



Aram Demirjian, Music Director

## Press Release

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### KNOXVILLE SYMPHONY OPENS 82<sup>nd</sup> SEASON WITH “KNOXVILLE POSTCARDS” LED BY MUSIC DIRECTOR ARAM DEMIRJIAN

**Knoxville, TN – August 24, 2017**– On September 21 and 22, the **Knoxville Symphony Orchestra** will kick off its 82<sup>nd</sup> season and the Moxley Carmichael Masterworks Series with *Knoxville Postcards: A Musical Love Letter to Knoxville*. **KSO Music Director Aram Demirjian** conducts the Orchestra and special guests for this artistic and celebratory season opener. The concert will take place on **Thursday, September 21 and Friday, September 22 at 7:30 p.m. at the Tennessee Theatre**. These performances are sponsored by Twin City Dealerships. [View tickets and information here.](#)

Musical selections include a world premiere commission dedicated to Knoxville by American composer **Michael Schachter** entitled “Overture to Knoxville,” Samuel Barber’s “Knoxville: Summer of 1915,” and Aaron Copland’s Suite from “The Tender Land.” The program concludes with Sergei Rachmaninoff’s Symphonic Dances. Featured guest artists are **Joelle Harvey**, soprano; **R.B. Morris**, Knoxville Poet Laureate; **Carson Newman A Capella Choir**, and the brass section of the **University of Tennessee Symphony Orchestra**. This is **Aram Demirjian’s** second season as KSO music director after he was appointed on June 1, 2016 and he will conduct six of the eight [Moxley Carmichael Masterworks Series](#) performances this season.

**Music Director Aram Demirjian** said, “One of the things I love about Knoxville is the breadth of musical variety it contains -- from bluegrass to jazz to a statue of Rachmaninoff. It seemed fitting to perform the last piece Rachmaninoff ever wrote in the city where he performed his last concert, and the Symphonic Dances are an electrifying journey, from their opening whispers all the way to the powerful strike of the gong that ends the piece. This pair of concerts also includes Aaron Copland, whose music occupies a special place in my heart, and Samuel Barber’s “Knoxville: Summer of 1915” which was inspired by the text by James Agee. But this program isn’t just about the past -- it is also about the future, and the future partially depends on bringing new music into the world, which is why we have commissioned a new overture by one of my dearest friends, Michael Schachter. Michael is a composer

who was just as endeared by East Tennessee's musical landscape as I was when he traveled here to soak in our city as he was writing the piece, to be premiered by the Knoxville Symphony Orchestra on this pair of concerts.

This program is the first stage of what I plan to make a multi-year exploration of our city's fascinating musical heritage. This program is a musical representation of what I might put down in a postcard to my loved ones, telling them about everything I am discovering in my new home. The more I learn about that history, the more I want to infuse it into everything we do -- to truly be Knoxville's orchestra."

Patrons can attend **pre-concert chats at 6:30 p.m.** in the concert hall before each performance. Guest performers will offer their personal perspective and audience members will have a chance for Q&A with the artists. This is a unique get-to-know-you opportunity! **There will be a very special Opening Night champagne toast in the Tennessee Theatre lobby at 7:00 p.m. All patrons are invited to enjoy complimentary champagne and toast to the next KSO season!**

Tickets may be purchased by calling 865-291-3310 or visiting our [website](#). Single tickets range from \$15.00 - \$85.00. Groups of 10 or more can purchase tickets at a discounted rate by calling 865-521-2337.

#### **About Aram Demirjian:**

Dynamic young conductor **Aram Demirjian** is currently serving as Music Director for the Knoxville Symphony Orchestra after a four-year stint as Associate Conductor at the Kansas City Symphony. American-born and of Armenian descent, Demirjian is already leaving his mark on the region's musical culture with creative programming, innovative collaborations and energetic community engagement. Recent conducting highlights include appearances with the St. Louis, Indianapolis and San Antonio symphonies, the Louisiana Philharmonic and his European debut with the Lausanne Chamber Orchestra. Demirjian is a recipient of the Solti Foundation U.S. Career Assistance Award in 2017 and holds the 2011 Robert J. Harth Conducting Prize from the Aspen Music Festival, where he was a three-time Conducting Fellow in the Aspen Conducting Academy. Demirjian holds a Bachelor of Arts in music and government from Harvard University and a Master of Music in Orchestral Conducting from New England Conservatory.

#### **About the KSO**

Established in 1935, and now under the leadership of Music Director Aram Demirjian, the KSO has contributed to the cultural life in East Tennessee continuously for more than 80 years, providing excellence in musical and educational programs. The Orchestra consists of 80 professional musicians and performs 300 programs throughout the region each season, reaching audiences of more than

200,000 people. The KSO performs in traditional venues such as the Tennessee Theatre, Bijou Theatre and the Civic Auditorium as well as non-traditional places like hospitals, schools, city parks and churches. For more information regarding the KSO, please visit [www.knoxvillesymphony.com](http://www.knoxvillesymphony.com) or call 865-291-3310.

**Social Media:** Knoxsymphony opens 82<sup>nd</sup> Season w/Knoxville Postcards, a musical love letter to Knoxville led by @aramdemirjian. Sept. 21-22, 7:30 PM @tntheatre. 865-291-3310. [Follow @knoxsymphony on Twitter](#) and [Like KSO on Facebook](#).

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