

Orchestra of St. Luke's

"For one longtime admirer, this versatile orchestra is about something else as well: fire, an alert, energetic style of performance, animated by a strong rhythmic pulse."

James R. Oestreich, The New York Times

"... the Orchestra of St. Luke's (is) perhaps the most flexible and adventurous collection of players in town."

Martin Bernheimer, Financial Times (London)

"The Orchestra of St. Luke's exceeded its usual high standard for versatility."

Steve Smith, The New York Times

"The Orchestra of St. Luke's lived up to its reputation for being able to play virtually any score as if the musicians had all grown up with it under their pillows."

Justin Davidson, New York Magazine

"... the Orchestra of St. Luke's, one of the city's busiest freelance bands, has established a distinct identity over the last decade. Its playing is tight, polished and vigorous, and its musicians sound fully at ease in a broad stretch of the repertory."

Allan Kozinn, The New York Times

"Symphony conductors are forever exhorting their troops to play like chamber musicians...only a few of the best ensembles, notably the Vienna Philharmonic and the Cleveland Orchestra, seem to have assimilated this style of performance...for at least one band, however...that sort of communication has never been a problem. The Orchestra of St. Luke's... invariably plays with a vigor evident to the eye as well as the ear."

James R. Oestreich, The New York Times

"There is one orchestra very few people seem to disagree about. 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."

Anne Midgette, The New York Times

"The Orchestra of St. Luke's, playing splendidly, held up this performance. From big blocks of sound, clear detail never failed to emerge. The lower strings were especially eloquent, the brass sections models of well-tuned ensemble."

Bernard Holland, The New York Times

"St. Luke's is an orchestra of remarkable range."

Bradley Bambarger, The Newark Star-Ledger

"Spot on precision...emotional enough to make Carnegie Hall almost topple like the walls of Jericho."

Harry Rolnick, ConcertoNet

"The real standout here was the Orchestra of St. Luke's, which continues to cement its reputation as the best orchestra in New York City."

Ben Finane, Classics Today

"Concert for concert, St. Luke's is the best orchestra in the metropolitan area; its players are flexible, well-schooled, enthusiastic and musical."

Peter Goodman, New York Newsday

"This is not dainty, dandified Mozart. Under Runnicles their playing was full of robust vigor and honest feeling, and in matters of articulation and attack, the experience of many of the players in the historically informed performance movement was audible."

Richard Dyer, The Boston Globe

"They played with youthful energy and spirit, as well as spit-and-polish accuracy. It was all there in glowing color under the sodden skies...The concluding Beethoven Seventh Symphony got a performance that made you want to jump up and shout, 'Yes! Hit me again! This is the way music should always be!'"

Andrew L. Pincus, The Berkshire Eagle

"St. Luke's offered audiences an experience beyond the ordinary, with fine and evocative performances, and the orchestra was rewarded with a long and enthusiastic standing ovation. An evening to remember."

Tom Moore, Classical Voice of North Carolina

"The Orchestra of St. Luke's...plays with an authority and assurance that rivals the leading full-force music organizations."

Andrew Patner, The Chicago Sun Times

"... the Orchestra simply blew the lid off Beethoven's Symphony No. 5. Here was an example of real joy in music-making: rhythms were crisp, attacks were incisive; a fresh musicianship and commitment were everywhere in evidence."

Susan Elliott, New York Post

"The results were so transparent, lean-textured, light textured, tightly coiled and cleansed of vibrato that St. Luke's gave the illusion of a period-instrument band."

Peter G. Davis, New York Magazine

St. Luke's Chamber Ensemble

"Gorgeously polished, brimming with zesty color and alert precision... adagios filled with pathos, andantes replete with a sense of newness and discovery. Propulsive and vibrant."

Daniel Ginsberg, The Washington Post

"One of the most versatile and galvanic ensembles in the U.S... The playing is spirited and cohesive."

David Simmons, WQXR

"Energetic, broad-boned, and with a seat-of-the-pants quality..."

Allan Kozinn, The New York Times

"What distinguishes the Ensemble is its make-up: 21 virtuoso musicians in demand all over the world for their musical prowess."

Kevin Filipski, The Brooklyn Papers

The DiMenna Center for Classical Music

"A major boon for New York's classical music scene...New York's freelance orchestras have long yearned for such a facility."

Daniel J. Wakin, The New York Times

"For many classical musicians, the biggest hurdle often is not hitting the right note, it's finding a place to rehearse...the DiMenna Center will be a rehearsal space, but the public will still have an opportunity to come inside and see musicians at work."

Stephanie Simon, NY1

"The midtown Manhattan center addresses the urgent needs of small-to-midsize organizations and groups challenged by increasingly prohibitive real estate costs while trying to maintain their work and visibility in New York City...the facility will enable musicians to work and strengthen their identities."

Business Wire

"Upon completion, the 20,000-plus square foot facility will enable classical musicians to work and strengthen their artistic identities...Reasonably priced rehearsal space, the promise of which excited so many about the St. Luke's project, helps to keep the creative output of the living city flowing."

Sandy Ikeda, The New York Sun

"I am thrilled that the Orchestra of St. Luke's will be joining us in our Hell's Kitchen neighborhood. I can't think of a more ideal neighbor. Now, along with the program and initiatives of the Baryshnikov Arts Center, the whole building will be transformed into

a resource that will help relieve the shortage of adequate and affordable space for artists of all disciplines in the greater New York area. Ours is one of those rare unions that is perfectly complementary."

