

KAUFMAN MUSIC CENTER PRESENTS

What Makes It Great?[®]

Stephen Sondheim

with Rob Kapilow



**MERKIN
HALL**

KAUFMAN
MUSIC
CENTER

Online Performance Filmed at
Merkin Hall at Kaufman Music Center
Streamed Tuesday, April 6, 2021 at 7 pm ET

What Makes It Great?®

Rob Kapilow, *pianist/commentator*

With Nikki Renée Daniels and Michael Winther

Celebrating the Great American Songbook
Stephen Sondheim

STEPHEN SONDHEIM

Send in the Clowns from *A Little Night Music* (1973)

Finishing the Hat
from *Sunday in the Park with George* (1984)

Too Many Mornings from *Follies* (1971)

Getting Married Today from *Company* (1970)
with JUSTINE ARONSON

No One is Alone from *Into The Woods*

*Join the conversation at a live post-concert Q&A
with Rob Kapilow*

All 2020-21 Kaufman Music Center performances are online, filmed in safe, socially distanced locations observing health and safety protocols, and streamed to the safety of your home.

Steinway is the official piano of Merkin Hall

KaufmanMusicCenter.org/MH | 212 501 3330

About the Host

For over 30 years, **Rob Kapilow** has brought the joy and wonder of classical music – and unraveled some of its mysteries – to audiences of all ages and backgrounds. Characterized by his unique ability to create an “aha” moment for his audiences and collaborators, whatever their level of musical sophistication or naiveté, Kapilow’s work brings music into people’s lives: opening new ears to musical experiences and helping people to listen actively rather than just hear.

Kapilow’s range of activities is astonishingly broad, including his *What Makes It Great?*® presentations (now for over 20 seasons in New York and Boston), his family compositions and Family Musik® events, his Citypieces, corporate programs, and residencies with institutions as diverse as the National Gallery of Canada and Stanford University. The reach of his interactive events and activities is wide, from Native American tribal communities in Montana and inner-city high school students in Louisiana to audiences in Kyoto and Kuala Lumpur, and from tots barely out of diapers to musicologists in Ivy League programs.

As the music world largely shifted to the virtual arena this summer, Mr. Kapilow recorded a new, three-part, socially-distanced series of *What Makes it Great?* programs entitled “Beethoven, the Pandemic and the Power of Connection” filmed in New York City’s Merkin Hall with Kaufman Music Center. He created Livestream programs for the Caramoor Festival as well as Stanford Live, and taught a 7-week online course, “Inside the Great American Songbook from Gershwin to Sondheim” for the Thurnauer School of Music of the Kaplan JCC of the Palisades, and worked with related themes in a unique, virtual corporate program on listening for CEOs in Istanbul and Dubai.

A summer highlight was a collaboration with the innovative dance group Pilobolus in which Mr. Kapilow helped curate and perform, as well as compose a new choral work based on a Rumi text, for their remarkable, live, car-safari-experience-in-the-woods at their Five Senses Festival in Washington Connecticut. In addition to the Rumi choral composition, Mr. Kapilow also worked intensively on his new, large-scale choral/orchestral composition, *We Came to America*, based on immigrant stories, and previewed parts of the work on a special 2-hour evening on WWFM radio combining demonstrations and discussions of the new work along with analyses of music ranging from Beethoven’s Fifth Symphony to Harold Arlen’s “Over the Rainbow.”

In June, Mr. Kapilow signed a new, two-book contract with Norton/Liveright, and he is currently hard at work doing research for both books, the first on the music of the Woodstock Generation.

Kapilow has appeared on NBC’s *Today Show* with Katie Couric; he presented a special *What Makes It Great?*® for broadcast on PBS’s *Live From Lincoln Center*; and he has written two books published by Wiley/Lincoln Center: *All You Have To Do Is Listen*, which won the PSP Prose Award for Best Book in Music and the Performing Arts, and *What Makes It Great* (2011), the first book of its kind to be especially designed for the iPad with embedded musical examples. His new book, *Listening for America: Inside the Great American Songbook from Gershwin to Sondheim*, published by Norton/Liveright is now available.

