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CLASSICAL MUSIC & DANCE

Hahn, Ax, Flórez, more: Kansas City Harriman-Jewell Series announces 2023-24 season

BY PATRICK NEAS *SPECIAL TO THE STAR*

APRIL 01, 2023 5:30 AM





Violinist Hilary Hahn will perform at the Folly Theater on Oct. 12. O.J. SLAUGHTER

The Harriman-Jewell Series has just announced its 2023-2024 season, and it's full of old favorites, as well as intriguing new offerings. And its free Discovery Concerts feature two amazing women devoted to making the world a better place.

The favorites include artists like violinist Hilary Hahn, pianist Emanuel Ax and tenor Juan Diego Flórez. Like Luciano Pavarotti, Flórez made his American recital debut on the Harriman-Jewell Series. There's been a lot of love between Flórez and Kansas City ever since.

"Juan Diego is in such demand all over the world that it's not easy to find a date that works for him to come to Kansas City," said Clark Morris, executive and artistic director of the Harriman-Jewell Series. "But he's very loyal to Kansas City and to the series because of his American recital debut, and he had a really warm relationship with Richard Harriman. When he got married in Peru, he invited Richard as his guest to come because he felt that he was that important to his career."

Ax is another artist who has a strong bond with the series.

"Emanuel Ax is like your favorite uncle playing the piano, if your favorite uncle were one of the greatest pianists in the world," Morris said. "That's how I feel when he's playing. He's such a warm and gentle, funny and friendly human being. When Richard Harriman passed away in 2009, Emanuel Ax offered to give a concert to benefit the memorial artistic fund for Richard. He donated his entire fee out of the goodness of his heart. We didn't ask, he volunteered to do it."

TOP VIDEOS

AD



Mark Morris Dance Group has collaborated with the Harriman-Jewell Series in the past, and they're doing it again, this time with "The Look of Love" on Nov. 17. Morris will use the music of Burt Bacharach, the Kansas City-born genius songwriter who died in February at the age of 94.

"We are excited about it," Clark Morris said. "One of the unusual things for them as a modern dance company is that they always bring musicians and perform with live music. That's a great bonus with the Mark Morris Dance Group. Also, Mark himself is a musician, and he approaches his choreography in a way that the movement is playing the music."

Dance is also represented by Step Afrika! on April 5, 2024. It's an American ensemble devoted to African stepping, where dancers provide their own rhythmic accompaniment by their dancing, slaps and shouts. On Jan. 12, NoGravity, an Italian company, will perform a dance version of Dante's "Divine Comedy."

"They create images through dance and costuming and props that can trick your eyes and surprise and amuse you," Morris said. "I'm really excited about their talent and their look and feel. It's very different from anything else that we've presented."

Great orchestras from around the world are always a major part of any Harriman-Jewell season. Next season, they're presenting Minería Symphony Orchestra of Mexico and the National Symphony Orchestra of Ukraine.

"I think all of us are struggling with the war that is going on in Ukraine and the devastation there, so this is a way we can do something positive and support their national symphony orchestra. It will probably end up being both celebratory but

also pretty emotional," Morris said.

The series always has a unique holiday offering, and next season it's "El Niño: Nativity Reconsidered" by none other than minimalist John Adams, the composer of the opera "Nixon in China."

"It's like an oratorio," Morris said. "It's the Nativity story told from the perspective of Mary. It has a lot of great artists, including the soprano Julia Bullock and the countertenor Anthony Roth Costanzo."

Mahani Teave, a pianist from Easter Island, will perform one of the Discovery Concerts. Pilar Castro

A free Discovery concert will open the season on Sept. 9 with Mahani Teave, a pianist from Easter Island. Teave took piano lessons as a child, but when her teacher left the island. Teave's family decided to move to Chile so she could continue her music education.

"She also trained in Europe," Morris said. "But instead of going on with a classical career, she ended up coming back to her home on Easter Island, which had no music school and no pianos. She did fundraising and had some pianos shipped in, and then built this really beautiful music school and studios and began to teach children piano lessons."

Another Discovery artist next season who is going above and beyond is violinist Kelly Hall-Tompkins. She will give a recital Nov. 10.