Mikhail Baryshnikov

"The DiMenna center for Classical Music will provide a new home for many of New York City's musicians, providing affordable, high-quality, rehearsal space that is tailored to the needs of orchestral ensembles... an important new resource for New York City's vibrant cultural community."

Kate D. Levin, Commissioner, New York City Department of Cultural Affairs

"To finally have a wonderful space for orchestras to rehearse, you can't imagine how critical that is to the success of orchestras in New York. Performances will improve as a result. I guarantee it."

James Johnson, Executive Director, New York Pops

St. Luke's Arts Education

"Nurturing...ambitious outreach programs."

Chamber Music Magazine

"Among the pioneers [of educational outreach programs]: the New York-based Orchestra of St. Luke's, whose school program has been an innovative and welcome educational force for three decades."

Barrymore Laurence Scherer, The Wall Street Journal

"The whole thing was as pleasing as a big banana split!"

Jeannette Sanchez, 5th grade, P.S. 19Q

"In the performance the orchestra played beautifully as though they were playing for the president."

Jordy Quiridumbay, 5th grade, P.S. 19Q

"The way you played was fantastic. I really felt the music in me."

Solana Ma, 3rd grade, P.S. 19Q

"I am happy to report that all 11 of the students enjoyed every minute...Thank you so much for the opportunity to have come to this fine production."

Mary Kaiser and students from the Hungerford School

"I thank you for your program, for the enthusiastic teaching artists and for positively impacting the lives of our students."

Susan R. Potoroka, ESL teacher, M.S. 131

"I understood the story that was being told, just by looking at the dance. That's amazing because I thought a story could only be told with words...the [Dido and Aeneas] movements were inspiring to me. It told a great love story."

P.S. 35th Grade Student

"My favorite part was everything because it was fascinating and a once in a lifetime experience."

P.S. 35th Grade Student

St. Luke's Collection Recordings

Mozart's Symphonies Nos. 39 & 41, "Jupiter"

"Fresh and invigorating...The news surrounding a release of Mozart's Symphonies Nos. 39 and 41 with the Orchestra of St. Luke's conducted by Donald Runnicles is that it comes from the ensemble itself, on a new label called St. Luke's Collection."

James Oestreich, The New York Times

"Highly enjoyable performances of two of Mozart's greatest symphonies."

Misha Donat, BBC Music Magazine

"A quiet revolution in the classical recording industry continues to swell with the arrival of yet another new label run by a high-profile orchestra... New York's esteemed Orchestra of St. Luke's enters the fray with a sparkling new recording of Mozart's Symphonies Nos. 39 and 41, led by principal conductor Donald Runnicles."

Steve Smith, Billboard

"The esteemed Orchestra of St. Luke's shows what it can do, and how much it knows, about these late Mozart repertory standards. That the Orchestra's members have had considerable experience in the more intimate confines of chamber music helps in the process of bringing Mozart to life in a fleet and lucid form...St. Luke's gives heft and fire to the outer movements of the 39th Symphony, and introspective warmth to the slow movement. As the thrilling final movement of the "Jupiter" Symphony races along boisterously...the composer's turbulent genius is duly served."

Josef Woodard, Los Angeles Times

"The performances of Mozart's Symphonies No. 39 and No. 41 are superb—taut, zippy and fully sensitive to the balance of elegance and dramatic urgency in the composer's last symphonies. Runnicles brings a wonderful rhythmic flair to the music, and the orchestral playing is precise and transparent. The tricky finale of the Symphony No. 39 is particularly astonishing."

Joshua Kosman, San Francisco Chronicle

"Timeless classics in vibrant new readings."

WQXR Gold Star Recording

Bach's Brandenburg Concertos

"The liveliness is consistently joyful, serving as a reminder that Bach penned this set not merely to impress but to delight."

Gramophone

"These are excellent, modern-instrument performances flavored by a fine sense of period style. The St. Luke's Chamber Ensemble boasts an impressive roster of talent, and every soloist makes a distinguished contribution to the proceedings. ("9/9" rating for artistic & sound quality)"

ClassicsToday.com

"The liveliness is consistently joyful, serving as a reminder that Bach penned this set not merely to impress but to delight."

Andrew Farach-Colton, Gramophone

"Vivacious, elegantly phrased performances."

Nicholas Anderson, BBC Music Magazine

"[A] fine set of the Brandenburg Concertos, glowingly recorded...Everything is expertly played."

Julian Haylock, International Record Review

"Bach wrote this music...to express the sheer joy he felt in making music. And no one has expressed that joyousness and abandon better than this splendid ensemble...The St. Luke's players use modern instruments and they've never sounded better or more perfectly suited to this music...There have been many excellent recordings [of the Brandenburg Concertos], but this one belongs with the very best...The result is a pure delight."

American Record Guide

"I've finally found my 'desert island Brandenburgs'."

Thomas Z. Shepard, Grammy Award-winning record producer

Haydn's *Morning, Noon and Evening*

"These gorgeous readings of Haydn's early concertante symphonies irresistibly combine elegance, virtuosity and florid melody."

Lawrence Vitte, Gramophone

"The St. Luke's musicians are experienced hands at Haydn...they've developed a trim, energetic style that is perfectly suited to this music. But what I liked best about these performances is the degree to which the players capture the youthful freshness of the works, and the supreme clarity they bring to Haydn's orchestral textures."

Allan Kozinn, New York Times