

SAINT-SAËNS

SYMPHONY No. 3 "ORGAN"

*INTRODUCTION AND
RONDO CAPRICCIOSO
LA MUSE ET LE POËTE*

MICHAEL STERN
KANSAS CITY
SYMPHONY

JAN KRAYBILL, ORGAN
NOAH GELLER, VIOLIN
MARK GIBBS, CELLO



A 'PROF' JOHNSON 24-BIT **HDCD** RECORDING



IN THE PARLANCE OF AN EARLIER AGE, CHARLES CAMILLE SAINT-SAËNS (1835-1921) was "a man of many parts." As an active performer, he was described by no less a critic than Hector Berlioz as "an absolutely shattering master pianist," and he was similarly admired as an organist. He wrote and published poetry and at least one staged drama; he wrote about mathematics, ancient music, and his contemporaries. He knew Berlioz, lived long enough to know Stravinsky, and was among the numerous younger composers who received significant encouragement from Liszt, to whom he dedicated the symphony recorded here. His long life saw the birth and death of such composers as Tchaikovsky, Chabrier, Bizet, Musorgsky, Dvořák, Mahler, Grieg and Debussy. He was a founder of the Société Nationale de Musique, and editor of works by Rameau and other earlier masters. He even wrote the very first "film score," for *L'Assassinat du Duc de Guise*, in 1908. (Sound movies, of course, did not come into being until 1928, seven years after his death. This score and subsequent ones from other composers before 1928 were intended for live performance during the showing of a silent film.) Among his other achievements, he is credited with making both the symphony and the symphonic poem significant parts of French musical life, along with formerly neglected works of such masters as Beethoven, Mozart, Bach and Handel. While all five of his piano concertos were composed for his own use, he also

performed all the Mozart concertos, and provided cadenzas for them. His love of travel, and his particular happiness in Egypt and Algeria, are reflected in several compositions, and it was in Algiers that he died, at the age of 86.

Saint-Saëns's final symphony—a work of importance not only among his own compositions, but in the establishment of this form in French music—is designated No. 3, but is actually the last of five, the composer having withheld from publication two of the four he composed between the ages of 14 and 23. He was in his 51st year when he composed this Symphony in C minor, early in 1886, and conducted its first performance on May 19 of that year, in a concert of the Philharmonic Society of London. It is thoroughly different from all earlier French symphonies, specifically including those by Saint-Saëns himself. Together with the Symphony in D minor of the Belgian-born César Franck, which followed at the end of the same decade, it formed the cornerstone of the late-Romantic symphonic edifice we recognize now as being characteristically French.

The dedication of this work is of greater than usual significance for such gestures. Saint-Saëns once wrote of “the orchestral works of Franz Liszt, whom the world calls a great pianist in order to avoid acknowledging him as one of the greatest composers of our time.” Liszt befriended Saint-Saëns in Paris at the time of the premiere of the latter's Second Piano

Concerto, in 1868, and, among other significant acts of support, he conducted the premiere of Saint-Saëns's opera *Samson et Dalila* at Weimar in 1877. No one's friendship could have pleased Saint-Saëns as much. His profound admiration for Liszt had developed well before their first meeting, and he was the first French composer (or in any event the first to make a difference) to take up the symphonic poem, a form whose very "invention" is credited to Liszt. The Symphony in C minor was an outright tribute to Liszt, in its substance and structure as well as the dedication. Liszt, however, died ten weeks after the work's London premiere, without hearing the work, and for the published score Saint-Saëns changed his dedication to read "*À la mémoire de Franz Liszt.*"

Added to the large orchestra for this work are the instruments on which both Liszt and Saint-Saëns were outstanding virtuoso performers: the organ, which plays a supportive role early in the work but comes into solo prominence in the finale, and the piano, played *à quatre mains* in some sections, two hands in others. For the premiere, in London, Saint-Saëns's detailed analytical note advised, regarding the work's structure, "This Symphony, divided into two parts, nevertheless includes practically the traditional four movements: the first, checked in development, serves as an introduction to the *Adagio*, and the scherzo is connected after the same manner with the finale. The composer has thus sought to shun in a

certain measure the interminable repetitions which are more and more disappearing from instrumental music.”

