

For immediate release

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Through June 2022, Orchestra of St. Luke's Offers 3 New "Sounds & Stories" Programs, Chamber Music Series, *St. Matthew Passion* and OSL Bach Festival at Carnegie Hall, Works by 15 Living Composers & More



Artists appearing with Orchestra of St. Luke's in winter/spring 2022 (click [here](#) for credits and to download high-resolution photos)

“One of the most versatile and galvanic ensembles in the U.S.” (WQXR), [Orchestra of St. Luke's \(OSL\)](#) offers a bountiful musical feast for the winter and spring, featuring both online and live performances, international guest artists, and works by fifteen living composers. Three new livestreamed composer portraits in the acclaimed digital “**Sounds & Stories**” series feature the

music of **Valerie Coleman**, **Joan Tower**, **Kinan Azmeh** and **Julius Eastman**. Three programs of the orchestra's **Chamber Music Series** take place at both Merkin Hall and Carnegie's Weill Recital Hall, with highlights including **Florence Price's** Second String Quartet performed by **St. Luke's Chamber Ensemble**, the artistic core of OSL, as well as guest appearances by pianist **Joyce Yang** and soprano **Liv Redpath**. OSL Principal Conductor **Bernard Labadie** leads the orchestra's sixth rendition of the *St. Matthew Passion* as part of Carnegie Hall's "Carnegie Presents" series, along with a concert of Bach and Mendelssohn that showcases Grammy-winning violinist **Augustin Hadelich** and Grammy-nominated countertenor **Reginald Mobley** in his Carnegie Hall debut. Meanwhile, Labadie's celebrated Bach interpretations continue with the third edition of the annual **OSL Bach Festival** in June, featuring cellist **Steven Isserlis**. The orchestra also reunites with **Paul Taylor Dance Company**, a longtime artistic partner, and continues its commitment to **community access** with free live events in its signature **Five-Borough Tour** and **free School Concerts** educational initiatives.

"Sounds & Stories" livestream series (Feb 22–June 28)

When it came to making new, original art and entertainment during the pandemic, OSL **"responded robustly and creatively to the constraints of streamed performance"** (*New York Times*), leading the New York City field in terms of innovation, frequency and production values. As *ABC News* reported in a [dedicated segment](#), through imaginative livestreaming like the interdisciplinary **"Sounds & Stories"** concert series, which explores music as a medium for storytelling, OSL successfully took the opportunity to **"grow its audience online – and make it more diverse in the process."**

The **"Sounds & Stories"** concerts **stream live** at OSLmusic.org from the **DiMenna Center for Classical Music**, now New York's leading venue for livestreaming digital performance. Hosted by OSL board member, Tony-winner and four-time Emmy-winner **David Hyde Pierce** and artistically filmed with multiple cameras to capture **St. Luke's Chamber Ensemble** from a variety of intimate perspectives, the livestreams are directed again this season by **Tristan Cook**, whose distinguished filmography includes a recent episode of *Live From Lincoln Center* and the award-nominated music documentary *Strangers on the Earth*. Collaborating with Cook is OSL's longtime audio partner, **Audiosmith Digital Solutions**.

The first of this season's three **"Sounds & Stories"** programs is **"Generational Fanfares" (Feb 22)**, which celebrates two female composers with strong OSL ties: **Joan Tower**, who previously served as the orchestra's Composer-in-Residence, and **Valerie Coleman**, whose *Fanfare for Uncommon Times* (2021), an **OSL commission**, will receive its **world premiere recording** by the company. As the *New York Times* [recognized](#) when OSL premiered the work last summer, Coleman's fanfare addresses "elements of the Black experience during a challenging time," and is "at once reflective and restless, uplifting and ominous." Coleman will also be honored, along with David Hyde Pierce, at OSL's **Gift of Music Gala** this spring (**April 25**).