Rob Kapilow dedicates his summer months to writing and composing new music. He was the first composer to be granted the rights to set Dr. Seuss’ words to music, and his *Green Eggs and Ham* has been called “the most successful piece written for families this half century.” A CD featuring Nathan Gunn and Isabel Leonard in two more of his popular Family Musik® compositions, Chris van Allsburg’s *Polar Express* and Dr. Seuss’s *Gertrude McFuzz*, was released in 2014, and his new piece for the 25th anniversary of Ottawa Chamberfest based on Louise Bourgeois’ spider sculpture, “Maman.” received

its premiere in August of 2019. He is currently working on a large new piece for the JCC based on immigrant stories called *We Came to America* to be premiered in 2021.

Kapilow's career has been marked by numerous major awards and grants. He won First Place in the Fontainebleau Casadesus Piano Competition and was the second-place winner of the Antal Dorati Conductor's Competition with the Detroit Symphony. He was featured on Chicago Public Radio's Composers In America series, and is a recipient of an Exxon Meet-the-Composer grant and numerous ASCAP awards.

Kapilow has conducted many of North America's major orchestras, as well as new works of musical theater, ranging from the Tony Award-winning *Nine* on Broadway to the premiere of *Frida* for the opening of the Brooklyn Academy of Music's Next Wave Festival, and premieres of works for the American Repertory Theater. At the age of 19, Kapilow interrupted his academic work at Yale University to study with the legendary Nadia Boulanger. Two years later, after graduating Phi Beta Kappa from Yale, he continued his studies at Eastman School of Music. After graduating from Eastman, he returned to Yale, where he was an assistant professor for six years at the university. He lives in River Vale, NJ, with his wife and three children.

About the Artists

Nikki Renée Daniels will be in the upcoming Broadway revival of *Company*, playing Jenny. She recently completed the Chicago run of *Hamilton* as Angelica Schuyler. On Broadway Nikki has starred in *The Book of Mormon* and the 2012 Tony Award Winning Broadway Revival of *The Gershwins' Porgy and Bess*. Other Broadway credits include Fantine in *Les Misérables*, *Anything Goes*, *Aida*, *Nine*, *Little Shop of Horrors*, *Lestat*, and *The Look of Love*. Ms. Daniels made her New York City Opera debut as Clara in *Porgy and Bess*. Other New York credits include Martha Jefferson in *1776* at City Center Encores! and Rose Lennox in *The Secret Garden* at David Geffen Hall. On television Nikki has been featured on *Chappelle's Show*, *Madam Secretary*, and *The Sound of Music: Live*. She has performed as a soloist with numerous symphony orchestras across the country and Canada, and at Carnegie Hall. She holds a BFA in Musical Theatre from the University of Cincinnati, College-Conservatory of Music. Her debut solo CD, *Home*, is available on iTunes and CDBaby.com. For more information please visit nikkireneedaniels.com. @nikkireneesings

Acclaimed by Stephen Holden of *The New York Times* as "a theater singer of unusual refinement" with "a voice that traverses genres," **Michael Winther's** Broadway credits include: *Fun Home*, *33 Variations*, *Mamma Mia*, *The Crucible*, *1776*, *Artist Descending a Staircase* and *Damn Yankees*. Most recently, he toured the country with the national tour of the Tony award-winning best musical, *Fun Home*. Equally comfortable on the Broadway stage as the concert hall and recording studio, Michael collaborated with multiple Grammy-nominee, jazz composer Fred Hersch and poet, Mary Jo Salter in the premiere of a new song cycle, *Rooms of Light* for Peak Performance at Montclair University. He portrayed Albert Einstein in author and theoretical physicist Brian Greene's multimedia theater piece, *Light Falls* in New York, Princeton, Australia and recently on PBS. He starred as "Dan" in the Pulitzer winning musical, *Next To Normal* at Baltimore/Centerstage; Tectonic's *The Laramie Project*