As in so many of Liszt’s works (and those of Berlioz, and several of Saint-Saëns’s earlier ones, as well as the symphonies of Franck and his disciples), there is a “motto” theme (in this instance apparently based on the *Dies irae*, which also intrigued so many of those other composers), introduced at the outset and subjected to various transformations in the succeeding sections of this symphony. A brief and somewhat mysterious introduction leads to a restless *Allegro moderato*. The restlessness subsides to prepare for the expansive *Adagio* that follows, with a theme which Saint-Saëns described as being “extremely peaceful and contemplative.” Subsequent writers have used such terms as “inward” and “heart-easing.” Here the organ makes itself felt as part of the orchestral coloring, and the theme is taken up and expanded by various woodwind and brass instruments. The theme of the *Allegro* returns to insert a note of unrest, but strings and organ prevail to end the movement in a more reassuring mood.

The two movements that constitute the symphony’s second part contrast brilliantly with the preceding sections, though they are built on much the same material. The scherzo is stunning in its demonic vigor, pointing up an element of fantasy. The note for the premiere called attention to “arpeggios

and scales swift as lightning, on the piano." The organ comes to the fore in the finale, which enters majestically and expands in confidence and grandeur. Following a brief pastoral interlude, scored intimately for flute, oboe, English horn and clarinet, the coda reaches a peak of exultation, capped by ringing fanfares.

Saint-Saëns had let 27 years go by after composing the last of his four early symphonies, and might not have thought of composing another if he had not been asked specifically for a symphony by the Philharmonic Society (the same London organization that had commissioned Beethoven's Ninth Symphony and Dvořák's Seventh). He was only 50 years old at the time, and had three dozen years left to him, but he clearly regarded the C minor Symphony as his valedictory effort as a symphonist. "With it I have given all I could give," he wrote; "what I did, I could not achieve again."

Fairly early in his long creative life, Saint-Saëns became an admirer and friend of the Spanish violinist Pablo de Sarasate (1844-1908), who was a reigning virtuoso before he was out of his teens. Saint-Saëns composed his Violin Concerto No. 1 (a *Concertstück* in its format and proportions, and actually preceded by the concerto published as "No. 2") for Sarasate in 1867, and the last and most popular of his three violin concertos for

him 14 years later. The INTRODUCTION AND RONDO CAPRICCIOSO, the most enduringly popular of Saint-Saëns's several short pieces for violin and orchestra, was composed for Sarasate earlier than either of those concertos—in 1863, when the violinist was 19. It is uncomplicated, neatly organized, and blessed with infectious tunes. The character of the melodies and the layout of the piece have suggested to many listeners the recitative-aria-cabaletta sequence in Italian opera.

The span of 18 years during which Saint-Saëns wrote his three concerted works for Sarasate was a period in which the violinist was the recipient of similar tributes from various other composers, among them a concerto and the famous *Symphonie espagnole* from Édouard Lalo, and the *Scottish Fantasy* from Max Bruch. Sarasate himself composed a number of very effective short pieces in Spanish dance forms for violin and piano, and the fantasy *Gypsy Airs* (for some reason more widely known under its German title, *Zigeunerweisen*), which is usually heard with orchestral accompaniment. The Saint-Saëns work recorded here, though, was one of Sarasate's favorite pieces from the first time he played it, and its popularity has never dimmed, among violinists or their audiences; it remains today one of the most beloved of all such compact pieces for violin and orchestra, and one of the most demanding. Since Saint-Saëns

said of himself, "I produce music as an apple tree produces apples," he would have been pleased with Lawrence Gilman's reference to this work as "one of the golden apples of Saint-Saëns's tonal garden."

In sharp contrast with the familiarity and affection that characterize the two works just discussed, the remaining one in this recorded collection is likely to be a new discovery for the vast majority of today's listeners. As its opus number indicates, *LA MUSE ET LE POÈTE* is a late work, dated 1910, the year Saint-Saëns turned 75, and it is a curious piece, to be sure, combining elements of the concerto (double concerto in this case, with solo parts for violin and for cello) and the symphonic poem. The violin is the voice of the Muse, tender and lyrical at first, while the cello, representing the Poet, is somewhat more earthy and forceful in its initial appearance. As the music moves into a more animated state, the violin takes on a greater sense of urgency, and the cello, by way of balance, adopts a more expansive, warm-hearted character. Eventually the two combine on more or less equal levels of intensity, their exchange set forth in that instinctive balance of passion, elegance and sure-handed craftsmanship that empowered and, one might say, simply defined Saint-Saens throughout his creative life.

