

UMS ANNOUNCES 2020-21 SEASON

**Acclaimed Arts Presenter's 142nd Lineup Includes Season-Long Focus
on Artists from the Arab World and Its Diaspora**

Berlin Philharmonic Returns with New Chief Conductor

Residency to include two public performances,
master classes, panel discussions, and workshops

Friday, November 13 and Saturday, November 14 at Hill Auditorium

UMS to Produce and Present New Theatrical Concert Version of *Rodgers & Hammerstein's South Pacific*

After debut at UMS, production will tour to Grand Rapids and then
be presented on The Philadelphia Orchestra's subscription series

Saturday, February 20 and Sunday, February 21 at Hill Auditorium

ANN ARBOR, MI (April 30, 2020) – The **University Musical Society (UMS)** announces its 142nd season, which runs from September 2020 through April 2021. A long-standing, innovative leader in the performing arts presenting world and a 2014 recipient of the National Medal of Arts, UMS unlocks the transformative power of music, theater, and dance with a season designed to entertain, stretch the imagination, and introduce audiences to new ideas. In addition to presenting world-class performances, UMS is also committed to creating unique and engaging ways for audiences to connect with the artists on stage through a robust offering of education and community engagement activities. A full list of performances by series is included at the end of this release and a chronological listing is available for download at ums.org/press.

“UMS has served as a present and positive force within our community throughout its 142-year history, providing purpose, perspective, and a sense of possibility and aspiration for all of us in trying times,” says UMS president Matthew VanBesien. “As we emerge from this particularly challenging time, we’re eager to continue our work convening people for the shared purpose of experiencing the beauty of performance and human expression.”

Throughout the 2020-21 season, UMS is pleased to continue a focus on artists, institutions, and ensembles from the Arab World and its diaspora. Artistic projects in this realm will explore the depth, complexity, and diversity of perspectives among Arab and Arab-American artists and communities. The events will serve as a platform for community building and cultural exchange. The season's Arab World focus features Lebanese choreographer and theater maker **Ali Chahrour's *Layl (Night)***, **Farida Mohammad Ali** with the **Iraqi Maqam Ensemble**, the **National Arab Orchestra** with singer **Abeer Nehme**, and a celebratory evening of performances by violinist/composer **Mike Khoury**, choreographer **Leyya Tawil**, vocalist/producer/DJ **Tammy Lakkis**, and the Moroccan performance group **Kabareh Cheikhats**.

In November, UMS proudly welcomes the next chapter of the **Berlin Philharmonic's** magnificent legacy with the Ann Arbor debut of the orchestra's new chief conductor **Kirill Petrenko**. As part of the orchestra's only university residency on a limited US tour, Petrenko will lead two performances on **Friday, November 13** and **Saturday, November 14** at 8 pm. The Friday evening program features Webern's *Passacaglia* for Orchestra, Op. 1; Mendelssohn's Symphony No. 1 in c minor, Op. 11; and Brahms's Symphony No. 4 in e minor, Op. 98. On Saturday, the orchestra performs a program that pairs American works with tone poems of Richard Strauss, including Ives's *Central Park in the Dark*, Andrew Norman's *Unstuck*, and Strauss's *Till Eulenspiegel's Merry Pranks* and *Ein Heldenleben*. In addition to the performances, the residency will include opportunities for the public to attend panel discussions, workshops, and master classes.

The season also includes a collaboration with the University of Michigan's School of Music, Theatre & Dance and College of Literature, Science & the Arts in which UMS will produce and present a new theatrical concert production of Rodgers & Hammerstein's ***South Pacific***. The project will interrogate the beloved masterpiece through a contemporary lens, reconsidering long-held assumptions about race, gender, and American dominance that are at the heart of this shockingly contemporary classic of the American Musical Theater. **Mary Birnbaum** directs the debut performances on **Saturday, February 20** and **Sunday February 21**, which will feature a **cast of Broadway stars (to be announced)**, **U-M Musical Theatre students**, and the **Grand Rapids Symphony**, led by the project's music director **Andy Einhorn**. After the UMS performances, the production tours to Grand Rapids and will then be presented on The Philadelphia Orchestra's subscription series.