The series continues with Syrian composer-clarinetist **Kinan Azmeh**, a member of Yo-Yo Ma's Silkroad collective, who performs three of his own chamber works exploring the concept of "home" through three locations of personal significance. **Café Damas** evokes a coffee shop in his

hometown of Damascus in the 50s; ***The Fence, the Rooftop, and the Distant Sea*** is set in Beirut and focuses on the memory of home after a long absence; and ***In the Element*** moves to Apple Hill Center for Chamber Music in New Hampshire, where Azmeh spent time as a teenager and to which he has returned regularly over the course of three decades (**April 19**). Azmeh's music is also the focus of OSL's **School Concerts** series this spring (see below for details). The "Sounds and Stories" series draws to a close on **June 28** with an account of ***Femenine***, an improvisatory tour de force by the late **Julius Eastman**, who strove to be "Black to the fullest, a musician to the fullest, [and] a homosexual to the fullest," and whose take on minimalism was "idiosyncratic and perhaps ahead of its time" (*New York Times*).

Chamber Music Series (Jan 18–March 17)

Orchestra of St. Luke's has its roots in chamber music: the 24 virtuoso musicians of **St. Luke's Chamber Ensemble** represent the seed from which the orchestra eventually grew, and their performances provide an intimate look at the heart of the larger ensemble. In this season's **Chamber Music Series**, each program is presented in both **Merkin Concert Hall** – hosted with enlightening commentary by OSL President and Executive Director **James Roe** – and Carnegie's **Weill Recital Hall**, on consecutive days.

The first program pairs **Brahms's** First String Sextet, an undisputed masterpiece, with the lyrical Second String Quartet by **Florence Price**, a recent subject of OSL's acclaimed "Music in Color" initiative (**Jan 18 & 19**). Next, Grammy-nominated pianist **Joyce Yang**, "one of the great chamber players of her generation" (*Theater Jones*), and OSL Principal Clarinetist **Jon Manasse**, "an absolutely first-rate clarinet soloist" (*New York Times*), anchor quintets by **Dvořák** and **Samuel Coleridge-Taylor** respectively (**Feb 14 & 16**). Finally, fast-rising soprano **Liv Redpath** – winner of the second prize, special prize for French music, and audience choice at the 2019 Viñas Competition at Gran Teatre del Liceu – and Bosnian pianist **Pedja Mužijević** join the ensemble for an all-**Schubert** program of lieder and the much-loved "Trout" Quintet, with which the series concludes (**March 16 & 17**).

"Carnegie Presents": St. Matthew Passion and more this spring (April 7 & May 5)

OSL Principal Conductor **Bernard Labadie** – "a Canadian maestro known for his detailed, nuanced accounts of the Baroque and Classical repertoire" (*New York Times*) – has become a prominent fixture in and leader of New York City's cultural life. Following OSL's season-opening performance at Carnegie Hall and free "Concert of Gratitude and Remembrance" at the Cathedral of St. John the Divine this past fall, Labadie turns to the music of **J. S. Bach** for two more concerts this spring in OSL's **34th season** in the "**Carnegie Hall Presents**" series. Marking a major highlight of the season, on **April 7** Labadie and OSL return to the Perelman Stage for a historically informed account of Bach's monumental ***St. Matthew Passion***. Singing the Evangelist, of which he is one of the world's most distinguished exponents, German tenor **Julian Prégardien** heads a stellar international sextet of specialist Baroque vocal soloists, also comprising soprano **Carolyn Sampson**, tenor **Andrew Staples**, countertenor **Hugh Cutting**, bass-baritone **Philippe Sly** and bass-baritone **Matthew Brook**. With OSL, they will be joined by three of North America's foremost choirs – Boston's venerable **Handel and Haydn Society**, the conductor's own **La**

Chapelle de Québec, and the boys of New York's **Saint Thomas Choir** – all of which are known for their expertise in Baroque repertoire.

For their final appearance in the series, Labadie leads OSL in a program pairing Bach's music with that of his champion **Mendelssohn**. This features two special guests: Grammy-winning violinist **Augustin Hadelich**, a frequent OSL collaborator, and Grammy-nominated countertenor **Reginald Mobley**, making his **Carnegie Hall and OSL debuts (May 5)**.

Third annual OSL Bach Festival (June 2–22)

Bach's timeless music and enduring legacy are not only the focal point of OSL's 2021-22 programming, but also the subject of the two previous **OSL Bach Festivals**. Held in 2019, the first series was an ambitious three-week, citywide initiative, while the second transitioned into last year's month-long virtual "Bach at Home" festival, reaching almost 11,000 unique new visitors online. Continuing this commitment to the Baroque composer, in June OSL returns the festival to live and in-person performances once more, with four concerts – three of them led by Labadie himself – at two New York City venues: Carnegie's **Zankel Hall (June 2, 7 & 22)** and Neidorff-Karpati Hall at the **Manhattan School of Music (June 15)**.

