

SUPERSTARS AND DISCOVERIES

New Season is Exciting Mix of Old and New



PHOTO BY OJ SLAUGHTER

Hilary Hahn, violin



PHOTO BY KRISTIN HOEBERMANN

Juan Diego Flórez, tenor

By Patrick Neas

The Harriman-Jewell Series' 59th season is chock-full of longtime favorites like Emanuel Ax, as well as exciting new offerings, including a collaboration with the Mark Morris Dance Group celebrating the late, great Kansas City native Burt Bacharach. There are also some of the world's finest orchestras and free Discovery concerts, too.

"We always have a roster of favorite artists we just can't get enough of, that we always want to bring back, like the tenor Juan Diego Flórez," said Clark Morris, executive and artistic director of the Harriman-Jewell Series.

The Peruvian opera superstar is one of the most sought-after singers in the world, but Kansas City will have a chance to hear him Nov. 26. Other world-class musicians on the schedule include violinist Hilary Hahn on Oct. 12 and Ax on March 6.

In addition to the Mark Morris Group on Nov. 17, other dance offerings include Step Afrika!, an American ensemble devoted to African stepping, and NoGravity.

"NoGravity are Italian, and they are masters of visual artistry," said Morris.

The group will perform a dance version of Dante's "Divine Comedy."

Three great orchestras will raise the rafters in Helzberg Hall: Minería Symphony Orchestra of Mexico conducted by Carlos Miguel Prieto, the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra with pianist Isata Kanneh-Mason and the National Symphony Orchestra of Ukraine conducted by Volodymyr Sirenko.

The season includes four free Discovery concerts, including the season opener on Sept. 9 featuring pianist Mahani Teave from Easter Island.

"Mahani is doing her first American tour, and her recital debut will be her Discovery concert in Kansas City," Morris said. "Her concert will add to our history of debuts, going all the way back to Luciano Pavarotti in 1973."

There are also some unique events, like John Adams' Christmas oratorio "El Niño" on Dec. 11 and Disney Pixar's *Coco in Concert* on Nov. 3. "Coco" is an animated film inspired by the Mexican holiday Day of the Dead. It will be accompanied by the 20-member Orquesta Folclórica Nacional de México.

"The musicians are really a mariachi band," Morris said. "We think it's going to be a really great event for grandparents to take their grandkids to or parents to take their children to. I can't wait to see it myself."



Julia Bullock, soprano *El Niño: Nativity Reconsidered*, an American Modern Opera Company Production.

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

Oct. 13: 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 with accordion, bass, and guitar ensemble. Free Discovery Concert (7 p.m. Atkins Auditorium at The Nelson-Atkins Museum)



Isata Kanneh-Mason, piano

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: *El Niño: Nativity Reconsidered*, an American Modern Opera Company Production. (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)

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

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

Spring 2024: Chelsea Guo, soprano and piano, and Joseph Parrish, bass-baritone. Free Discovery Concerto. (Time to be determined. Folly Theater)

Spring 2024: Santiago Cañón-Valencia, cello (Time to be determined. Folly Theater)

For tickets and a complete listing of all concerts, go to hjseries.org.