—RICHARD FREED



Music Director **MICHAEL STERN** has embarked on his second decade with the Kansas City Symphony, hailed for its remarkable artistic ascent, inventive programming, organizational development and stability, and the extraordinary growth of its varied audiences since his tenure began. Under his thoughtful direction, the Symphony has partnered with Grammy® Award-winning Reference Recordings for an ongoing series of highly praised CDs and ushered in a new era of critical acclaim and sold-out concerts since moving to the acoustically superior Helzberg Hall at the \$400 million Kauffman Center for the Performing Arts in

2011. Stern is also the founding artistic director and principal conductor of the IRIS Orchestra in Tennessee. Since 2000, this unique group has been widely praised for its virtuosity and programming, producing a string of recordings and acclaimed commissioned new works by American composers. Stern has led orchestras throughout Europe and Asia, including the London, NHK and Vienna Radio symphonies; the Israel, London, Helsinki, Royal Stockholm and Moscow philharmonics; and the Budapest Radio Symphony Orchestra, Orchestre de Paris and National Symphony of Taiwan, among many others. He has appeared with major orchestras across the United States as well as at many summer festivals. A frequent visitor to the Aspen Music Festival, Stern also has served on the faculty of the American Academy of Conducting at Aspen.

Passionately committed to education, Stern frequently works with students at the Curtis Institute and a number of festivals, including the National Repertory Orchestra, National Orchestral Institute, The Festival at Round Top and others.

Stern received his music degree from the Curtis Institute of Music in Philadelphia under the guidance of noted conductor and scholar Max Rudolf. Stern co-edited the third

edition of Rudolf's famous textbook, "The Grammar of Conducting," and also edited a new volume of Rudolf's collected writings and correspondence. Stern is a 1981 graduate of Harvard University, where he earned a degree in American history.



JAN KRAYBILL (DMA, FAGO) is Principal Organist for The Dome and Spire Organ Foundation, an affiliate of Community of Christ International Headquarters in Independence, Missouri, and Organ Conservator at the Kauffman Center for the Performing Arts in Kansas City. As such, she regularly plays and oversees the care of the three largest pipe organs in the Kansas City metropolitan area: Community of Christ's 113-rank Aeolian-Skinner (installed in 1959) and 102-rank Casavant (1993), and the 102-rank Julia Irene Kauffman Casavant (2011). At Community of Christ, Dr. Kraybill performs regularly,

teaches workshops, leads international hymn festivals, co-leads the Dome and Spire concert series, and is a resource person for the denomination's musicians. At the Kauffman Center, she performs and hosts guest organists in both solo and collaborative musical events, including regular appearances with a major tenant of the Center, the Kansas City Symphony and Chorus. As a junior in high school in Colby, Kansas, Jan performed her first European piano recital in Andover, England. She earned education and piano performance degrees from Kansas State University in Manhattan, Kansas, and her doctorate in organ performance is from the Conservatory of Music and Dance at the University of Missouri-Kansas City. In 2010 she earned the Fellow certificate from the American Guild of

Organists, the highest certification available for organists. Dr. Kraybill maintains an active concert career, having appeared as a soloist and collaborative artist throughout the United States and in Canada, Germany, Great Britain, Poland, Russia, South Korea, and Tahiti; she has been featured at regional and national conventions of the AGO and other musicians' organizations. She has recorded three solo CDs on Community of Christ's instruments, and this disc is the first on the Julia Irene Kauffman Casavant. Jan is also a clinician, organ consultant, and instructor of classes on fostering personal creativity.

David Bickley



VIOLINIST NOAH GELLER, winner of numerous competitions and prizes, has performed throughout the United States and abroad. At the invitation of Music Director Michael Stern, Geller became the Kansas City Symphony concertmaster in 2012 and occupies the Miller Nichols Chair. He has since appeared frequently as soloist with the Symphony. Geller is also an enthusiastic music educator. Upon his arrival in Kansas City, he was appointed to the position of adjunct associate professor of violin at the University of Missouri-Kansas City Conservatory of Music and Dance.

Previously, Geller was a member of the Philadelphia Orchestra, where he served as acting assistant concertmaster for the 2010 and 2011 seasons. While with the Philadelphia Orchestra, Geller performed throughout the United States, Europe and Asia, and he regularly collaborated with the world's finest conductors.

An active chamber musician, Geller has performed at the Marlboro, Kingston, Saratoga, Heartland and Taos festivals, and he has appeared on the Lyon and Healy, Dolce Suono, Philadelphia Museum of Art and Lyric Chamber Music Society series,

among others. He is an original member of Shir Ami, an ensemble dedicated to the music of composers whose lives were adversely affected by the Holocaust.