Showcasing **Steven Isserlis**, one of only two living cellists featured in *Gramophone's* Hall of Fame, the series opens with a program of symphonies and cello concertos by **Haydn** and **C.P.E. Bach**, two of the composers most directly influenced by the latter's father. Next follows an evening of music by **J. S. Bach** and his contemporaries, featuring the **U.S. premiere** of Labadie's original arrangement of Pachelbel's E-minor Chaconne, as well as guest appearances by soprano **Amanda Forsythe**, whose recordings have been recognized with Grammy and Diapason D'Or awards; **Philippe Tondre**, Principal Oboe of the Philadelphia Orchestra; and **Stefan Jackiw**, a violinist with "talent that's off the scale" (*Washington Post*). The series culminates with Labadie's leadership of Bach's ***A Musical Offering***, contextualized with the conductor's characteristically informative and illuminating commentary. Dating from the composer's final decade, the work is complex and highly chromatic, exhaustively exploring the contrapuntal possibilities of a single theme. It also provides the inspiration for **new works** for chamber orchestra by four emerging composers, developed under the tutelage of Grammy-nominated English composer **Anna Clyne**, through OSL's **DeGaetano Composition Institute**. In the series' penultimate concert, these new compositions will receive their **world premiere** performances under the baton of **Ben Gernon**, Principal Guest Conductor of the BBC Philharmonic, highlighting OSL's 15-year commitment to enriching the chamber orchestral repertoire with no fewer than 60 new works.

With Paul Taylor Dance Company (March 24–31) at City Center Dance Festival

"One of the world's superlative troupes" (*New York Times*), **Paul Taylor Dance Company** is also one of OSL's most treasured artistic partners. The two continue their long association this spring (**March 24–31**), with three programs anchored by the orchestra at New York City Center's **City Center Dance Festival**. Set to music by **Bach, Wagner, Baermann** and **Ginastera**, the first combines the **world premiere** of a new dance by **Lauren Lovette** with ***Roses*** and ***Brandenburgs*** by the late Taylor himself, who "brought a lyrical musicality, capacity for joy and

wide poetic imagination to modern dance over six decades as one of its greatest choreographers” (*New York Times*). Two more of Taylor’s creations – ***Offenbach Overtures*** and ***Airs***, set to **Offenbach** and **Handel** respectively – share the second program with **Larry Keigwin’s *Rush Hour***, choreographed to music by **Adam Crystal**, which OSL helped premiere at Lincoln Center in 2016. After opening with *Offenbach Overtures* and *Roses*, the third and final program concludes with Taylor’s 1975 classic ***Esplanade***, “which, while set to Bach, is a soul-stirring labyrinth of walking, running, rolling and skipping [that] remains an overwhelming feat of choreographic ingenuity” (*New York Times*).

Community programs: NYC Five-Borough Tour (March 6–13) & School Concerts (May 3 – July 1)

Designed to introduce new music to new audiences, this year’s NYC **Five-Borough Tour** debuts “**Earth Works: Music for our Planet.**” This program features new and recent chamber works about our terrestrial world and its survival by Latin Grammy winner **Gabriela Lena Frank** and alumni of the **Gabriela Lena Frank Creative Academy of Music**. Performed by **St. Luke’s Chamber Ensemble**, “Earth Works” will be presented in **free concerts** at the orchestra’s partner venues in each of the five New York City boroughs: the **Brooklyn Public Library**, Queens’s **Flushing Town Hall**, the Bronx’s **Hostos Center for the Arts & Culture**, Staten Island’s **Snug Harbor Cultural Center** and, in a new collaboration, Manhattan’s **Americas Society (March 6–13)**.