The UMS season kicks off in September with a season-opening weekend of high-profile performances: **Paul Taylor Dance Company** in two different programs on Friday and Saturday, September 11 and 12 at the Power Center and a recital performance by the beloved violinist **Itzhak Perlman** on Sunday, September 13 at Hill Auditorium, marking the 50th anniversary since his UMS debut.

Paul Taylor helped shape and define American modern dance from the earliest days of his career as a choreographer in 1954 until his death in 2018. An alumnus of the Martha Graham company, Taylor uniquely bridged the legendary founders of modern dance and the dance makers of the 21st century, creating 147 different works that covered an unprecedented range. These two performances feature Taylor's choreography as part of an international celebration of his legacy and vision for the future of modern dance.

Itzhak Perlman opens the UMS Choral Union Series with his twelfth UMS appearance since his 1970 UMS debut with The Philadelphia Orchestra. He will perform a recital program with pianist and longtime collaborator Rohan De Silva, just weeks after he celebrates his 75th birthday.

The full season includes:

142nd ANNUAL CHORAL UNION SERIES

11 concerts in historic **Hill Auditorium**.

- Revered violin virtuoso **Itzhak Perlman** opens the Choral Union Series on **Sunday, September 13** at 7 pm in recital with pianist and longtime collaborator Rohan De Silva. Program to be announced.
- The electrifying young Lithuanian conductor **Mirga Gražintė-Tyla** leads the **City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra and Chorus** in its UMS debut on **Thursday, October 22** at 7:30 pm. The first half of the program features cellist **Sheku Kanneh-Mason** in Elgar's Cello Concerto. Soprano Talis Trevigne, mezzo-soprano Dame Felicity Palmer, tenor Joshua Stewart, and bass-baritone Matthew Brook will join the orchestra for the second half of the program to perform Michael Tippett's *A Child of Our Time*, which will be performed only at UMS and Carnegie Hall.

- The **Berlin Philharmonic** returns with the Ann Arbor debut of the orchestra's new chief conductor **Kirill Petrenko**. Petrenko leads the orchestra in two performances on **Friday, November 13** and **Saturday, November 14** at 8 pm. The Friday evening program features Webern's *Passacaglia* for Orchestra, Op. 1; Mendelssohn's Symphony No. 1 in c minor, Op. 11; and Brahms's Symphony No. 4 in e minor, Op. 98. On Saturday, the orchestra performs a program that pairs American works with tone poems of Richard Strauss, including Ives's *Central Park in the Dark*, Andrew Norman's *Unstuck*, and Strauss's *Till Eulenspiegel's Merry Pranks* and *Ein Heldenleben*.
- Pianist **Jean-Yves Thibaudet**, violinist **Lisa Batiashvili**, and cellist **Gautier Capuçon** take the stage for a special trio performance on **Saturday, December 12** at 8 pm. The three virtuoso musicians and close friends will perform Shostakovich's Piano Trio No. 1 in c minor, Op. 8; Ravel's Piano Trio; and Mendelssohn's Piano Trio No. 2 in c minor, Op. 66.
- Music director **Valery Gergiev** leads his **Mariinsky Orchestra** on **Saturday, February 13** at 8 pm. The program includes Rachmaninoff's Symphony No. 2 in e minor, as well as Saint-Saëns's Piano Concerto No. 5 in F Major ("Egyptian"), featuring the young French pianist **Alexandre Kantorow** as soloist. The **UMS Choral Union** also joins the orchestra for Debussy's *Martyrdom of Saint Sebastian*.
- In collaboration with the University of Michigan's School of Music, Theatre & Dance and College of Literature, Science & the Arts, UMS will produce and present a new theatrical concert production of Rodgers & Hammerstein's *South Pacific*. The project will interrogate the beloved masterpiece through a contemporary lens, reconsidering long-held assumptions about the issues of race, gender, and American dominance that are at the heart of this shockingly contemporary classic of the American Musical Theater. **Mary Birnbaum** will direct the debut performances on **Saturday, February 20** and **Sunday February 21**, which will feature a **cast of Broadway stars (TBA)**, **U-M Musical Theatre students**, and the **Grand Rapids Symphony**, led by the project's music director **Andy Einhorn**.
- Pianist **Sir Andrés Schiff** returns **Saturday, March 13** at 8 pm with a program of Bach's *Overture in the French Style* in b minor, BWV 831; Beethoven's Piano Sonata No. 7 in D Major, Op. 10, No. 3; Haydn's Piano Sonata in b minor, Hob XVI:32; and Schubert's Piano Sonata in D Major, D. 850.
- **Orquesta Sinfónica Nacional de México** makes its first UMS appearance since 1958 with soloist **Gabriela Montero** on **Thursday, March 18** at 7:30 pm in a program featuring the work of

