

Steve Hackman, conductor

Conductor, composer, arranger, producer and songwriter Steve Hackman is increasingly in demand as one of the most compelling artists contributing to a new landscape in classical music. Fluent in both classical and popular repertoire, he crafts virtuosic, cross-genre works and performances that intrigue the established audience and engage an excited new one.

Active across the country as a guest conductor of major symphony orchestras, Hackman presents programs he architects that synthesize orchestral and pop masterworks. He has performed his pieces such as *Brahms + Radiohead*, *Beethoven + Coldplay*, *Copland + Bon Iver* and *Bartok + Björk* with the Pittsburgh Symphony, Indianapolis Symphony, Alabama Symphony, Florida Orchestra, North Carolina Symphony, Charlotte Symphony, Columbus Symphony and Colorado Music Festival orchestra. Hackman's work as an artistic entrepreneur was most recently recognized by an invitation to speak at the TedX Conference.

In 2016, Hackman continues in his second season as creative director and conductor of FUSE at the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra, an innovative new concert series aimed at engaging a new young audience. The season will include the premiere of *Tchaikovsky + Drake*, a symphonic mash-up of the Tchaikovsky Fifth Symphony and the music of Drake, as well as *Bartok + Björk*, a piece that fuses the former's *Concerto for Orchestra* with the latter's first three albums. For the final FUSE@PSO concert of 2015-2016, Hackman composed *Firebird: Remix | Response*, an original concept-album/remix of Stravinsky's *Firebird*, for full orchestra, chorus, singer, rapper, drummer, synthesizer and electronics.

From 2013 to 2015, Hackman was music director of the "Mash-Up" series at the Colorado Music Festival. CMF commissioned three premieres in this time — *Bartok V. Björk*, *Copland V. Bon Iver* and *Beethoven V. Coldplay*. Other highlight programs included collaborations with My Brightest Diamond, Aoife O'Donovan, Olga Bell (of *Dirty Projectors*) and San Fermin.

From 2009 to 2013, Hackman served as co-creative director of the Happy Hour at the Symphony Series with the Indianapolis Symphony, where, along with co-artistic directors Time For Three (TF3), he pioneered a new type of concert experience by

producing, arranging/composing and conducting compelling presentations that blended classical with pop. He returns as guest conductor regularly, most recently in spring 2016 premiering a program commissioned by the ISO and Time for Three that combined symphonic movements of Dvořák with songs by Dave Matthews Band.

Hackman is the creative director of :STEREO HIDEOUT:, a music brand that represents the removal of barriers between classical and popular music and the skillful blending of the two. In 2014, he released the debut :STEREO HIDEOUT: album *The Radio Nouveau*, along with several music videos. The album was mixed in London by Gareth Jones (Grizzly Bear, Depeche Mode) and mastered in Brooklyn by Joe Lambert (Animal Collective, Dirty Projectors).

Hackman's work as a composer and arranger has met with considerable success. The string trio Time for Three and choral ensemble Chanticleer present his works as their showpieces; TF3's *Chaconne in Winter* highlights their recent release on Universal Records, and Chanticleer's *Wait Fantasy* can be heard on their recent album *Someone New*. He enjoys a continuing relationship as an arranger for Time for Three, and most recently contributed the arrangement for their appearance on *From The Top*, two pieces to their holiday EP *Yuletide* (Universal) and the music for their appearance on ABC's hit show *Dancing with the Stars*. Hackman's orchestrations for artists like Time for Three, The Five Browns, Michael Cavanaugh, My Brightest Diamond, Arlo Guthrie, Aoife O'Donovan and Joshua Radin have been performed by nearly all the major orchestras in America. This season marked his first collaboration with the world-renowned Tallis Scholars.

Hackman was a four-year member, producer and musical director of the *a capella* group The Other Guys at the University of Illinois, a group that under his direction placed runner-up in the International Competition of Collegiate Acapella at Avery Fisher Hall. He is a prolific songwriter, having written hundreds of songs and releasing several albums of original music. His song "The Pendulum Song" was chosen among tens of thousands as a finalist in the prestigious John Lennon Songwriting Competition, and he has also received honorable mention in the *Billboard* songwriting competition. He has entertained as a dueling piano player at *Howl at the Moon* piano bar in Chicago, Indianapolis and Louisville. In season seven of *American Idol*, Hackman was one of 164

contestants chosen from more than 150,000 to attend Hollywood Week. He finished in the top 64.

Hackman studied conducting under Otto-Werner Mueller and counterpoint/composition under Dr. Ford Lallerstedt at the Curtis Institute of Music in Philadelphia. He subsequently studied conducting with David Zinman at the American Academy of Conducting at Aspen and received further instruction in orchestration from the prolific Broadway orchestrator and composer William Brohn (*Miss Saigon*, *Wicked*, *Ragtime*, and countless others). He served as the assistant conductor of the Reading Symphony for two seasons, where he led subscription, family, education and New Year's Eve programs.