

Press Release

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KNOXVILLE SYMPHONY OPENS 83rd SEASON WITH HITS OF BRAHMS AND RACHMANINOFF

Knoxville, TN – Sept. 6, 2018– On September 20 and 21, the **Knoxville Symphony Orchestra** will kick off its 83rd season and the Moxley Carmichael Masterworks Series with *Brahms and Rachmaninoff*. **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 20 and Friday, September 21 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 Jonathan Leshnoff's *Starburst*, Rachmaninoff's Piano Concerto No. 2 featuring Joyce Yang, and Brahms' Symphony No. 1. This is Aram Demirjian's third season as KSO Music Director.

KSO Music Director Aram Demirjian said, "This season is somewhat of a dialogue across the past, present and future. We will revisit music from our past, explore why it's relevant to us today and discover the repertoire that will shape our musical future. Our first program starts off this journey with three emotionally turbulent pieces with youthful energy, from composers who were still just making their marks in the symphonic world.

American composer Jonathan Leshnoff's *Starburst* is true to its name -- it is a fiery burst of symphonic energy that easily qualifies for 'contemporary classic' status, as it has been performed frequently by orchestras across the country in the eight years since Jonathan wrote it. In Brahms' First Symphony and Rachmaninoff's Second Piano Concerto, you have two deeply Romantic works by composers in the throes of anxiety over whether they could create music that would endure the test of time. In Rachmaninoff's compositional experience, you have one of the earliest recorded examples of a composer seeking the help of a psychologist. The humanity and vulnerability of each composer that comes through is one of the chief reasons I think these pieces resonate deeply with so many of us. I am also delighted to welcome back my friend, pianist Joyce Yang, who is a distinctively engaging artist and one of the true treasures of the musical world."

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

Aram Demirjian is the eighth Music Director of the Knoxville Symphony Orchestra and is internationally sought after for his dynamic performances and innovative programming. He served previously as the Associate Conductor of the Kansas City Symphony. A devoted educator, Demirjian has created and conducted education and family concerts for orchestras across the country. Demirjian has conducted The Philadelphia Orchestra, the Detroit, Houston, Indianapolis, St. Louis and Wichita symphonies, the Minnesota and Sarasota orchestras, the Louisiana Philharmonic and appearances at the Tanglewood Music Center and Breckenridge Music Festival. Demirjian is the winner of a 2017 Solti Foundation U.S. Career Assistance Award and 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 joint Bachelor of Arts in Music and Government from Harvard University and a Master of Music in Orchestral Conducting from New England Conservatory.

About Joyce Yang

Pianist Joyce Yang is a Van Cliburn International Piano Competition silver medalist and Avery Fisher Career Grant recipient. Born in 1986 in Seoul, South Korea, Yang received her first piano lesson at the age of four. Over the next few years, she won several national piano competitions in her native country. She went on to make a number of concerto and recital appearances in Seoul and Daejeon. In 1997, Yang moved to the United States. After winning the Philadelphia Orchestra's Greenfield Student Competition, she performed Prokofiev's Third Piano Concerto with that orchestra at just 12 years old. She graduated from Juilliard with special honor as the recipient of the school's 2010 Arthur Rubinstein Prize, and in 2011 she won its 30th Annual William A. Petschek Piano Recital Award. Yang showcases her colorful musical personality in solo recitals and collaborations with the world's top orchestras and chamber musicians.

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 or call 865-291-3310.

Social Media: @Knoxsymphony opens season w/best of Brahms & Rachmaninoff. Pianist @JoyceYang joins the KSO, led by @aramdemirjian. Sept. 20-21, 7:30 PM @tntheatre. 865-291-3310. [Follow @knoxsymphony on Twitter](#) and [Like KSO on Facebook](#).

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