Mexican composers (Carlos Chávez, Silvestre Revueltas, and José Pablo Moncayo) as well as Montero's *Latin Concerto* for piano.

- Violinist **Joshua Bell** returns in recital with pianist Peter Dugan on **Friday, April 2** at 8 pm. Program to be announced.
- The 142nd Choral Union Series closes with a recital by pianist **Paul Lewis** on **Thursday, April 22**. Lewis, who has graciously stepped in for ailing pianists in past seasons, brings a unique recital program featuring Mendessohn's *Songs without Words*, Haydn's Sonata No. 61 in D Major, Schubert's Piano Sonata in B Major, D. 575, Scriabin's Five Preludes, and Mussorgsky's *Pictures at an Exhibition*.

58TH ANNUAL CHAMBER ARTS SERIES

Six concerts in **Rackham Auditorium**.

- The **Takács Quartet** returns **Saturday, October 17** at 8 pm for the ensemble's first UMS performance with its new violist Richard O'Neill. They'll perform Mozart's Quartet No. 15 in d minor, K. 421/417b and Dutilleux's *Ainsi la nuit*, as well as Schumann's Piano Quintet in E-flat Major, Op. 44 featuring **Jeremy Denk**.
- **Farida Mohammad Ali** and the **Iraqi Maqam Ensemble** make their UMS debut with a chamber performance on **Sunday, November 22** at 4 pm that showcases the tradition of classical *maqam*, a form of Arab art song that dates back to the ancient civilization of Mesopotamia and is typically sung by men. **This performance is also part of the global focus on the Arab World and its Diaspora.**
- The **Imani Winds** and the **Catalyst Quartet** team up on **Friday, January 29** at 8 pm for a special program titled *(im)migration: music of change*. Imani Winds starts the evening off with Santamaria's *Afro Blue*, followed by the Catalyst Quartet's performance of Villa-Lobos's String Quartet No. 1. The two ensembles then join forces to perform Roberto Sierra's *Concierto de Cámara* and *Sergeant McCauley*, a work written by Catalyst violinist Jessie Montgomery and co-commissioned by UMS.
- Canadian violinist **James Ehnes** and American pianist Orion Weiss make their UMS debuts together on **Sunday, February 14** at 4 pm. They'll perform a recital program of Schubert's Violin Sonata in g minor, D. 408; Prokofiev's Violin Sonata No. 2 in D Major, Op. 94a; Aaron Jay Kernis's *Two Movements with Bells*; and Saint-Saëns's Violin Sonata No. 1 in d minor, Op. 75.

