A SCHEHERAZADE THANKSGIVING

Andrés Orozco-Estrada, conductor

James Ehnes, violin

Shostakovich: Violin Concerto No. 1

Rimsky-Korsakov: *Scheherazade*

This Thanksgiving, Andrés conducts Rimsky-Korsakov's *Scheherazade*. Inspired by *1001 Nights*, this sumptuously orchestrated tone poem takes listeners along on the voyages of Sinbad and ends with an electrifying festival at Baghdad. Grammy® Award-winning violinist James Ehnes presents his unforgettable interpretation of Shostakovich's Violin Concerto No. 1.

FAMILY 2 | December 2, 2017 (10 & 11:30 a.m.)

A GRINCH CHRISTMAS

Robert Franz, conductor

It's the holiday season in Dr. Seuss' zany world of Whoville. Although the Grinch is in town, this Christmas will surely not be stolen! Join the Houston Symphony and local high school singers as we present the classic story of the grouchy, green creature. The festive fun also includes a holiday sing-along and the hit "Believe" from the movie *Polar Express*.

POPS 4 | December 1, 2 (8 p.m.) December 3, 2017 (2:30 & 7:30 p.m.)

VERY MERRY POPS WITH MEGAN HILTY

Steven Reineke, conductor

Megan Hilty, conductor

Houston Symphony Chorus

Betsy Cook Weber, director

We're thrilled to welcome back the multi-talented Megan Hilty (NBC's *Smash*; Broadway's *Wicked*) to our annual *Very Merry Pops* extravaganza. Join Megan, Steven, the orchestra and chorus for a weekend packed with holiday classics, including special arrangements of songs from Megan's new holiday album, *A Merry Little Christmas*. Enjoy favorites such as "Jingle Bells," "Have Yourself a Merry Little Christmas," "Santa Baby" and "It's the Most Wonderful Time of the Year." We're also highlighting some of Steven's fantastic arrangements like "Jingle Bell Rock."

SPECIAL 4 | December {14}, 15, 16 (8 p.m.) December 17, 2017 (2:30 p.m.)

HANDEL'S MESSIAH

Paul Agnew, conductor

Yulia Van Doren, soprano

Daniel Taylor, countertenor

Samuel Levine, tenor

Alex Rosen, bass

Houston Symphony Chorus

Betsy Cook Weber, director

Handel: *Messiah*

Celebrate Christmas with a true Houston holiday tradition. Praised for the "perfect harmony, excellence, [and] virtuosity" (*Est Républicain*) he brings to his ensembles, conductor Paul Agnew leads the Houston Symphony Chorus, soloists and orchestra in Houston's premier performances of this Baroque masterpiece. From "Comfort ye, my people" to the final "Amen" chorus, *Messiah* will leave you singing "Hallelujah" for Handel! **{Note:** December 14 performance is part of the Sugar Land Series at Sugar Land Baptist Church.}

POPS 5 | January 5, 6 (7:30 p.m.) January 7, 2018 (2:30 p.m.)

DISNEY'S FANTASIA—FILM WITH LIVE ORCHESTRA

Steven Reineke, conductor

The Houston Symphony proudly presents selections from Disney *Fantasia* and *Fantasia 2000*, shown on the big screen, with live score. A crowning achievement in the history of animation, the film is an imaginative celebration of great orchestral music, with Tchaikovsky's *The Nutcracker*, Stravinsky's *The Firebird* and, of course, *The Sorcerer's Apprentice*. Join the Houston Symphony on a fantastical journey as we explore the magic of Disney. **Note:** Sunday performance will be at 2:30 p.m.

CLASSICAL 8 | January 11, 12, 13, 2018 (8 p.m.)

KIRILL GERSTEIN PLAYS BRAHMS

Andrés Orozco-Estrada, conductor

Kirill Gerstein, piano

Bartók: *Music for Strings, Percussion and Celesta*

Brahms: Piano Concerto No. 1

Andrés leads a guided tour of Bartók's masterful *Music for Strings, Percussion and Celesta*. Famously featured in Stanley Kubrick's *The Shining*, this innovative work combines modern sophistication with the visceral excitement of Hungarian folk music. Houston favorite Kirill Gerstein returns for a performance of Brahms' powerful Piano Concerto No. 1, a deeply personal work often praised as a veiled symphony for its ambition and scope. **NOTE:** Sunday subscribers attend Friday, January 12 performance.

