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Gábor Takács-Nagy to become SPCO's newest Artistic Partner

The wildly popular, Hungarian conductor's three-year tenure will begin in the 2024.25 season when he returns to lead the SPCO in its season finale for a third consecutive year

SAINT PAUL, MN, JULY 18, 2024 — The Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra (SPCO) announces today that internationally-renowned conductor Gábor Takács-Nagy has been named the orchestra's newest Artistic Partner.

As one of the world's leading conductors and musicians, Takács-Nagy first made his SPCO debut in June 2023, leading the orchestra in its 64th season finale. The program included a world premiere arrangement of Claude Debussy's *Première rhapsodie*, featuring Principal Clarinet Sang Yoon Kim as soloist; Ludwig van Beethoven's *Pastoral* Symphony; and an arrangement by Takács-Nagy himself of Edvard Grieg's String Quartet in G Minor. Of his arrangement, the *Star Tribune* noted that "this was where Takacs-Nagy's enthusiasm became palpable throughout the Ordway Concert Hall," explaining how he, "took a work that sounds stormy in string quartet form and turned it into an emotional tornado, interspersed with absorbing meditations, lilting waltzes and folk-flavored hoedowns."

Since first performing with the SPCO in 2023, Takács-Nagy has quickly become an audience favorite for his intimate yet energetic interpretations of new and timeless works, as well as his thoughtful commentary, which he shares generously during each concert, making music accessible to all listeners — from new attendees to longtime subscribers.

"The SPCO is so fortunate and excited to welcome Gábor Takács-Nagy as a new Artistic Partner," said Principal Oboe Cassie Pilgrim. "The energy and emotion that is generated when we work with Gábor is palpable, and it feels certain that there are some legendary performances to come."

“For me, music is a spiritual medicine which gives mental energy as well,” said Takács-Nagy. “We musicians are lifting ourselves and our listeners into a higher sphere where honesty, friendship and love all prevail. I am very much looking forward to sharing these feelings with our public in company of my friends, the brilliant SPCO.”

“From his very first concert with the SPCO, Gábor formed a strong bond with our community,” said SPCO Managing Director and President Jon Limbacher. “Our audience immediately appreciated his extraordinary artistry, profound humanity and his deep connection with the Orchestra. We are so thrilled that Gábor will join the SPCO as an Artistic Partner and look forward to the many amazing concerts this partnership will produce.”

PRESS COVERAGE OF GÁBOR TAKÁCS-NAGY

“Takács-Nagy was not only a joy to behold, but a leader with such strong interpretive ideas that each of the concert's three pieces held ideas, insights and emotional epiphanies that I'd never encountered from the works before. And that's saying something, when you consider that the finale was Beethoven's *Pastoral* Symphony, an orchestral staple. This may have been the most thrilling performance of the SPCO's season, a richly gratifying showcase for an orchestra at the peak of its powers.” — *Star Tribune*

“It's the second straight season that the SPCO has concluded with Takács-Nagy conducting Beethoven — 2023's *Pastoral* Symphony was brilliantly rendered — and Friday's concert demonstrated that they indeed share a special chemistry. Here is a conductor who is clearly passionately in love with the music they're performing, and the atmosphere in the hall was one of intense dedication to expressing the emotional core of the music.” — *Star Tribune*

“... see for yourself on Medici TV or YouTube just how literally animated Takács-Nagy is, how little he has in common with old time maestros and yet how much of a collaborative spirit of endeavour he inspires in his musicians.” — *Gramophone*

“Takács-Nagy, at times, also seems to enjoy taking a vocal role in proceedings, an extension of the mini-opera concept which I could hear even on the very back row ...” — *The Arts Desk*

“His attention to precision detail in curating microscopic aspects of articulation, ensemble, phrasing and dynamics never came at the expense of musical drama ... An infectious enthusiasm for the music set the tone for the rest of the concert ...” — *Bachtrack*

PHOTOS OF GÁBOR TAKÁCS-NAGY

[Link to hi-res artist headshots](#)

[Link to hi-res photos of Takács-Nagy performing with the SPCO \(2024\)](#)

VIDEOS OF GÁBOR TAKÁCS-NAGY

Takács-Nagy conducts the SPCO: [Ludwig van Beethoven: *Pastoral* Symphony](#)

Takács-Nagy conducts the SPCO: [Claude Debussy: *Première rhapsodie*](#)

Takács-Nagy conducts the SPCO: [Edvard Grieg: *Quartet for String Orchestra in G Minor*](#)

ABOUT GÁBOR TAKÁCS-NAGY

Born in Budapest, Gábor Takács-Nagy is considered one of today's most authentic exponents of Hungarian music and was awarded the Liszt Prize in 1982 and the prestigious Béla Bartók-Ditta Pásztory Prize in 2017. In March 2021 he received the Érdemes Művész award for Artist of Merit, presented by the Hungarian government to artists of long service in Hungarian national culture, and in December 2021, the Prima Primissima Prize, reserved for artists, athletes, and representatives of scientific life, culture, and education for their performances and exemplary human qualities and values. In March 2024 he received the prestigious Kossuth Prize which acknowledges outstanding personal and group achievements in the fields of culture and the arts.

