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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
December 17, 2014



**THE MUSIC OF AFRICA OPENS "SHELDON CLASSICS" SERIES
WITH PERCUSSIONIST WILL JAMES AND PIANIST PETER HENDERSON**

ST. LOUIS – The Sheldon presents “Sheldon Classics: Africa” featuring St. Louis Symphony principal percussionist Will James, pianist Peter Henderson and other members of the St. Louis Symphony, Wednesday, January 28, 2015 at 8 p.m. in the perfect acoustics of the Sheldon Concert Hall. St. Louis Symphony principal percussionist Will James is joined by pianist Peter Henderson and other members of the St. Louis Symphony for music inspired by the rhythms and sounds of Africa. James will play two works for solo marimba, and Peter Henderson will play music by Scott Joplin, William Grant Still and St. Louis’ own Fred Onovwerosuoke. Also featured will be the premiere of a commissioned piece by University of Missouri-Columbia graduate Justin Pounds, made possible by the Sinquefeld Charitable Foundation and the Mizzou New Music Initiative.

St. Louis Symphony Orchestra Principal Percussionist **William James** graduated from New England Conservatory in 2006 with a Master’s of Music and was a student of Will Hudgins of the Boston Symphony Orchestra. He received his Bachelor of Music degree from Northwestern University in 2004. James has played with many outstanding ensembles including the Boston Symphony Orchestra, Chicago Symphony Orchestra, North Carolina Symphony, San Diego Symphony, Chicago Civic Orchestra, Tanglewood Festival Orchestra and Chautauqua Festival Orchestra. In addition to his experience as an orchestral player, he has performed several solo recitals across the country as well as soloing with the St. Louis Symphony Orchestra and with the New World Symphony. Along with these accomplishments, he performs regularly on the Pulitzer Foundation Chamber Music Series and plays in a percussion and piano duo with Peter Henderson.

A versatile pianist, **Peter Henderson** is active as a performer in solo, chamber and orchestral settings. Henderson is currently Associate Professor of Music and Artist in Residence at Maryville University, where he has served on the faculty since fall 2005. He performs frequently as an ensemble keyboardist with the St. Louis Symphony, and made his debut as a subscription-concert soloist with the orchestra in January 2008. In recent years, Henderson has played solo recitals focused on works of a single composer: during the 2011-12 season, he performed the 32 piano sonatas of Beethoven; in November and December 2012, he presented the complete piano works of Debussy; and in November 2013, he played Chopin’s 27 Études in a single concert. Henderson holds the degree of Doctor of Music from Indiana University-Bloomington.

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Sheldon Concert Hall / *Sheldon Classics: Africa*
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Justin Pounds is a graduate student currently pursuing a Master of Music degree in Composition at the University of Missouri-Columbia, where he studies with Dr. Thomas McKenney and Dr. Stefan Freund. His choral piece, *Music, When Soft Voices Die* was selected as a “Recommended Work” by The C7 Prize, and he was a finalist for the Sinquefield composition prize in 2012 and 2013 and for the 2014 MU Collaborative Arts Initiative. His recent work, *A Leaf on the Wind*, was written for the “Sound of Forest Park” event at the Jewel Box in St. Louis and it was also performed at the 2014 Mizzou International Composers Festival. During 2013-2014 he was the resident composer for Lexington, Missouri’s Community Arts Pilot Project, through which he composed scores for two audio tours of the city’s historical districts. He is currently working on a one-act opera based on August Strindberg’s 1871 play, *The Outlaw*.

Tickets are \$30 orchestra/\$25 balcony/\$15 student, and are on sale now through MetroTix at 314-534-1111, through The Sheldon’s website at TheSheldon.org, or in person at The Fox Theatre Box Office, 534 N. Grand Blvd. For more information, call The Sheldon at 314-533-9900 or visit TheSheldon.org.

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*Sheldon Classics are underwritten in part by Wilfred and Ann Lee Konneker
Commissioned work made possible by the Sinquefield Charitable Foundation and the Mizzou New Music Initiative
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