

The 2009-2010 season marks the 35th year of America's foremost chamber orchestra, the Orchestra of St. Luke's. This unique musical organization comprises three divisions: the Orchestra of St. Luke's, St. Luke's Chamber Ensemble, and St. Luke's Arts Education Program. St. Luke's currently performs approximately 100 orchestral, chamber, and educational concerts throughout New York each year, all showcasing the hallmark collaborative spirit that has garnered consistent critical acclaim for vibrant music-making of the highest order.

In the 2010-2011 season, the Orchestra of St. Luke's will open The DiMenna Center for Classical Music, a state-of-the-art rehearsal and recording facility for New York's musical community. The new resource center, named in recognition of a \$5 million gift from Joseph and Diana DiMenna, will form an anchor for classical music on Manhattan's west side as well as provide administrative offices for St. Luke's. The center will occupy half of a six-story building, located at 450 West 37th Street – which is also occupied by the Baryshnikov Arts Center – and will provide a creative home for all St. Luke's activities, as well as those of other New York music organizations.

“There is one orchestra very few people seem to disagree about,” said Anne Midgette in *The New York Times*. “In the last couple of years, everyone I know, it seems, has come back from hearing the Orchestra of St. Luke's with great excitement about the quality of the playing and the experience. And each time it has been a different concert. ... It's hard to ignore the example of an orchestra capable of making vivid music in a wide range of settings, and sustaining that model economically. It's vitally important – more so than the musical establishment may think.”

An unusually wide variety of music and a stellar roster of conductors and guest artists characterize every season of the Orchestra of St. Luke's. In 2009-2010, the orchestra's annual series presented by Carnegie Hall features composer John Adams conducting a performance of his acclaimed oratorio *El Niño* featuring soprano Dawn Upshaw; Beethoven's Symphony No. 9 conducted by St. Luke's Conductor Emeritus Sir Roger Norrington; and a program in which Christian Zacharias both conducts and is soloist in Beethoven's Piano Concerto No. 3.

Formed at the Caramoor International Music Festival in the summer of 1979, the Orchestra evolved from the St. Luke's Chamber Ensemble (founded in 1974), with Ensemble members forming the Orchestra's artistic core as principal players. In addition to being presented by Carnegie Hall in its annual series, the Orchestra continues a 20-year collaborative relationship with that institution that currently includes participation in such Carnegie events as annual holiday concerts, Family Concerts, concert presentations of musical theater, and such special events as the recent festival *Honor! A Celebration of the African American Cultural Legacy*. The Orchestra is also engaged throughout the year in a number of artistic collaborations, which have recently included performances with the Paul Taylor, Mark Morris, Michael Clark, and Morphoses dance companies. The Orchestra continues to serve each summer as Orchestra-in-Residence and celebrates its 30th anniversary at the Caramoor International Music Festival, its “birthplace.”

In chamber music, St. Luke's performs annual concert series in three of New York's most esteemed art institutions: in The Morgan Library & Museum's Gilder Lehrman Hall; at the Brooklyn Museum; and at Dia:Beacon in upstate New York. The St. Luke's Arts Education Program comprises free education performances and year-long in-school residencies supported by professional development for teachers and standards-based curriculum materials. Twenty thousand New York City school children and their teachers are served by the program annually.

The Orchestra has released two critically-acclaimed recordings on its own label, St. Luke's Collection: Mozart's Symphonies Nos. 39 and 41, “Jupiter,” under the direction of Donald Runnicles, and Bach's *Brandenburg* Concertos, performed by the St. Luke's Chamber Ensemble. The Collection also includes *Morning, Noon & Evening*, featuring Haydn's Symphonies 6, 7 and 8; *With Valour Abounding*, music by Handel inspired by the Old Testament; a recording of J.S. Bach's complete wedding cantatas titled *Wedding Gifts*; and a DVD of Vivaldi's *The Four Seasons* accompanied by animated artwork of New York City public school students. These are the most recent additions to an already stellar and extensive discography, numbering more than 70 recordings, that includes four Grammy Award-winning discs.