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## Orchestra of St. Luke's Announces 2021-22 Carnegie Hall Season, with Principal Conductor Bernard Labadie Leading Two Spring Concerts of Bach and Mendelssohn



*Left to right: Andrew Staples, Augustin Hadelich, Avery Amereau, Carolyn Sampson, Haydn and Handel Society, Julian Prégardien, Matthew Brook, Philippe Sly, Reginald Mobley, La Chapelle de Québec (photo credit: courtesy of OSL)*

***“One of the most versatile and galvanic ensembles in the U.S.” – WQXR on OSL***

Next spring, [Orchestra of St. Luke's \(OSL\)](#) – New York's “hometown band” (*New York Times*) –

resumes its performances at **Carnegie Hall**, with two concerts led by Principal Conductor **Bernard Labadie**. On **April 7**, the orchestra is joined by two iconic choirs and a stellar group of Baroque specialist soloists for a rendition of Bach's towering *St. Matthew Passion*. Vocalists participating in the concert are Boston's **Handel and Haydn Society**, **La Chapelle de Québec**, soprano **Carolyn Sampson**, contralto **Avery Amereau**, tenors **Julian Prégardien** and **Andrew Staples**, baritone **Philippe Sly**, and bass-baritone **Matthew Brook**. On **May 5**, Bach is featured again, alongside his 19th-century champion Felix Mendelssohn, in a program with two special guests: frequent OSL collaborator and violin superstar **Augustin Hadelich**, and Grammy-nominated countertenor **Reginald Mobley**, making his **Carnegie Hall debut** in his first performance with the OSL.

**James Roe**, OSL's President and Executive Director, says:

"We can't think of a better way to reunite with our Carnegie Hall audience than with *St. Matthew Passion*, a monumental and timeless work that connects so strongly with contemporary audiences and that has been a cornerstone of OSL's performance history at Carnegie Hall. This will be OSL's 34th season as part of Carnegie Hall Presents and it will be our seventh *St. Matthew Passion*! We're so fortunate to be led by Principal Conductor Bernard Labadie, one of the world's finest interpreters of Bach, and to be joined by his own chorus, La Chapelle de Québec, as well as the Handel and Haydn Society Chorus out of Boston, making their Carnegie Hall debut. Following that, in May, we'll be performing a unique program featuring Bach and Mendelssohn masterpieces with our frequent guest, celebrated violinist Augustin Hadelich, as well as countertenor Reginald Mobley, making his OSL and Carnegie Hall debuts in Bach's numinous Cantata 82, *Ich habe genug*."

First performed on Good Friday in 1727 and revived a handful of times in Bach's lifetime, the *St. Matthew Passion* fell into obscurity upon his death in 1750. It was only in 1829 that the work was revived, after some five years of score editing and preparation by the industrious and gifted 20-year-old Felix Mendelssohn. After that performance, Bach's reputation continued to grow steadily, a story symbolically narrated by Labadie's programming: first the "great" Passion, as Bach's family called it, and then a program juxtaposing works by the two composers.

The Passion is performed by a roster of exceptional historically informed vocal soloists, along with **La Chapelle de Québec**, the chorus Labadie founded in 1985 as a counterpart to his orchestra Les Violons du Roy, and Boston's 206-year-old **Haydn and Handel Society**, making its **Carnegie Hall debut**. The performance will take place on the eve of Holy Week, the time between Good Friday and Easter when Christians commemorate the passion of Christ, and which is an especially rich time in New York, and cities around the world, for sacred music performances. **Bernard Labadie**, an internationally recognized leader in 18th-century repertoire and performance practice, observes:

"Every time I revisit the *St. Matthew Passion* I remain in awe of the complexity, depth and humanity of this ultimate masterpiece. It is officially my desert island piece, and no words can describe its greatness and its uncanny capacity to pierce our soul while showing such restraint."

The May 5th program features Grammy-winning violinist **Augustin Hadelich**'s "rich, full tone and uncanny accuracy" (*Seattle Times*) in Mendelssohn's Violin Concerto in E minor, a touchstone of the repertoire since its composition. Bach's serene cantata *Ich habe genug* is performed by Grammy-nominated countertenor **Reginald Mobley**, in his first appearance with OSL and his **Carnegie Hall debut**. Labadie notes that *Ich habe genug* "has one of Bach's greatest tunes, with music of a personal and intimate dimension that goes straight to the heart of the listener." The program is rounded out with Mendelssohn's "Italian" Symphony, inspired by a two-year tour of Europe the composer undertook soon after reviving the *St. Matthew Passion*.

## About St. Luke's Chamber Ensemble, OSL & the DiMenna Center for Classical Music

**St. Luke's Chamber Ensemble** was founded in 1974, when a group of virtuoso musicians began performing chamber concerts at Greenwich Village's Church of St. Luke in the Fields. Today, the 24 ensemble musicians make up the artistic core of **Orchestra of St. Luke's**, pairing beloved chamber works with lesser-known gems in OSL's Chamber Music Series and anchoring almost every program presented by the orchestra. Regular seasons also see OSL perform in diverse musical genres at New York's major concert venues, drawing on an expanded roster for large-scale works, and collaborating with artists ranging from Joshua Bell and Renée Fleming to Bono and Metallica. The orchestra has commissioned more than 50 new works and has given more than 175 world, U.S., and New York City premieres, as well as participating in 118 recordings, four of which have been recognized with Grammy Awards. Internationally celebrated for his expertise in 18th-century music, **Bernard Labadie** was appointed as OSL's Principal Conductor in 2018, continuing the orchestra's long tradition of working with proponents of historical performance practice. Built and operated by OSL, the **DiMenna Center for Classical Music** opened in 2011. New York City's only rehearsal, recording, education and performance space expressly dedicated to classical music, it serves more than 500 ensembles and 30,000 musicians each year.

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## Orchestra of St. Luke's at Carnegie Hall

**April 7 at 8:00pm**

**Bernard Labadie**, Principal Conductor

**Carolyn Sampson**, soprano

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**Avery Amereau**, contralto  
**Julian Prégardien**, tenor  
**Andrew Staples**, tenor  
**Philippe Sly**, baritone  
**Matthew Brook**, bass-baritone  
**La Chapelle de Québec**  
**Handel and Haydn Society Chorus**  
BACH: *St. Matthew Passion*

**May 5 at 8:00pm**  
**Bernard Labadie**, Principal Conductor  
**Augustin Hadelich**, violin  
**Reginald Mobley**, countertenor  
BACH: *Ich habe genug*, BWV 82  
MENDELSSOHN: Violin Concerto in E minor, Op. 64  
MENDELSSOHN: Symphony No. 4 in A, Op. 90, "Italian"

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