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MINNESOTA ORCHESTRA ANNOUNCES 2017-18 SENSORY-FRIENDLY CONCERT SERIES

In July 2018, the Minnesota Orchestra performs its first-ever full-Orchestra concert designed for attendees of all ages and abilities, including those on the autism spectrum and those with sensory sensitivities

Three small ensemble performances by Minnesota Orchestra musicians are also presented during the season

The Minnesota Orchestra today announced plans for a Sensory-Friendly Concert Series that will include three small ensemble concerts in Orchestra Hall's Target Atrium and culminate with the Minnesota Orchestra's first full-Orchestra Sensory-Friendly Concert, under the direction of Assistant Conductor Akiko Fujimoto. The first of these inclusive events occurs on Saturday, December 9, 2017, and features a duo of Minnesota Orchestra violinists. Two additional small ensemble performances are scheduled for Tuesday, February 13, and Saturday, April 14, 2018, featuring a violin/bass duo and a flute/guitar duo, respectively. The full-Orchestra concert takes place on Saturday, July 14, 2018, in Orchestra Hall's main auditorium. For additional concert details, see the third page of this press release.

"One of the greatest things about music is that everyone responds to it in ways that are unique to who they are," says Assistant Conductor Akiko Fujimoto. "I am thrilled to conduct the Orchestra's first full-Orchestra Sensory-Friendly program, and to welcome those who might not have yet had the opportunity to hear live orchestral music in a concert hall."

Sensory-Friendly Concerts are designed for audiences of all ages and abilities, including individuals on the autism spectrum and those with sensory sensitivities. While the musical experiences onstage follow formats typical to many chamber and family concerts, the surrounding experiences throughout Orchestra Hall are carefully designed to create a relaxed and inclusive environment for all attendees. Patrons can also access specially-designed online preparatory materials one month before each performance. Fidgets, noise-canceling headphones, ear plugs and quiet spaces are available at all concerts.

Small Ensemble Sensory-Friendly Concerts are free for attendees, but tickets are required. Tickets for the July 14 full-Orchestra performance are \$12 each. Tickets for all events are now available at minnesotaorchestra.org/sensoryfriendly and by phone at 612-371-5656. Information about accessibility at each of these concerts is available at minnesotaorchestra.org.

About Minnesota Orchestra Sensory-Friendly Concerts

Sensory-Friendly Concerts give community members more freedom to choose how they engage in live-music experiences, and provide a judgment-free space where individuals of all abilities can enjoy classical music together. The Minnesota Orchestra's Sensory-Friendly Concerts were originally conceived and designed in 2013 by Orchestra musicians in partnership with local music therapist Lyndie Walker of ToneWorks, who serves as onstage host for the July 14 concert. The Minnesota Orchestra's full-Orchestra Sensory-Friendly Concert in July is the first of its kind at Orchestra Hall and has been designed with support from an Accessibility Team that comprises members of Orchestra staff, local music therapists and educators, self-advocates, and other community members.

"We have collaborated closely with community advisors to design concerts that empower audiences to experience the music in an environment where they are encouraged to relax and be themselves. We are all enriched when more voices are at the table and more people are included in our programming," said Jessi Ryan, the Orchestra's Manager of Community Engagement. "Our musicians were an integral part in establishing the Orchestra's small ensemble Sensory-Friendly Concerts, and we are very excited to build on their work by expanding the series this year with a full-Orchestra performance."

Akiko Fujimoto, conductor

Akiko Fujimoto joined the Minnesota Orchestra in September 2017 as assistant conductor, after serving for five and a half seasons as the associate conductor of the San Antonio Symphony. There she conducted classical, pops, education and baroque concerts as well as ballet. Prior to her position in Texas, she served as the conducting associate for the Virginia Symphony Orchestra. She has extensive experience working with young musicians, starting at Harvard University where she directed the Mozart Society Orchestra, and at Stanford University, with her leadership of the Stanford Symphony Orchestra. In Virginia, she held the positions of Director of Orchestras at the College of William & Mary and Music Director of the Williamsburg Youth Orchestras. More: minnesotaorchestra.org.

Lyndie Walker, host

Lyndie Walker is the Director of Clinical Services and Board-Certified Music Therapist at Toneworks Music Therapy Services, LLC. She works as both a music therapist and adaptive lesson teacher with groups and individuals of all ages with developmental disorders, behavior disorders, cognitive delays, Down syndrome, cerebral palsy and reactive attachment disorder. She also collaborates as a teaching artist with Minneapolis Arts and VSA, to provide opportunities for exposure to musical experiences in early childhood special education autism and mental health classrooms in the public school system. She works as a community music therapist to build partnerships with the Minnesota Orchestra, Autism Society of Minnesota, and the Music Therapy Association of Minnesota to promote accessibility to classical music through Sensory-Friendly Concerts. More: toneworks.org.

Minnesota Orchestra Sensory-Friendly Concerts
SMALL ENSEMBLE CONCERTS

Saturday, December 9, 2017, 11 a.m. / Target Atrium, Orchestra Hall

Helen Chang Haertzen, violin

Joanne Opgenorth, violin

Tuesday, February 13, 2018, 11 a.m. / Target Atrium, Orchestra Hall

Pamela Arnstein, violin

Kathryn Nettleman, bass

Saturday, April 14, 2018, 11 a.m. / Target Atrium, Orchestra Hall

Adam Kuenzel, flute

Magdalena Loza Flores, guitar

Tickets: Admission to all Small Ensemble Sensory-Friendly Concerts is **FREE**, but tickets are required. Visit minnesotaorchestra.org to order online.

Minnesota Orchestra Sensory-Friendly Concerts
COURAGE AND TRIUMPH

Saturday, July 14, 2018, 2 p.m. / Orchestra Hall

Minnesota Orchestra

Akiko Fujimoto, conductor

Lyndie Walker, host

Nygel Witherspoon, cello

COPLAND	<i>Fanfare for the Common Man</i>
TOWER	<i>Fanfare for the Uncommon Woman, No. 1</i>
WILLIAMS	<i>Hedwig's Flight</i> , from <i>Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone™</i>
BERNSTEIN	Overture to <i>West Side Story</i>
FAURÉ	Elégie for Cello and Orchestra
J. STRAUSS, Sr.	<i>Radetzky March</i>
BEETHOVEN	<i>Allegro con brio</i> , from Symphony No. 7
STRAVINSKY	Finale from <i>The Firebird</i>

Tickets: \$12

This performance is approximately 60 minutes.

Audience members are invited to arrive early on July 14 to enjoy a variety of pre-concert activities in the lobby, beginning at 12:45 p.m. Activities include opportunities to try orchestral instruments, engage in creative movement, participate in collaborative art-making and meet Orchestra musicians.

TICKET PURCHASING INFORMATION

Individual tickets can be purchased online at minnesotaorchestra.org, or by calling 612-371-5656 or 800-292-4141. Tickets can be purchased in person at the Orchestra Hall Box Office, 1111 Nicollet Mall, Minneapolis (Stage door ticketing is open Monday to Friday, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Box Office ticketing begins two hours before all ticketed performances); and at the Skyway-accessible Minnesota Orchestra Administrative Office, International Centre, 5th floor, 920 Second Avenue South, Minneapolis (open Monday to Friday, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.). For more information, call 612-371-5656, or visit minnesotaorchestra.org.

All programs, artists, dates, times and prices subject to change.

The **Star Tribune** is the Minnesota Orchestra's media partner for the 2017-18 season.

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