Geller is a laureate of the 2007 Michael Hill International Violin Competition in New Zealand, where he performed solo recitals in Queenstown and chamber music in Auckland's Town Hall. He received top prizes at the Corpus Christi International Competition, Wisconsin Public Radio's Neale-Silva Young Artists' Competition and the Music Academy of the West Concerto Competition. Following performances at the Tanglewood Music Festival, Geller was awarded the Jules C. Reiner violin prize.

David Bickley



Praised by the Kansas City Star for his "sweet, sensuous tone and a sophisticated feel for long-breathed lines," **MARK TSUYOSHI GIBBS** serves as principal cellist of the Kansas City Symphony and occupies the Robert A. Kipp Chair.

Prior to his appointment in Kansas City in 1999, Gibbs earned both his bachelor's and master's degrees from Northwestern University, where he was a student of Hans Jorgen Jensen. At Northwestern, Gibbs was named principal cellist of the Northwestern University Symphony Orchestra and the Civic Orchestra of Chicago. He also worked closely with Professor Jensen as a teaching assistant.

Gibbs' numerous awards include the Northwestern University Civic Scholar String Fellowship, the Union League of Chicago Civic and Arts Foundation Prize, first place in the Northwestern University School of Music Concerto Competition, first prize in the Music Teachers National Association Collegiate Artist National Competition as well as grand prize in the American String Teachers Association National Solo Competition. He has appeared as a soloist with the Kansas City Symphony and has presented master-

classes, recitals and performed concertos at area universities. He is proud to be known as a "Fine Kansan Cellist" (Audiophilia Online Magazine) and currently resides in Olathe, Kansas, with his wife, the Kansas City Symphony principal second violinist Tamamo Someya Gibbs, and their daughters, Mika and Maho.

Todd Rosenberg



Founded by R. Crosby Kemper, Jr., in 1982, the KANSAS CITY SYMPHONY has risen to national prominence as a powerful cultural force in its region. Under the inspired leadership of Music Director Michael Stern, the Symphony has set an impressive new standard for artistic excellence.

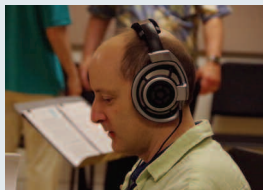
Since 2011, the Symphony has called the acoustically superior Helzberg Hall at the Kauffman Center for the Performing Arts its home, performing sold-out concerts featuring imaginative programming to growing critical acclaim. In the 2013-14 season, the Symphony reached an audience of more than one million people through its various concert series, education programs, community engagement initiatives, recordings as well as public radio and television broadcasts. In that same season, live Symphony concerts drew audience members from eight foreign countries and all 50 states.

In 2008, the Symphony began its ongoing partnership with Reference Recordings. Together, they have released four highly-praised CDs, including the Grammy® winning "Britten's Orchestra" in 2009. The Symphony also was featured in a nationally broadcast PBS special with opera superstar Joyce DiDonato.

The Symphony benefits from the artistic contributions of Associate Conductor Aram Demirjian, who leads the orchestra for its education, pops and other concert programs, and Chorus Director Charles Bruffy, whose 160-voice strong Symphony Chorus shares the stage for a number of Symphony performances each season. The Symphony also performs as resident orchestra for the Lyric Opera of Kansas City and Kansas City Ballet.

The Kansas City Symphony is governed by a Board of Directors under the leadership of Board Chair William M. Lyons, administered by a full-time staff of dedicated professionals led by Executive Director Frank Byrne and supported by more than 700 volunteers. In recent years, the Symphony has experienced dramatic audience and revenue growth, as well as unprecedented financial stability. The Symphony also takes pride in its outstanding organizational culture and positive, collaborative relationships among all constituents, making it a model for the 21st century American orchestra.

DAVID FROST has produced numerous critically acclaimed recordings, released by many major and independent labels. Honors include 14 Grammy® Awards, among them four for Classical Producer of the Year. His work for Reference Recordings includes four previous titles with the Kansas City Symphony. For one of these, "Britten's Orchestra" (RR-120SACD), Keith O. Johnson and David Frost won the Grammy® for Best Surround Sound Album at the 53rd annual Grammy Awards.



As a staff producer at BMG Classics (RCA Red Seal) for nearly a decade, he collaborated with RCA's most important artists to create dozens of albums. He has been guest faculty at the Banff Centre and the Manhattan School of Music, giving workshops and lectures on record producing.

An accomplished pianist, David Frost has performed Beethoven's "Emperor" Concerto at Carnegie Hall and has made two recordings, one titled Romantic Variations and one of the music of Scott Joplin. He has both a Bachelor's and a Master's degree from the Juilliard School of Music.

