

Gianandrea Noseda
Music Director

Press Release

March 14, 2019

**National Symphony Orchestra Takes Families on a
Grand Multimedia Adventure With
*Symphonic Storytelling: The Travels of Babar***

**Program Includes U.S. Premiere of Raphael Mostel's
*Babar's Return to the Land of the Elephants***

Sunday, April 7, at 2 and 4 p.m.

(WASHINGTON)—Principal Pops Conductor Steven Reineke leads the National Symphony Orchestra (NSO) in *Symphonic Storytelling: The Travels of Babar*, a fun filled, magical adventure for all children and children at heart. The program, which features the U.S. Premiere of the new orchestral version of composer Raphael Mostel's *Babar's Return to the Land of the Elephants* (one of his two compositions based on *The Travels of Babar*), combines music, storytelling, and images to bring to life this classic children's tale by author and artist Jean de Brunhoff with a new English translation by Phyllis Rose.

Mostel, who will attend the performance, is known for his widely varied compositions, drawing inspiration from the firmly classical to the modern avant-garde. Mostel's previous work, *The Travels of Babar*, was lauded by *The New York Times* as "a miniaturized history of classical music"...with "charms hard to resist."

The program also includes an abridged version of Saint-Saëns's legendary work *Carnival of the Animals*, featuring poetic verse from Jack Prelutsky, America's first Children's Poet Laureate, and stunning illustrations by Mary GrandPré, renowned illustrator of the Harry Potter book series.

Concerts take place at [2 p.m. and 4 p.m. on Sunday, April 7, in the Kennedy Center Concert Hall](#). Beginning one hour before the start of each performance is a musical instrument “petting zoo” at which children can get a hands-on look at some of the instruments in an orchestra. Following the 4 p.m. concert is a Creative Conversation Q & A session with the NSO musicians, a fantastic opportunity for young musicians and music lovers to hear from those that inspire them.

TICKET INFORMATION

Tickets (\$15–\$18) are available at the Kennedy Center Box Office, online at kennedy-center.org, and via phone through Instant Charge, (202) 467-4600; toll-free at (800) 444-1324. For all other ticket-related customer service inquiries, call the Advance Sales Box Office at (202) 416-8540.

ABOUT THE NATIONAL SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

The 2018–2019 season marks the National Symphony Orchestra’s 88th, and Gianandrea Noseda’s second as its music director. The Italian conductor serves as the Orchestra’s seventh music director, joining the NSO’s legacy of such distinguished leaders. Its artistic leadership also includes Principal Pops Conductor Steven Reineke and Artistic Advisor Ben Folds.

Founded in 1931, the Orchestra has always been committed to artistic excellence and music education. In 1986, the National Symphony became an artistic affiliate of the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, where it performs year-round. The NSO’s community engagement projects are nationally recognized, including NSO In Your Neighborhood, an annual week of approximately 50 performances in schools, churches, community centers, and other unexpected venues; Notes of Honor, which offers free performances for active, veteran, prior service, and retired members of the military and their families; and Sound Health, a collaboration with the National Institutes of Health (NIH) and its affiliated organizations. Career development opportunities for young musicians include the NSO Youth Fellowship Program and its tuition-free Summer Music Institute. For more information, visit nationalsymphony.org.

Popular offerings have ranged from performances on a barge on the Potomac River, to concerts on the Ellipse, and in National Parks around the greater Washington area. The 2011–2012 season was the first with Steven Reineke as Principal Pops Conductor. NSO popular programming—which ranges in genre from Broadway and American song to jazz and from film scores to Hip Hop to rock ‘n’ roll—takes place at the NSO’s principal performance venues: the NSO’s primary home, the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts Concert Hall, Wolf Trap, and the West Lawn of the U.S. Capitol, with a subscription season featuring a variety of musical genres.

ABOUT STEVEN REINEKE

ABOUT RAPHAEL MOSTEL

FUNDING CREDITS:

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Bank of America is the Presenting Sponsor of Performances for Young Audiences.

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Funding for Access and Accommodation Programs at the Kennedy Center is provided by the U.S. Department of Education.

These U.S. Premiere performances of *Babar's Return to the Land of the Elephant* are by arrangement with Raphael Mostel, composer/publisher and production proprietor. The composer gratefully acknowledges the cooperation of GOH Productions/Seven Loaves, Inc. in the creation of the new version for orchestra and the multi-media. The orchestral version of *Babar's Return to the Land of the Elephants* is dedicated in memory of Anna-Maria Kellen. The HD multi-media production uses with permission the original 1932 watercolors of Jean de Brunhoff from the collections of the Bibliothèque nationale de France, the Morgan Library, and Kendra & Allan Daniel, and was directed by the composer.

Major support for educational programs at the Kennedy Center is provided by **David M. Rubenstein** through the Rubenstein Arts Access Program.

Patrons 30 and under and active-duty members of the military are invited to join the Kennedy Center's *MyTix* program for special discount offers and chances to win free tickets. **For more information, visit kennedy-center.org/mytix**

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TICKETS & INFORMATION

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