- The 2017 M-Prize Competition-winning musicians of **Russian Renaissance** return **Thursday, April 15** at 7:30 pm with a unique blend of tradition and modernity that breathes new life into centuries-old Russian folk instruments. Performing on the balalaika, mandolin-like domra, button accordion, and giant contrabass balalaika, the ensemble transcends genres from classical to folk, jazz, and tango. Program to be announced.
- The **Jerusalem Quartet** with violinist **Pinchas Zukerman** and cellist **Amanda Forsyth** perform **Saturday, April 24** at 8 pm to close out both the Chamber Arts Series and the 142nd season with a program of Bruckner's Adagio from String Quintet in F Major, WAB 112; Dvořák's Sextet for Strings in A Major, Op. 48; and Brahms's Sextet for Strings in B-flat Major, Op. 18.

INTERNATIONAL THEATER SERIES

Three productions presented at the **Power Center for the Performing Arts** and another venue to be announced.

- The Lebanese choreographer and theater maker **Ali Chahrour's *Layl (Night)*** comes on **Saturday, November 21** at 8 pm. The first part of a trilogy on the topic of love, *Night* draws inspiration from Arabic stories, legends, and poems. The work references stories from the cultural memory of the Levant and Mesopotamia about the fate of lovers who challenged social and religious systems, only to be punished with separation. Performed in Arabic with English supertitles. **This performance is also part of the global focus on the Arab World and UMS Renegade.**
- Tim Crouch's ***Total Immediate Collective Imminent Terrestrial Salvation*** comes for a run of five performances Wednesday, January 27-Sunday, January 31. Presented through the parallel worlds of stage action and illustrated text, the play tells the story of a man who, compensating for his own failure, manipulates a group of people to sit in a place together and believe in something that isn't true. Venue to be announced. **This performance is also part of UMS Renegade.**
- The **Battersea Beatbox Academy**, a Southwest London-based collective of beatboxers, rappers, and vocalists aged 19-27, brings its production of ***Frankenstein: How to Make a Monster*** on **Friday, April 23** and **Saturday, April 24** at 8 pm. This reanimation of Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* uses thrilling theater and tongue-twisting vocal gymnastics to examine how the themes in Shelley's story still resonate today.

30TH ANNUAL DANCE SERIES

Five performances at the **Power Center for the Performing Arts** and the **Detroit Opera House**.

- **Paul Taylor Dance Company** will perform two different programs featuring Taylor's choreography as part of an international celebration of the seminal artist's legacy and vision for the future of modern dance. On **Friday, September 11** the company performs *Images, Runes*, and *Offenbach Overtures*. On **Saturday, September 12**, audiences will enjoy *Polaris*, *Piazzolla Caldera*, and *Brandenburgs*. Both performances take place at the Power Center at 8 pm.
- **Cloud Gate Dance Theater of Taiwan** returns to the Power Center on **Tuesday, November 17** at 7:30 pm with two pieces representing the past and future of the company. The program begins with *Dust*, a work choreographed by **Lin Hwai-Min**, who founded the company nearly 50 years ago. *Tongues*, a piece by the company's incoming artistic director **Cheng Tsung-lung**, rounds out the program with a nod to the future.
- The **Cleo Parker Robinson Dance Ensemble** performs a new work conceived by Amalia Viviana Basanta Hernandez, co-artistic director of Ballet Folkórico de México, at the Power Center on **Saturday, January 23** at 8 pm. Titled *The Four Journeys*, the piece examines the confluence of culture in Mexico — from its diverse, indigenous heritage to the more recent influences of European, African, and Asian infusions — and features a collaboration with Japanese video mapping artist Taketo Kobayashi.
- Acclaimed choreographer **Caleb Teicher** and his company of 12 dancers team up with **Eyal Vilner's Big Band** to bring the best of the swing dance world to the Power Center on **Friday, February 12** and **Saturday, February 13** at 8 pm. Teicher and his brain trust of collaborators, including Evita Arce, Latasha Barnes, and Nathan Bugh, pair their choreographic magic with stunning improvisations and a post-show swing dance jam that invites the audience onto the stage. **This performance is also part of the Jazz Series and UMS Renegade.**
- Dance subscribers will experience the Michigan Opera Theatre presentation of **Dance Theatre of Harlem** at the Detroit Opera House on **Saturday, February 27** at 7:30 and **Sunday, February 28** at 2:30 pm. This performance is part of an ongoing collaboration between UMS and Michigan Opera Theatre to bring great dance to Southeast Michigan.

