

For release: Tuesday, April 30, 2013

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Month of May brings Sibelius, Gershwin, chamber works and a world premiere to Indianapolis Symphony Orchestra's Lilly Classical Series

INDIANAPOLIS – The Indianapolis Symphony Orchestra races through five centuries of music in the month of May as part of its three concert weekends in the Lilly *Classical Series* and KeyBank *Coffee Classical Series*.

On **Thursday, May 9** at 11 a.m. and **Saturday, May 11** at 8 p.m., Finnish conductor John Storgårds leads the ISO in Sibelius' *The Bard* and Symphony No. 5 and Prokofiev's first piano concerto with the 2010 Gilmore Artist Award winner, Kirill Gerstein. R. Strauss' *Burleske* in D Minor will be included in the evening performance.

A week later, ISO Concertmaster Zach De Pue leads the Indianapolis Symphony Orchestra's string section in performances on **Thursday, May 16** at 11 a.m. and **Friday, May 17** at 8 p.m. Spanning many centuries of great chamber works from the Baroque period to today, the concerts open with "Reyja," composed by Ben Frost and Daniel Bjarnason in 2010, which is a five-minute segment from the full suite, *Solaris*. The string players then step back in time to perform major 17th, 18th and 19th-century works by Schubert, Bach, Vitali and Tchaikovsky and also showcase significant works by contemporary composers Wojciech Kilar and Michael Colina.

On **May 30-June 1**, Music Director Krzysztof Urbanski returns to the podium for an all-American tribute to Bernstein, Gershwin and to one of the most distinguished composers working today: William Bolcom. Commissioned and premiered by the ISO, Bolcom has created the concerto, *Games and Challenges: Something Wonderful Right Away*, based on the improvisational prowess of the ISO's artists-in-residence, Time for Three (Zach De Pue and Nick Kendall, violin; Ranaan Meyer, double bass). According to Bolcom, "The fact that Time for Three was so intimately connected with the ISO suggested to me a notion I've had for many years – namely, how to integrate theatrical improvisational techniques into a purely musical setting. Time for Three and the orchestra are playing nine 'Games and Challenges,' intermixing elements of theater and music as nonverbally as possible." Also on the evening programs are Gershwin's beloved *Rhapsody in Blue* with guest pianist Awadagin Pratt and *An American in Paris*. Bernstein's Overture to *Candide* opens the KeyBank *Coffee Classical Series*.

Ticket prices for the 11 a.m. KeyBank *Coffee Classical Series* concert on May 9, 16 and 30 range from \$20-\$50 each. For the Friday and Saturday evening performances on May 11, 17, 31 and June 1 at 8 p.m., tickets range from \$20 to \$80 each and may be ordered by calling the Hilbert Circle Theatre Box Office at (317) 639-4300, in person, or online by visiting www.IndianapolisSymphony.org. To order by telephone outside of Indianapolis, call toll free (800) 366-8457.

Eli Lilly and Company is the Title Sponsor of the entire 2012-2013 Lilly *Classical Series* and ExactTarget is the Premiere Sponsor for the evening performances of the Lilly *Classical Series*. KeyBank is the Title Sponsor for the Thursday morning KeyBank *Coffee Classical Series* and Indianapolis Power & Light Company is the Premiere Sponsor for the Thursday morning programs. The Associate Sponsor is Tastings.

Metropolitan Youth Orchestra – Final season performance!

The Metropolitan Youth Orchestra, the ISO's student and family music program, concludes its 2012-2013 year with a performance on **Sunday, May 19** at 3 p.m. With a focus on the great standards of jazz, the MYO will appear alongside several local jazz artists in this special concert.

Admission is free and the public is invited to attend.

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Artist Biographies

Chief Conductor of the Helsinki Philharmonic Orchestra and Principal Guest Conductor of BBC Philharmonic Orchestra, **John Storgårds'** career as a conductor and violin virtuoso is widely recognized for creative flair and commitment to contemporary music. He is also Artistic Director of the Chamber Orchestra of Lapland in Finland.

Storgårds has appeared with the Bayerischer Rundfunk, NDR Hamburg, Bamberger Symphoniker, City of Birmingham Symphony, Scottish Chamber, Orchestre Philharmonique de Radio France, Netherlands Radio, Orchestra Sinfonica Nazionale della RAI Torino and the major Scandinavian orchestras. He has conducted the Sydney, Melbourne, New Zealand, Cincinnati, Toronto and Houston symphonies and the National Symphony Orchestra, as well as Boston Symphony Orchestra at Tanglewood Festival and with such soloists as Christian Tetzlaff, Sol Gabetta, Jean-Yves Thibaudet, Colin Currie and Dejan Lazić.

Storgårds began the season with a commission of the Eighth Symphony by Per Norgård, a work he also performs with Danish National and BBC Symphony Orchestras. He returns to the WDR Sinfonieorchester Köln, Gothenburg Symphony, the Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra and debuts with St. Louis, Detroit and Indianapolis.