Now in its 45th season, OSL’s **School Concerts** program has reached more than a million children over the past four decades. After serving more than 20,000 K-12 students online last season, Orchestra of St. Luke’s continues its virtual programming in May with a program devoted to “**The Music and Inspiration of Kinan Azmeh**” (**Streaming on-demand May 3–July 1**). Featuring a special guest appearance from the eponymous Syrian composer-clarinetist – also the subject of the second episode of this year’s “Sounds and Stories” series – the school concert combines works by Azmeh with those who influenced him, like fellow folk song aficionado **Bartók**, fellow New Yorker and improviser par excellence **Duke Ellington**, and Iraq-born composer **Solhi Al-Wadi**, who founded the Syrian National Symphony Orchestra. The program also features host **Leila Buck** and conductor **Tito Muñoz**.

About Orchestra of St. Luke’s

Orchestra of St. Luke’s (OSL) grew from a group of virtuoso musicians performing chamber music concerts at Greenwich Village’s Church of St. Luke in the Fields in 1974. Regular seasons 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, while also 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: winter-spring engagements

Jan 18 & 19

New York, NY

OSL Presents: The Chamber Music Series

"Brahms and Price"

PRICE: String Quartet No. 2

BRAHMS: String Sextet No. 1

Jan 18: Merkin Concert Hall

Jan 19: Carnegie Hall (Weill Recital Hall)

Feb 14 & 16

New York, NY

OSL Presents: The Chamber Music Series

"Dvořák and Coleridge-Taylor"

COLERIDGE-TAYLOR: Clarinet Quintet

DVOŘÁK: Piano Quintet

(With Jon Manasse, clarinet; Joyce Yang, piano)

Feb 14: Merkin Concert Hall

Feb 16: Carnegie Hall (Weill Recital Hall)

Feb 22

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OSL Presents: "Sounds & Stories"

"Generational Fanfares"

David Hyde Pierce, host

Tristan Cook, filmmaker

Tito Muñoz, conductor

Valerie COLEMAN: *Fanfare for Uncommon Times*

Joan TOWER: *Fanfare for the Uncommon Woman*

March 6–13

New York, NY

OSL Presents: The NYC Five-Borough Tour

“Earth Works: Music for our Planet”

CHRISTINE DELPHINE HEDDEN: *Luisne* for violin and cello

MICHAEL-THOMAS FOUMAI: *Bang!* for flute, oboe, clarinet, trumpet, viola, and cello

AKSHAYA TUCKER: *In Whose Mouth, the Stars* for string trio

GABRIELA LENA FRANK: “Canto de la Hoja” from *Suite Mestiza* for violin

GABRIELA LENA FRANK “Zapatos de Chincha” from *Hilos* for clarinet and cello

IMAN HABIBI: *Āhūye Kūhī* for violin and cello

NICOLAS LELL BENAVIDES: *Recyclate* for flute, oboe, bass clarinet, violin, viola, and cello

March 6: Flushing Town Hall, Queens

March 10: Hostos Center for the Arts and Culture, Bronx

March 11: Americas Society, Manhattan

March 12: Snug Harbor Cultural Center, Staten Island

March 13: Brooklyn Public Library, Brooklyn

March 16 & 17

New York, NY

OSL Presents: The Chamber Music Series

“Schubert’s Trout Quintet”

SCHUBERT: *Auf dem Strom*

SCHUBERT: *Shepherd on the Rock*

SCHUBERT: “Trout” Quintet

SCHUBERT: other works TBA

(With Liv Redpath, soprano; Pedja Mužijević; piano)

March 16: Merkin Concert Hall

March 17: Carnegie Hall (Weill Recital Hall)

March 24–31

New York, NY

New York City Center

City Center Dance Festival

Paul Taylor Dance Company

March 24, 26 & 29

WAGNER / BAERMANN with choreography by Paul Taylor: *Roses*

GINASTERA with choreography by Lauren Lovette: new work (world premiere)

BACH with choreography by Paul Taylor: *Brandenburgs*

March 25, 27 & 30

OFFENBACH with choreography by Paul Taylor: *Offenbach Overtures*

HANDEL with choreography by Paul Taylor: *Airs*

ADAM CRYSTAL with choreography by Larry Keigwin: *Rush Hour*

March 31

WAGNER / BAERMANN with choreography by Paul Taylor: *Roses*

OFFENBACH with choreography by Paul Taylor: *Offenbach Overtures*

BACH with choreography by Paul Taylor: *Esplanade*

April 7

New York, NY

Carnegie Hall (Stern Auditorium)