CLASSICAL 9 | January 25, 27 (8 p.m.) January 28, 2018 5 (2:30 p.m.)

MOZART & TCHAIKOVSKY

Omer Meir Wellber, conductor

Simone Lamsma, violin

Mozart: Overture and Ballet Music from *Idomeneo*

Britten: Violin Concerto

Tchaikovsky: Symphony No. 4

Israeli conductor Omer Meir Wellber makes his Houston Symphony debut with Tchaikovsky's Symphony No. 4, a compelling musical drama the composer regarded as his "best symphonic work." Dutch violinist Simone Lamsma has received ecstatic praise for her interpretation of Britten's gorgeous Violin Concerto, which treats listeners to "high-running emotions" and "spectral, blazing sound" (*Cleveland.com*).

CLASSICAL 10 | February 2, 3 (8 p.m.) February 4, 2018 (2:30 p.m.)

RAVEL'S DAPHNIS AND CHLOE

Fabien Gabel, conductor

Colin Currie, percussion

Bernstein: Overture to *Candide*

J. Corigliano: *Conjurer* for Percussionist, Strings and Brass

Ibert: *Ports of Call*

Aubert: *Habanera*

Ravel: Suite No. 2 from *Daphnis and Chloé*

Acclaimed conductor Fabien Gabel returns with a program of French and American classics, including the breathtaking musical sunrise from Ravel's *Daphnis and Chloé*. A rock star of the percussion world, Colin Currie performs John Corigliano's *Conjurer* for Percussionist, Strings and Brass. In the words of the composer, this percussion concerto turns the soloist into "a kind of sorcerer."

CLASSICAL 11 | February 15, 17 (8 p.m.) February 18, 2018 (2:30 p.m.)

ANDRÉS CONDUCTS DVOŘÁK

Andrés Orozco-Estrada, conductor

Dvořák: *The Noon Witch*

Dvořák: Symphony No. 7

Experience Andrés and the orchestra's gripping account of Dvořák's dramatic Symphony No. 7. Our recent recording of this work has received widespread acclaim: "Big-boned and big-hearted...this Texan ensemble doesn't hold back" (Gramophone). Plus, enjoy Dvořák's spooky retelling of the Czech legend of the Noon Witch.

CLASSICAL 12 | February 23, 24 (8 p.m.) February 25, 2018 (2:30 p.m.)

HILARY HAHN CELEBRATES BERNSTEIN

Andrés Orozco-Estrada, conductor

Hilary Hahn, violin

Shostakovich: *Festive Overture*

Bernstein: Serenade for Violin and Orchestra

Shostakovich: Symphony No. 11, *The Year 1905*

The Houston Symphony celebrates Leonard Bernstein's 100th birthday with one of the world's greatest violinists, Hilary Hahn. Bernstein's Serenade follows the musings of Plato's *Symposium*, a colorful dialogue about the nature of love and "beauty absolute...and everlasting." Andrés leads the orchestra in Shostakovich's riveting Symphony No. 11, which was first performed in America by Leopold Stokowski and the Houston Symphony.

FAMILY 3 | March 3, 2018 (10 & 11:30 a.m.)

BE OUR GUEST

Robert Franz, conductor

Enter a land of enchantment with horses, castles and the unforgettable music from *Beauty and the Beast* as the Houston Symphony performs along with a local high school chorus. In our fairytale fantasy, we discover that things are not always as they seem, as in the adventure of *Tubby the Tuba*. Meet Tubby and his orchestra friends, including Peepo the Piccolo, as we learn what it's like to find your *own* song.

POPS 6 | March 1, 2, 3, 2018 (8 p.m.)

