

Our Love Is Here to Stay: Charles Lazarus and The Steeles with the Minnesota Orchestra

Roderick Cox, conductor

Charles Lazarus, trumpet | The Steeles, vocalists

Tommy Barbarella, keyboards, arranger and producer | Cory Wong, guitar
Jeff Bailey, bass | David Schmalenberger, drums | Ken Chastain, percussion

Live at Orchestra Hall

Friday, April 6, 2018, 8 pm | Orchestra Hall

*With this concert we gratefully recognize **Margot and Paul Grangaard**
for their generous contribution to the Minnesota Orchestra's **Investing in Inspiration** campaign.*

Tonight's concert features arrangements of hit music from great songwriters and artists including George Gershwin, Miles Davis, Stevie Wonder, Earth Wind & Fire, Chicago, Curtis Mayfield, The Stylistics, Herb Alpert, Chuck Mangione, Marvin Gaye, Burt Bacharach, Michael Jackson and Prince.

Charles Lazarus, a member of the Minnesota Orchestra's trumpet section since 2000, has masterminded several original productions with the Orchestra, serving as soloist, composer and bandleader. He has created and starred in three original orchestral shows featuring his jazz ensemble: *A Night in the Tropics*, *American Riffs*, and *Fly Me to the Moon*. In addition, his holiday concert *Merry & Bright* has been performed annually at Orchestra Hall since 2015. In 2015 he and the Orchestra performed the world premiere of *American Nomad*, a trumpet concerto composed for him by Steve Heitzeg; Lazarus and the Orchestra will reprise this work in January 2019. Lazarus' composition *A Perfect Square*, paired with Michael Hall's book of the same name, was recently made into a children's animated short film. His four solo recordings, *Solo Settings*, *Zabava*, *Merry & Bright* and *Lovejoy*, showcase his wide-ranging talent and feature collaborations with diverse composers, arrangers and performers, including Orchestra musicians. He serves on the trumpet faculty at the University of Minnesota. More: minnesotaorchestra.org or charleslazarus.com.





The Steeles—five siblings J.D., Fred, Jearlyn, Jevetta and Billy—have been singing together since they were children growing up in Gary, Indiana. They performed with the Minnesota Orchestra most recently in a halftime show at the inaugural Minnesota Vikings game at U.S. Bank Stadium in September 2016. They have recorded and performed with Prince as well as super producers Jimmy Jam and Terry Lewis, and they have shared the stage with Donald Fagen, Morgan Freeman, George Clinton, the Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra, Mavis Staples and the Blind Boys of Alabama, among many others, and performed on *A Prairie Home Companion*. The family has traveled around the world performing the acclaimed musical *The Gospel at Colonus*, including a Broadway run at the Lunt Fontanne theatre in 1988. They have also performed for 3M, Target, AMBEV, U.S. Bank, the Make-A-Wish Foundation, Boys and Girls Club of America, Tubman, and the Military Family Tribute at the Minnesota State Capitol. In 2014, the NBA used one of their

recordings to promote its basketball season. Their heartfelt, melodic sounds have been shared throughout the U.S. and around the world in Greece, France, England, Scotland, Spain, Italy, Russia, Brazil, India and Austria. The Steeles have also contributed to several soundtracks including the award-winning documentary *Hoop Dreams*, *Graffiti Bridge*, *Blank Man*, *In The Meantime* on UpTV, and *Corrina, Corrina*. Collectively they have several Gold and Platinum albums and have earned the Sally Award in Education. More: thesteelsmusic.com.

Multitalented pianist **Tommy Barbarella** worked extensively with Prince, among many other artists, and arranged *Purple Rain* for the Minnesota Orchestra's September 2016 performance at the Minnesota Vikings home opener. **Cory Wong** is the guitar player for the fast-rising funk band Vulfpeck and has played with many artists including Ben Rector, Gene Simmons, Blake Shelton, The Blind Boys of Alabama and Bootsy Collins. **Jeff Bailey** is active as a bass performer, composer, producer and educator. He has performed with many renowned jazz artists, and he was the bass department head at McNally Smith College of Music. Percussionist **David Schmalenberger** performs with nationally renowned artists and is active as a clinician. He was the assistant head of the percussion department at McNally Smith College of Music. **Ken Chastain** scores, sound designs and mixes TV commercials and films as head of audio post production, chief engineer and composer at Pixel Farm. He can be heard performing on records from Switchfoot and Miley Cyrus to Ziggy Marley.



Roderick Cox, now in his second full season as the Minnesota Orchestra's associate conductor after one year as assistant conductor, won critical and audience praise for his subscription performances with the Orchestra in January and October 2017. He regularly conducts the Orchestra in Young People's Concerts, family programs, outdoor community concerts and special performances such as last October's "Send Me Hope" collaboration with church choirs from north Minneapolis and other local performers. Tonight's performance marks his debut on the Live at Orchestra Hall series; in July he will lead two Symphony in 60 concerts. A native of Macon, Georgia, he served as assistant conductor of the Alabama Symphony Orchestra and music director of the Alabama Symphony Youth Orchestra. His other recent honors include winning a Solti Foundation Career Assistance Award and being selected by the League of American Orchestras for the prestigious Bruno Walter National Conducting Preview. In addition, he is one of five conductors from around the globe invited to work with Amsterdam's Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra at its Chief Conductor Daniëlle Gatti's annual conducting masterclass in June 2018. More: minnesotaorchestra.org, roderickcox.com.