Cycle at BAM/Harvey Theatre; Fred Hersch's multimedia jazz-theatre piece, *My Coma Dreams* in NYC, Berlin, San Francisco; *Merrily We Roll Along* at City Center Encores!®. He regional credits include productions at Center Theatre Group/LA, Guthrie Theater, Yale Rep, McCarter Theater, Old Globe, Goodspeed Musicals, Theatreworks/Palo Alto, La Jolla Playhouse, George Street Playhouse, Perseverance Theater, O'Neill Theatre Center, Sundance Theatre Lab. His recent film credits include *The Avengers*, *Jumper*, *The Break-Up*, *Mr. & Mrs. Smith*. Recent television credits include "The Hunt," "The Blacklist," "Mysteries of Laura," "Boardwalk Empire," "Hostages," "Leverage" and "Law & Order."

Other concert credits include: four appearances as part of Lincoln Center's *American Songbook* series, Town Hall, Symphony Space, New York Pops at Carnegie Hall, New York Philharmonic at Avery Fisher Hall. He has performed various solo evenings of music at Feinstein's 54 Below, Joe's Pub, Birdland, The Metropolitan Room and Ars Nova. Michael is a graduate of Williams College.

Michael Winther received nominations from the Drama Desk and Drama League for his critically acclaimed solo performance in the theatrical song cycle, *Songs From An Unmade Bed* at NYTW.

Justine Aronson's repertoire spans the traditional and the contemporary, with performances that adventurously embrace the unexpected. Highlights of recent seasons include engagements with the Los Angeles Philharmonic and LA Phil's Chamber Music series, On Site Opera, Lyric Fest of Philadelphia, Mirror Visions Ensemble, Five Boroughs Music Festival, the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum, Wild Shore New Music Festival and Eighth Blackbird, among others. Recent workshops include the roles of gene and actress for *Iphigenia* and the role of The Assistant for David Lang's *prisoner of the state* with the New York Philharmonic.

Additional performances include appearances with the LA Phil's Green Umbrella series, Opera Philadelphia, Beth Morrison Projects, National Sawdust, New York Festival of Song, Copland House, Eighth Blackbird Creative Lab, Lucerne Festival Academy, Bang on a Can Summer Festival, the Metropolitan Opera Guild and the HEAR NOW Music Festival. Justine is featured on the NAXOS record release of composer Daron Hagen's portrait album *Hagen: 21st Century Song Cycles*. She has given premieres of such composers as David Lang, Ted Hearne, Kamala Sankaram, Anna Pidgorna, Sarah Goldfeather, Christopher Cerrone, Daron Hagen, William Kraft, Veronika Krausas, Aaron Jay Kernis, Thomas Pasatieri, Fred Hersch, Nicholas Deyoe and Andrew McIntosh.

As a concert soloist Justine premiered William Kraft's orchestrations of his *Settings of Pierrot Lunaire*. Previous seasons also included appearances with the Metropolitan Opera Guild, New Jersey Chamber Singers, and Synchrony Music. In opera and chamber opera repertoire, she has portrayed roles including Oscar (*Un ballo in maschera*), Despina (*Così fan tutte*), Yum-Yum (*The Mikado*), Monica (*The Medium*), Nuria (*Ainadamar*), Yniold (*Pelléas et Mélisande*), and she covered the role of Lisa for the NYC premiere of David T. Little's *Dog Days* produced by Beth Morrison Projects.

See a Concert. Take a Class. Connect through Music.

Founded in 1952 as a community music school, today's Kaufman Music Center is home to **Merkin Hall**; **Lucy Moses School**, New York's largest community arts school; **Special Music School**, New York's only K-12 public school that teaches music as a core subject; and the acclaimed youth new music ensemble **Face the Music**.