"Kelly Hall-Tompkins is is a classical violinist and an artist of color," Morris said. "She has this incredible social ministry where she takes music to soup kitchens and homeless shelters. One of her requirements for her recital here was that we arrange for her to play either at a homeless shelter or at a soup kitchen in Kansas City."

Morris says that Hall-Tompkins' mission aligns perfectly with that of the series' free Discovery concerts.

"Our mission is to remove the barrier of price so anyone can have access to this music, and access is her issue," Morris said. "Kelly wants people who are in a struggling position to have access to great classical music, and she brings it to them live."

The Italian dance troupe NoGravity will "create images through dance and costuming and props that can trick

your eyes and surprise and amuse you,” says Clark Morris of the Harriman-Jewell Series. *Courtesy NoGravity*

The Harriman-Jewell season:

Sept. 9: Mahani Teave, piano. Free Discovery Concert. 7 p.m., Folly Theater, 300 W. 12th St.

Oct. 12: Hilary Hahn, violin. 7 p.m., Folly Theater.

Oct. 20: Jazz at Lincoln Center featuring Wynton Marsalis. 7 p.m., Folly Theater.

Oct. 23: Minería Symphony Orchestra of Mexico, Carlos Miguel Prieto, music director, and Gabriela Montero, piano. 7 p.m., Helzberg Hall, Kauffman Center for the Performing Arts.

Nov. 3: Disney/Pixar’s “Coco in Concert” performed with 20-member Orquesta Folclórica Nacional de México. 7 p.m., Folly Theater.

Nov. 10: Kelly Hall-Tompkins, violin. Free Discovery Concert. 7 p.m., Atkins Auditorium at Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art.

Nov. 17: Mark Morris Dance Group performing “The Look of Love,” featuring the music of Burt Bacharach. 7:30 p.m., Muriel Kauffman Theatre, Kauffman Center for the Performing Arts.

Nov. 26: Juan Diego Flórez, tenor. 3 p.m., Folly Theater.

Dec. 11: American Modern Opera Company in John Adams’ “El Niño: Nativity Reconsidered.” 7 p.m., Grace and Holy Trinity Cathedral, 415 W. 13th St.

Jan. 12, 2024: NoGravity performing “Divine Comedy.” 7:30 p.m., Muriel Kauffman Theatre.

Jan. 23: Royal Philharmonic Orchestra with Isata Kanneh-Mason, piano. 7 p.m., Helzberg Hall.

Pianist Isata Kanneh-Mason will perform in Helzberg Hall on Jan. 23. John Davis

Feb. 3: Simone Dinnerstein, piano. 7 p.m., Folly Theater.

Feb. 18: National Symphony Orchestra of Ukraine with conductor Volodymyr

Sirenko and soloist Natalia Khoma, cello. 7 p.m., Helzberg Hall.

March 6: Ema Nikolovska, mezzo-soprano. 7 p.m., Folly Theater.

April 5: Step Afrika! 7 p.m., Folly Theater.

April 7: Emanuel Ax, piano. 3 p.m., Folly Theater.

Date to be determined: Chelsea Guo, soprano and piano, and Joseph Parrish, bass-baritone. Free Discovery Concerto. Time TBA, Folly Theater.

Date to be determined: Santiago Cañón-Valencia, cello. Time TBA, Folly Theater.

WESTPORT PRESBYTERIAN — GAIL ARCHER

Gail Archer, organist at Vassar College and director of the music program at Barnard College, will give a “Concert for Peace” April 15 at Westport Presbyterian Church. The program will include music by Russian and Ukrainian composers.

7 p.m. April 15. Westport Presbyterian Church, 201 Westport Road. Free.
westportpresbyterian.org.

You can reach Patrick Neas at patrickneas@kcartsbeat.com and follow his Facebook page, KC Arts Beat, at www.facebook.com/kcartsbeat.

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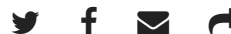
CLASSICAL MUSIC & DANCE

Guest conductor to lead Kansas City Symphony in variety of styles, including Gershwin

BY PATRICK NEAS SPECIAL TO THE STAR

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MARCH 24, 2023 5:30 AM



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CLASSICAL MUSIC & DANCE

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City Symphony with a stellar season

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