27TH ANNUAL JAZZ SERIES

Five concerts in **Hill Auditorium**, **Michigan Theater**, and the **Power Center for the Performing Arts**.

- Tenor saxophonist and composer **Joshua Redman** reunites the original ensemble from his 1994 acclaimed album *MoodSwing* — pianist Brad Mehldau, bassist Christian McBride, and drummer Brian Blade — for an unforgettable Hill Auditorium performance on **Thursday, October 1** at 7:30 pm. They'll perform brand new material alongside some of Redman's signature work.
- The **Jazz at Lincoln Center Orchestra** brings a festive *Latin Big Band Holidays* program led by the 17-time Grammy and Latin Grammy Award winning singer/songwriter **Rubén Blades** on **Wednesday, December 2** at 8 pm at Hill Auditorium.
- Vocalist and NEA Jazz Master **Sheila Jordan** makes her UMS debut — at age 92! — at the Michigan Theater on **Saturday, February 6** at 8 pm. Jordan is joined by pianist Zen Zdravec, bassist Marion Hayden, and drummers Louis Hayes and Nate Winn.
- **Eyal Vilner's Big Band** teams up with acclaimed choreographer **Caleb Teicher** and his company of 12 dancers to bring the best of the swing dance world to the Power Center on **Friday, February 12** and **Saturday, February 13** at 8 pm. The evening features choreographic magic with stunning improvisations and a post-show swing dance jam that invites the audience onto the stage. **This performance is also part of the Dance Series and UMS Renegade.**
- The 2020-21 Jazz Series concludes with a virtuosic double-bill performance by vocalists **Cécile McLorin Salvant** and **Kurt Elling** on **Saturday, April 17** at 8 pm at the Michigan Theater. Each singer brings their own ensemble for separate sets, and perhaps a collaborative finale.

ARTISTS FROM THE ARAB WORLD AND ITS DIASPORA

This season, UMS will celebrate music, theater, and dance from the Arab World and its Diaspora with four performances in Ann Arbor and Detroit.

- The Lebanese choreographer and theater maker **Ali Chahrour's *Layl (Night)*** comes to the Power Center on **Saturday, November 21** at 8 pm. The first part of a trilogy on the topic of love, *Night* draws inspiration from Arabic stories, legends, and poems. The work references stories from the cultural memory of the Levant and Mesopotamia about the fate of lovers who challenged social and religious systems, only to be punished with separation. Performed in Arabic with English supertitles. **This performance is also part of the Theater Series and UMS Renegade.**
- **Farida Mohammad Ali** and the **Iraqi Maqam Ensemble** will present a performance on **Sunday, November 22** that showcases the tradition of classical *maqam*, a form of Arab art song that

dates back to the ancient civilization of Mesopotamia and is typically sung only by males. **This performance is also part of the Chamber Arts Series.**

- Music director Michael Ibrahim leads the **National Arab Orchestra** at Hill Auditorium on **Saturday, March 20** at 8 pm. The program features Lebanese vocalist **Abeer Nehme** and includes pieces from the traditional classical canon of Arab music as well as newly arranged original works by contemporary Arab composers.
- UMS's Arab World focus closes with **Sahra** (Arabic for "soiree" or "evening"), an event in Detroit that brings together three wildly different performances. Featured performers include violinist/composer **Mike Khoury** and choreographer **Leyya Tawil** with their work *Zombie Frequencies of the Palestinian Diaspora*, vocalist/producer/DJ **Tammy Lakkis**, and the Moroccan performance group **Kabareh Cheikhats**. **Saturday, April 10** at 8 pm at Spot Lite. **This performance is also part of UMS Renegade.**

ADDITIONAL EVENTS

Not included in any fixed series packages.