In the opera field, he has conducted Verdi's *Don Carlos* and the Finnish premiere of Rodion Shchedrin's *The Enchanted Wanderer*. This season, he performs a new opera by Uljas Pulkkis with the Chamber Orchestra of Lapland.

Storgårds' discography includes works of Corigliano, Sibelius' Violin Concerto and works by Erich Wolfgang Korngold and Rautavaara, which received a 2012 Gramophone Award and a 2013 Grammy nomination. With BBC Philharmonic, he will perform and record a cycle of Sibelius symphonies for Chandos Records.

A native of Helsinki, John Storgårds was concertmaster of the Swedish Radio Symphony Orchestra and studied conducting with Jorma Panula and Eri Klas. He received the Finnish State Prize for Music in 2002 and the Pro Finlandia Prize 2012.

Pianist **Kirill Gerstein** was the sixth recipient of the 2010 Gilmore Artist Award, given to an exceptional pianist who possesses profound musicianship, charisma and the desire to sustain a career as a major international concert artist. He received a 2010 Avery Fisher Career Grant, First Prize at the 2001 Arthur Rubinstein Piano Competition, 2002 Gilmore Young Artist Award and was chosen Carnegie Hall's "Rising Star" for 2005-2006. He became an American citizen in 2003 and is a professor of piano at the Musikhochschule in Stuttgart.

Highlights of 2012-2013 include BBC Proms with the BBC Symphony Orchestra, NDR Symphony, RSO Berlin, Montreal Symphony, Czech Philharmonic, Philadelphia Orchestra, St. Louis, Boston, Lucerne, Toronto, Melbourne and Tasmanian symphonies and RTE National Symphony Orchestra of Dublin. In addition, he embarks on a European and U.S. recital tour with Steven Isserlis.

Recent engagements include his debut with the New York Philharmonic, the Los Angeles Philharmonic, Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra, Cleveland, Chicago, Dallas, Detroit, Seattle, San Francisco and Vancouver orchestras and a three-week residency with the Houston Symphony. Internationally, he has appeared with the Munich, Rotterdam and Royal Philharmonics, Royal Stockholm Philharmonic, City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra, Bournemouth Symphony, Royal Liverpool Philharmonic, Dresden Staatskapelle, Zurich Tonhalle, Finnish and Swedish Radio Orchestras, WDR Symphony Orchestra Cologne, Deutsches Symphonie Orchester Berlin, the NHK Symphony Orchestra and Australia, where he returns in 2013.

Born in 1979 in Voronezh, Russia, Gerstein taught himself jazz by listening to his parents' extensive record collection. He came to the U.S. at 14 to study jazz piano as the youngest student to attend Boston's Berklee College of Music. Following his second summer at the Boston University program at Tanglewood, he moved to New York City to attend the Manhattan School of Music and focus on classical music, studying with Solomon Mikowsky and earning Bachelor and Master of Music degrees.

Born in Pittsburgh, **Awadagin Pratt** began piano at the age of six. He studied at the Peabody Conservatory of Music and became the first student to earn diplomas in three performance areas - piano, violin and conducting, and received the Distinguished Alumni Award from Johns Hopkins in recognition of this achievement.

In 1992, Pratt won the Naumburg International Piano Competition and two years later was awarded an Avery Fisher Career Grant. He has played numerous recitals throughout the U.S., including Lincoln Center, Kennedy Center, Dorothy Chandler Pavilion in Los Angeles and Chicago's Orchestra Hall. Orchestral performances include the New York Philharmonic, Minnesota Orchestra and the Pittsburgh, Atlanta, Baltimore, St. Louis, National and Detroit symphonies. Summer festival engagements include Ravinia, Blossom, Wolftrap, Caramoor and Aspen and the Hollywood Bowl. Pratt is Artistic Director of the Next Generation Festival, a two-week chamber music festival in Lancaster, PA. Recent and upcoming appearances include recitals at the New Jersey Performing Arts Center and in Baltimore, the Cincinnati, Indianapolis, Seattle and Colorado symphonies, and internationally in Germany, Japan, Italy, Switzerland, Poland, Israel and South Africa.

Awadagin Pratt was named one of the 50 Leaders of Tomorrow in *Ebony* Magazine and has been featured on National Public Radio's *Performance Today*, the *Today Show*, *Good Morning America*, *Sesame Street*, *CBS Sunday Morning* and PBS's "Live from the Kennedy Center – A Salute to Slava." He performed at the White House in 2009, hosted by President and Mrs. Obama, and has performed for President and Mrs. Clinton.

Pratt's recordings include *A Long Way From Normal*, an all-Beethoven Sonata CD, *Live From South Africa*, and most recently, the Brahms Sonatas for Cello and Piano with Zuill Bailey. Mr. Pratt is an Associate Professor of Piano and Artist-in-Residence at the College Conservatory of Music at the University of Cincinnati.