KANSAS CITY SYMPHONY

Michael Stern, *Music Director* – Aram Demirjian, *Associate Conductor*

FIRST VIOLINS

Noah Geller
Concertmaster
Miller Nichols Chair
Sunho Kim
Associate Concertmaster
Dorris Dai Janssen
Acting Assistant Concertmaster
Gregory Sandomirsky,
Associate Concertmaster Emeritus
Alex Shum
Vladimir Rykov
Anne-Marie Brown
Susan Goldenberg
Paul Hatton-Soto
Jessica Wakefield Hao
Anthony DeMarco
Tomoko Iguchi
Andrea Oh
Will Haapaniemi
* Heidi Han
‡ Andrew Fuller

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Tamamo Someya Gibbs,
Principal
Kathy Haid Berry,
Associate Principal

Kristin Velicer, *Assistant Principal*

Kevin Hao
Sara Hurst
Mary Garcia Grant
Chia-Fei Lin
Karen Klein
Adrienne Geisler
Francesca Manheim
Nancy Beckmann
Rena Ishii
* Stephanie Cathcart
* Lisa Jackson
‡ Eri Kosaka
‡ David Repking

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Matthew Rombaum,
Associate Principal
Jessica Nance,
Assistant Principal
Jenifer Richison
Youming Chen
Marvin Gruenbaum
Kent Brauning
Duke Lee
Sean Brumble
‡ Laura Fuller

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Alexander East,
Assistant Principal
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Rung Lee
Maria Crosby
Richard Bell
John Eadie
Allen Probus
‡ Ho Anthony Ahn

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Associate Principal
Richard Ryan
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Louis Newman,
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* Barron Weir
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Associate Principal
Diane Schick

PICCOLO
Diane Schick

OBOES
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Shirley Bush Helzberg *Chair*
Barbara Bishop,
Associate Principal
Kenneth Lawrence

ENGLISH HORN
Kenneth Lawrence

CLARINETS
Raymond Santos, *Principal*
Boris Allakhverdyan,
Associate Principal
Tzu-Ying Huang

E-FLAT CLARINET
Boris Allakhverdyan

BASS CLARINET
Tzu-Ying Huang

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Miles Maner, *Associate Principal*
Marita Abner

CONTRABASSOON
Miles Maner

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David Sullivan,
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David Gamble
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Roger Oyster, *Principal*
Porter Wyatt Henderson,
Associate Principal
David Becker
‡ Graeme Mutchler

BASS TROMBONE
David Becker
‡ Graeme Mutchler

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Associate Principal

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* Daniel Velicer

ORGAN
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Assistant Personnel Manager
* Substitute/Extra Musician

‡ On Leave of Absence

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Producer: David Frost

Recording Engineer: Keith O. Johnson

Recorded by: Sean Royce Martin

Editing: David Frost

Mastering Engineer: Keith O. Johnson

Executive Producers: J. Tamblyn Henderson, Jr.
& Marcia Gordon Martin

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Page 2 Painting of Camille Saint-Saëns: A.Rossi, 1903

Saint-Saens Symphony No. 3 "Organ"
was performed on the Julia Irene Kauffman Casavant Organ.

Special Thanks to the Kansas City Symphony staff:
Frank Byrne, Executive Director;
Emma Kail, General Manager; Justin White, Personnel Manager;
Rebecca Martin, Director of Artistic Operations;
and the staff of Helzberg Hall,
Kauffman Center for the Performing Arts, Kansas City, Missouri

For 35 years KEITH O. JOHNSON has served as Technical Director, Recording Engineer and one of the founding partners of Reference Recordings. He has engineered over 130 releases in the RR catalog, and many for other labels. He is a true audio legend, having designed and patented numerous innovative products in the professional and consumer fields, including (with digital engineer Michael Pflaumer) the revolutionary HDCD (High Definition Compatible Digital) encoding process. The RR Sound comes from his singular methods and equipment, almost all hand-built or extensively modified by him. His microphone techniques range from purist to complex, depending on the musical forces and the performing space involved.



For his work with the Kansas City Symphony on *Britten's Orchestra* (RR-120SACD), he received the Grammy® for Best Surround Sound Album in 2011, shared with producer David Frost. He has also received 7 Grammy® nominations for Best Engineering, Classical, and a host of other industry awards and nominations, including the prestigious **Audio Engineering Society Silver Medal Award** in 2008. The Silver Medal Award, formerly the Emile Berliner Award, is given in recognition of outstanding development or achievement in the field of audio engineering. Other winners of this award include: Ray Dolby, Paul Klipsch, Robert Moog, and Willi Studer.