THE OSCARS: BEST ORIGINAL SONGS

Steven Reineke, conductor

Ashley Brown, vocalist

Ryan Silverman, vocalist

The 90th Annual Academy Awards® is March 4, and to celebrate, Steven has assembled some of the Oscars'® best original songs for a stunning, star-studded evening. Our program includes over 80 years of cinematic sounds, including "Over the Rainbow" (1939); "Moon River" (1962); "The Way We Were" (1973); "I've Had the Time of My Life" (1987); "Beauty and the Beast" (1991); "My Heart Will Go On," (1997); "Skyfall" (2012) and "Let it Go" (2013). We're also featuring award-winning film scores from composers John Williams, Erich Korngold and Ennio Morricone. **NOTE:** *Sunday subscribers attend Thursday, March 1 performance*

POPS 7 | March 24 (8 p.m.) March 25, 2018 (2:30 & 7:30 p.m.)

CHRIS BOTTI RETURNS

Steven Reineke, conductor

Chris Botti, trumpet

Grammy Award®-winning Chris Botti, who “has a trumpet sound that suggests the softer side of luminosity” (*The New York Times*), returns to the Houston Symphony to share the stage with his electrifying band members, the orchestra and one of his favorite conductors, our very own Steven Reineke. Botti, who is one of the most celebrated contemporary musicians today, delivers a night of exquisite music. **NOTE:** *Friday subscribers attend Sunday, March 25 2:30 pm matinee performance*

CLASSICAL 13 | March 29, 30 (8 p.m.) March 31, 2018 (2:30 p.m.)

BERNSTEIN & STRAVINSKY

Bramwell Tovey, conductor

Jean-Yves Thibaudet, piano

Houston Symphony Chorus

Betsy Cook Weber, director

Bernstein: Symphony No. 2, *The Age of Anxiety*

Stravinsky: *Symphony of Psalms*

For Easter and Passover weekend, the Houston Symphony offers a musical meditation on faith in the modern world.

Continuing our celebration of Bernstein’s centennial, his Symphony No. 2, *The Age of Anxiety*, follows four young people as they grapple with a war-torn world. Featuring world-renowned pianist Jean-Yves Thibaudet in a virtuoso solo part, the work ends by discovering “a core of faith.” The program concludes with choral settings of psalms by Stravinsky. **NOTE:** *Sunday subscribers attend Friday, March 30 performance*

CLASSICAL 14 | April 6, 7 (8 p.m.) April 8, 2018 (2:30 p.m.)

TCHAIKOVSKY’S SLEEPING BEAUTY

Andrey Boreyko, conductor

Benjamin Beilman, violin

Schreker: Nocturne from *The Distant Sound*

Mendelssohn: Violin Concerto

Tchaikovsky: Selections from *The Sleeping Beauty*

“A prodigious artist” (*Le Monde*), Benjamin Beilman performs Mendelssohn’s sparkling Violin Concerto. Conductor Andrey Boreyko leads the orchestra in selections from one of Tchaikovsky’s treasured ballet scores and a luminous, romantic excerpt from Franz Schreker’s opera, *The Distant Sound*.

FAMILY 4 | April 21, 2018 (10 & 11:30 a.m.)

¡FIESTA!

Robert Franz, conductor

You’re invited to our Symphony fiesta! Bring your passport as we head south of the border for a colorful, cultural celebration. We’re highlighting the vibrant sounds of the Americas, including Brazil (*Tico Tico*) and Mexico (*Conga del Fuego Nuevo*). The party continues with a mariachi band as well as the Flamenco-inspired dance hit, “Macarena”!

POPS 8 | April 20, 21 (8 p.m.) April 22, 2018 (7:30 p.m.)

THE ELVIS PRESLEY SONGBOOK

Michael Krajewski, conductor

Dave Bennett, clarinet, vocalist

Allison Blackwell, vocalist

Michael Krajewski steps back onto the podium to help us honor the King of Rock & Roll, along with returning clarinetist-guitarist-pianist Dave Bennett (last seen in *A Tribute to Benny Goodman*) and Allison Blackwell (Disney’s *The Lion King*). Elvis’ music is undoubtedly timeless, and this program reflects not only his enormous popularity, but his incredible artistry and musicianship. Enjoy fully orchestrated arrangements of songs such as “Burning Love,” “Always on My Mind,” “Love Me Tender,” “Jailhouse Rock,” “Can’t Help Falling in Love” and many more Elvis hits.