- **Béla Fleck's My Bluegrass Heart** tour comes to Hill Auditorium on **Wednesday, September 30** at 7:30 pm. The performance convenes a lineup of bluegrass masters, including Bryan Sutton, Sierra Dawn Hull, Michael Cleveland, and Mark Schatz.
- The **UMS Choral Union** and the **Ann Arbor Symphony Orchestra**, led by Choral Union music director **Scott Hanoian**, join forces for their annual Hill Auditorium presentation of the ultimate holiday season classic, **Handel's Messiah**, on **Saturday, December 5** at 7:30 pm and **Sunday, December 6** at 2 pm. (Note start time for Saturday performance.)
- Mexico's national dance company **Ballet Folklórico de México de Amalia Hernández** returns to Ann Arbor for the first time in 15 years for a special Hill Auditorium performance on **Wednesday, February 24** at 7:30 pm.

RENEGADE

UMS Renegade includes five performances that celebrate artists whose creative enterprise is full of risk-taking, experimentation, and boundary pushing. Renegade is about artists who, in their own time and context, color outside the lines, changing our expectations and our world. These events are also listed on other series; full descriptions can be found in the corresponding series line-up above.

- **Ali Chahrour's *Layl (Night)***
Saturday, November 21 at the Power Center
- **Tim Crouch's *Total Immediate Collective Imminent Terrestrial Salvation***
Wednesday-Sunday, January 27- 31 (venue TBA)
- **Caleb Teicher's Swing Company with Eyal Vilner's Big Band**
Friday-Saturday, February 12-13 at the Power Center
- ***Sahra: An Evening of Performance***
Saturday, April 10 at Spot Lite (Detroit)
- **Battersea Arts Centre Beatbox Academy's *Frankenstein: How to Make a Monster***
Friday-Saturday, April 23-24 at the Power Center

SERIES:YOU

Series:You is a popular season ticket option that allows subscribers to choose at least five different events from the UMS season and save 10% off the price of tickets.

EDUCATION PROGRAMS

During the 2020-21 season, UMS's Education and Community Engagement events will focus on UMS Renegade performances, UMS Theater and Dance Series performances, and events related to the Arab World and its Diaspora. Specific educational events will be announced later this summer and throughout the season.

TICKETING & SUBSCRIPTION INFORMATION

Subscription packages will go on sale to renewing subscribers on Monday, May 4 and to the general public on Monday, May 11. Subscribers may purchase additional performances at any point during the subscription period.

UMS also offers **Series:You**, a "custom-fit" series for patrons with a diverse range of interests looking to attend five or more performances in the 2020-21 season. Series:You offers a 10% discount and access to the best seats in the house, along with all other subscriber benefits.

Tickets to individual events will go on sale to the general public online, in person, and by phone on Monday, August 3; UMS donors of \$250+ may purchase beginning Wednesday, July 22. Groups of 10 or more may reserve tickets beginning Wednesday, July 22. To be added to the mailing list, please contact the UMS Ticket Office at **734.764.2538** or visit **ums.org**. UMS also has an e-mail list that provides up-to-date information about all UMS events; sign-up information is available on the website.

A complete listing of UMS events in chronological order is included as a separate attachment and can be downloaded at **ums.org/press**.

ABOUT UMS

A recipient of the 2014 National Medal of Arts, UMS (also known as the University Musical Society) contributes to a vibrant cultural community by connecting audiences with performing artists from around the world in uncommon and engaging experiences. One of the oldest performing arts presenters in the country, UMS is an independent non-profit organization affiliated with the University of Michigan, presenting over 70 music, theater, and dance performances by professional touring artists each season, along with over 100 free educational activities. UMS is committed to bold artistic leadership, engaged learning through the arts, and access and inclusiveness. Since 1990, the organization has co-commissioned and supported the production of nearly 80 new or reimagined works. Matthew VanBesien became the organization's seventh president in July 2017.

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