Executive Director

Kate Sheeran

Board of Trustees

Orli Shaham, Chair
Shahriar Rafimayeri, President
Rosalind Devon, Honorary Chair
Elaine Kaufman, Honorary Chair
Charles Dimston, Vice President
Bethany Millard, Vice President
Cathy White O'Rourke, Vice President
Irving Sitnick, Vice President
Christina M. Mason, Treasurer
Wendy Mosler, Secretary

Joel Beckerman
Joshua Bell
Justin Berrie
Damian Cavaleri
Nikki Renée Daniels
Danielle Dimston
Phyllis Feder
Sir James Galway
Kara Hammond
Nathalie Joachim
Daniel Kaufman
David B. Krieger
Solange Landau
Dennis Lee
Solomon Merkin
Marjorie Penrod
Sal Piscopo
Jessica Rothstein
William A. Schwartz
Jonathan Sulds
Kara Unterberg
Patricia Weinbach

Leadership Council

Etta Brandman
Connie Goodman
David Klaffer
Roy Niederhoffer

Artists Council

Tzvi Avni
Alan Menken
Fred Sherry
Arnold Steinhardt
Eugenia Zukerman

Administration

Brooke Bryant, Director of Development
John Glover, Director of Artistic Planning
Sean Hartley, Director, Theater@Kaufman
Kathy Hubbard, Chief Administrative Officer
John Johansen, Director, Marketing and Communications
Igal Kesselman, Director, Lucy Moses School
and Music Director, Special Music School
Leslie Lehman, Director of Facilities

Merkin Hall Staff

David Bridges, Client Services Manager
Ben Young, Production Manager
Kelsy Hillesheim, Box Office Manager
Margaret Evans, Program Coordinator
Jenny Liao, Head House Manager

Chantal Emond Bourhis, Yannick Lewis, Xing Liao,
Rocco Luongo, Kathleen Raab, House Managers

Michael Boyas, Shammah Campbell, Jorge Civico,
Jacqueline Da Silva, Christian Gohler, Arcinello Jocson,
Ken Ossip, Matthew Palmer, Jordan Peters,
Tom Thornton, Rosemarie Urbanek, Ushers

Stephanie Armitage, Emily Ballou, Ann Barkin,
Kelly Faustel, Sam Gordon, Amira Mustapha, Ariel Osborne,
Carly Osnow-Levin, Rachel Rakov, Harry Rawlings,
Eleanor Smith, Ted Sterns, Antoine Thrower, Leon Virgo,
Katherine Yip, Stage Managers

Kurtis Bradley, Richie Clark, Jeremiah Eigenmann,
Ken Feldman, David Hurtgen, Gil Shuster,
Sound Engineers

Damon Whittemore, Recording Studio Manager

Richard Kwan, Bill Moss, Noriko Okabe, Recording Engineers

Executive Director Emeritus, Founder, Kaufman Music Center

Lydia Kontos

Founding Director, The Hebrew Arts School (1951-1985)

Dr. Tzipora H. Jochsberger

Kaufman Music Center gratefully acknowledges the generous support of Mollie and Abraham Goodman and the Goodman family.

Pianos by Steinway and Sons. The house harpsichord was built by Eric Herz in 1985 and donated by Mr. Joseph Wronker.

Thank you to the Supporters of [Merkin Hall](#).

[Click on the program names above to learn more.](#)

Kaufman Music Center transforms lives through music.

See a concert. Take a class. Connect through music.

Founded in 1952 as a community music school, today's Kaufman Music Center is leveling the playing field for kids all over NYC and beyond with innovative programs making music education accessible for 4,000 students of all ages and backgrounds each year at Special Music School; Lucy Moses School, a community arts school for all ages; and groundbreaking teen new music programs like Face the Music and Luna Composition Lab. At Merkin Hall, more than 50,000 audience members each year connect with music at performances ranging from classical to cutting-edge.

Abraham Goodman House

129 West 67th Street, New York, NY 10023

VISIT KaufmanMusicCenter.org | **CALL** 866 222 6330 **or** 212 501 3350



[/KaufmanMusicCenter](https://www.facebook.com/KaufmanMusicCenter)



[@kaufmanmusiccenter](https://www.instagram.com/kaufmanmusiccenter)



[@KaufmanMusicNYC](https://twitter.com/KaufmanMusicNYC)



[/KaufmanMusicCenter](https://www.youtube.com/KaufmanMusicCenter)