Carnegie Hall Presents: Orchestra of St. Luke's

Bernard Labadie, Principal Conductor

BACH: *St. Matthew Passion*

(With Julian Prégardien, tenor (Evangelist); Philippe Sly, bass-baritone (Jesus); Carolyn Sampson, soprano; Andrew Staples, tenor; Matthew Brook, bass-baritone; La Chapelle de Quebec, choir; Handel + Haydn Chorus, choir; Boys of the Saint Thomas Choir, children's choir)

April 19

OSLmusic.org

OSL Presents: "Sounds & Stories"

"Kinan Azmeh"

David Hyde Pierce, host

Tristan Cook, filmmaker

Kinan Azmeh, composer and clarinetist

Kinan AZMEH: *Café Damas* for string trio

Kinan AZMEH: *The Fence, the Rooftop, and the Distant Sea* for clarinet and cello

Kinan AZMEH: *In the Element* for clarinet and string quartet

May 3–July 1

OSLmusic.org

OSL Presents: School Concerts

"The Music and Inspiration of Kinan Azmeh"

Leila Buck, host

Tito Muñoz, conductor

Kinan Azmeh, composer and clarinetist

KINAN AZMEH: *Suite for Improviser and Orchestra*

KINAN AZMEH: *A Scattered Sketchbook* for clarinet and violin

BARTÓK: *Romanian Folk Dances* (selection)

SOLHI AL-WADI: *Love Poem* for string orchestra (selection)

ELLINGTON: *Harlem Air Shaft*

May 5

New York, NY

Carnegie Hall (Stern Auditorium)

Carnegie Hall Presents: Orchestra of St. Luke's

"Mendelssohn's "Italian" Symphony"

Bernard Labadie, Principal Conductor

BACH: "Ich habe genug," BWV 82 (with Reginald Mobley, countertenor)

MENDELSSOHN: Violin Concerto in E Minor (with Augustin Hadelich, violin)

MENDELSSOHN: Symphony No. 4, "Italian"

June 2

New York, NY

Carnegie Hall (Zankel Hall)

OSL Presents: OSL Bach Festival 2022

"Steven Isserlis plays Haydn and Bach"

Presented in association with Carnegie Hall

Bernard Labadie, Principal Conductor

HAYDN: Symphony No. 26, "Lamentatione"
C.P.E. BACH: Cello Concerto in A (with Steven Isserlis, cello)
C.P.E. BACH: Symphony in E-flat
HAYDN: Cello Concerto in C (with Steven Isserlis, cello)

June 7

New York, NY

Carnegie Hall (Zankel Hall)

OSL Presents: OSL Bach Festival 2022

"Virtuoso Concertos"

Presented in association with Carnegie Hall

Bernard Labadie, Principal Conductor

PACHELBEL (arr. LABADIE): Chaconne in E minor (U.S. premiere)

HANDEL: Concerto grosso in D minor Op. 6, No. 10, HWV 328

BACH: Concerto for oboe d'amore in A, BWV 1055R (with Philippe Tondre, oboe)

BACH: Concerto for oboe and violin in C minor, BWV 1060R (with Philippe Tondre, oboe; Stefan Jackiw, violin)

HANDEL: *Silete venti*, HWV 242 (with Amanda Forsythe, soprano)

June 15

New York, NY

Manhattan School of Music (Neidorff-Karpati Hall)

OSL Presents: OSL Bach Festival 2022

"Bach Today: World Premieres for Chamber Orchestra"

Ben Gernon, conductor

DeGaetano Composition Institute composers KEVIN DAY, CHARLES PECK, JEREMY RAPAPORT-STEIN & NICKY SOHN: new compositions based on BACH's *A Musical Offering* (world premieres)

June 22

New York, NY

Carnegie Hall (Zankel Hall)

OSL Presents: OSL Bach Festival 2022

"A Narrated Musical Offering"

Presented in association with Carnegie Hall

Bernard Labadie, Principal Conductor and narrator

BACH: *A Musical Offering*

June 28

OSLmusic.org

OSL Presents: "Sounds & Stories"

"Julius Eastman's *Feminine*"

David Hyde Pierce, host

Tristan Cook, filmmaker

EASTMAN: *Feminine*

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