From 1975 to 1992 he was founding member and leader of the acclaimed [Takács Quartet](#). In 1996 he founded the Takács Piano Trio and in 1998 established the Mikrokosmos Quartet and recorded for the second time the six Bartók quartets.

In 2002 Gábor Takács-Nagy turned to conducting and in 2007 became Music Director of the [Verbier Festival Chamber Orchestra](#). In September 2011, he became Music Director of the [Manchester Camerata](#), one of the UK's leading chamber orchestras, and is Principal Guest Conductor of the Budapest Festival Orchestra since September 2012. He was Professor of String Quartet at the Haute École de Musique in Geneva until August 2021 and was awarded honorary membership of the Royal Academy of Music in London in June 2012. Gábor Takács-Nagy has conducted the Orchestre National de Lyon, Orchestre Philharmonique de Monte Carlo, Detroit Symphony Orchestra, Orchestra Philharmonique of Bologna, Orchestre de l'Opéra de Toulon, Royal Danish Orchestra, Calgary Philharmonic, Hungarian National Philharmonic, Orchestre National du Capitole de Toulouse, BBC Symphony Orchestra Wales, Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra, Orchestre della Scala Milan, Paris Chamber Orchestra, Orchestre de Chambre de Genève and Orchestre de Chambre de Lausanne amongst others.

In June 2023 [Deutsche Grammophon](#) released the live recordings of the nine Beethoven symphonies with the Verbier Festival Chamber Orchestra.

ABOUT THE SAINT PAUL CHAMBER ORCHESTRA

Renowned for its artistic excellence, remarkable versatility of musical styles and adventurous programming, [The Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra](#) is one of the finest chamber orchestras in the world. Entering its 66th season in September, the SPCO is primarily an uncondacted ensemble that performs a broad range of repertoire, from Baroque works to new music, in close collaboration with a dynamic roster of [Artistic Partners](#). The current roster of Artistic Partners consists of British Baroque specialist Richard Egarr, , South African cellist Abel Selaocoe and German violist Tabea Zimmermann.

In its commitment to making music accessible to everyone, the virtuoso musicians of the SPCO present over 80 concerts each season, sharing live music with over 70,000 people throughout the Twin Cities from September through June. Regular subscription series are performed in [a variety of different venues](#) across the Twin Cities metropolitan area each season — a unique commitment to geographic accessibility for a major orchestra. The SPCO offers the most affordable ticket prices of any professional orchestra in the United States, with over 50 percent of tickets available for \$15 or less and with free tickets for children and students as a part of its [New Generation Initiative](#). The orchestra also offers an innovative ticket membership model in which members pay a monthly fee to attend unlimited concerts, with a \$5 per month concert membership option for first-time Concert Members and members of [club2030](#), the orchestra's discount program for audience members in their 20s and 30s.

The SPCO's free, online [Concert Library](#) offers audio and video concert recordings — both live and on-demand — that can be accessed anytime, completely free of charge thanks to donors. Through its partnership with YourClassical Minnesota Public Radio and American Public Media, the SPCO is regularly played on public radio programs that reach nearly 850,000 listeners each week on over 250 stations. Additionally, the SPCO has released [68 recordings](#), including its recent critically acclaimed album of Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart Piano Concertos with former Artistic Partner Jeremy Denk and the 2018 Grammy Award-winning [recording](#) of Franz Schubert's *Death and the Maiden* with violinist and former Artistic Partner Patricia Kopatchinskaja. In addition to its programs in the Twin Cities, the orchestra also tours nationally and internationally, including recent engagements in Europe and New York City, and prestigious residencies at the 2021 and 2022 [Bravo! Vail Music Festival](#) with violinists Joshua Bell and Stefan Jackiw, bassist Xavier Foley, and pianist and Bravo! Vail Artistic Director Anne-Marie McDermott.

The SPCO is deeply committed to expanding orchestral repertoire, [commissioning more than 160 new works](#) throughout its 65-year history and receiving 17 ASCAP awards for adventurous programming. In a divergence from the industry standard of commissioning individual works from composers, the SPCO's [Sandbox Residency program](#) invites composers to experiment freely across a variety of new works created in collaboration with the orchestra. This groundbreaking residency model allows composers to workshop new

pieces, experiment and revise, take risks, develop relationships with SPCO musicians and engage with SPCO audiences.

The SPCO is a proud member of the [Arts Partnership](#), a strategic alliance of four performing arts organizations — Minnesota Opera, the Ordway, the SPCO and Schubert Club — that ensures equitable sharing and effective care of the Ordway Center as a vital cultural asset in the Twin Cities.

MISSION OF THE SAINT PAUL CHAMBER ORCHESTRA

Our mission is to sustain a world-class chamber orchestra at the highest standards of artistic excellence that enriches the Twin Cities community by sharing dynamic, distinctive and engaging performances. We are actively committed to accessibility and intentional inclusivity in all aspects of our work and continually strive to provide all people in our community with opportunities to connect with the music we perform.

PHOTOS OF THE SAINT PAUL CHAMBER ORCHESTRA

Access photos of The Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra [here](#). Click on the thumbnails to view images. Then, right click and select “Save image as...” to download.

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