CLASSICAL 15 | April 26, 28 (8 p.m.) April 29, 2018 (2:30 p.m.)

ALSO SPRACH ZARATHUSTRA

Juraj Valčuha, conductor

Evgeni Bozhanov, piano

Nicolai: Overture to *The Merry Wives of Windsor*

Chopin: Piano Concerto No. 2

R. Strauss: *Also sprach Zarathustra*

Praised for his passion and musical intelligence, conductor Juraj Val uha returns to Jones Hall with Richard Strauss' *Also sprach Zarathustra*. Featured in Stanley Kubrik's *2001: A Space Odyssey*, this tone poem is famous for its unforgettable opening sunrise. Acclaimed Chopin interpreter Evgeni Bozhanov performs Chopin's poetic Piano Concerto No. 2, which features some of the composer's most tender melodies.

CLASSICAL 16 | May 4, 5 (8 p.m.) May 6, 2018 (2:30 p.m.)

A GERMAN REQUIEM

Andrés Orozco-Estrada, conductor

Mark Nuccio, clarinet

Nicole Heaston, soprano

Russell Braun, baritone

Houston Symphony Chorus

Betsy Cook Weber, director

Mozart: Clarinet Concerto

Brahms: *A German Requiem*

Houston Symphony Principal Clarinet Mark Nuccio takes center stage with the beautiful melodies and virtuoso passagework of Mozart's Clarinet Concerto. The Houston Symphony Chorus then joins the orchestra for Brahms' *A German Requiem*, a sublime work. Its moving solos feature Nicole Heaston's breathtaking soprano and Canadian Russell Braun's elegant, burnished baritone.

CLASSICAL 17 | May 10, 11, (8 p.m.) May 13, 2018 (2:30 p.m.)

BRAHMS & SIBELIUS

Andrés Orozco-Estrada, conductor

Augustin Hadelich, violin

Sibelius: Violin Concerto

Brahms: Symphony No. 3

Hear Sibelius' passionate Violin Concerto when the brilliant young violinist Augustin Hadelich returns to Jones Hall. From its snowy opening to its final "polonaise for polar bears," this masterpiece is a true tour-de-force of violin playing. Andrés leads an exciting performance of Brahms' Symphony No. 3. A showcase for the orchestra, this epic score features a hauntingly beautiful horn solo and ends with a twist. *NOTE: Saturday subscribers attend Friday, May 11 performance.*

CLASSICAL 18 | May 18, 19 (8 p.m.) May 20, 2018 (2:30 p.m.)

EMANUEL AX PLUS THE RITE OF SPRING

Andrés Orozco-Estrada, conductor

Emanuel Ax, piano

Klaus Obermaier, conception, artistic direction, choreography

Ars Electronica Futurelab, interactive design

and technical development

Yuka Oishi, dancer

Mozart: Piano Concerto No. 27

Stravinsky: *The Rite of Spring*

Experience Stravinsky's revolutionary *Rite* like never before when Andrés teams up with Klaus Obermaier and Ars Electronica Futurelab for a performance featuring innovative dancing and 3-D visual effects. World-renowned pianist Emanuel Ax offers the perfect contrast to Stravinsky's wild score with Mozart's refined Piano Concerto No. 27, his final work in the genre. To open the concert, Ax joins Houston Symphony musicians for some lively chamber music.

POPS 9 | May 25, 26 (8 p.m.) May 27, 2018 (7:30 p.m.)

ONE-HIT WONDERS

Steven Reineke, conductor

Storm Large, vocalist

You know them. You love them. But you have no idea who sang them. Our final program of the season showcases those familiar songs—"Come on Eileen," "Forever Young," "She's So High," "Walking in Memphis," "Take on Me," "Closing Time"—from artists of the past century who disappeared, but nonetheless left a mark on radio air play and in our hearts. The show-stopping Storm Large from *U.K. Rocks* and Pink Martini helps us remember what made these hits so much fun.