



# MAGIC *of* CHRISTMAS

December 14–23, 2018  
 Knight Theater at Levine Center for the Arts

Christopher James Lees, *conductor*  
 Francene Marie Morris, *host*  
 Charlotte Symphony Chorus

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Alan SILVESTRI	Spirit of the Season (from <i>Polar Express</i> )
John RUTTER	O Come, All Ye Faithful
TCHAIKOVSKY <i>arr. McDermott</i>	<b>Nutcracker</b> Dances Mother Ginger Arabian Trepak
Randol BASS	The Night Before Christmas
ANDERSON	Sleigh Ride
HANDEL	Hallelujah Chorus (from <i>Messiah</i> )
Gary FRY	Joyful Carols of Christmas
Jerry HERMAN <i>arr. Fry</i>	We Need a Little Christmas
TRADITIONAL <i>arr. Rutter</i>	The Twelve Days of Christmas
TRADITIONAL <i>arr. Fry</i>	Deck the Halls
Gary FRY	Christmastime in Charlotte ( <i>World Premiere</i> )
BERLIN <i>arr. Bennett</i>	White Christmas
Lee NORRIS	Christmas Pops Sing Along

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*This concert will be presented without intermission and will last approximately 90 minutes.*



## Christopher James Lees conductor

*Christopher James Lees was named Resident Conductor of the Charlotte Symphony in 2018.*

Music Director Christopher Warren-Green appointed Mr. Lees Assistant Conductor of the Charlotte Symphony in the 2016-17 season, and since then, Lees has curated and conducted more than 50 performances a year, leading Pops and Family series concerts, plus the popular On Tap series at Charlotte-area breweries and the Symphony's traveling series, CSO On the Go.

As Resident Conductor, he leads Healing Hands performances at area senior care centers and recreation centers, and conducts Link Up, a program of Carnegie Hall, which engages over 3,000 students in the Symphony experience at Belk Theater. He has also led the *Nutcracker* collaboration with Charlotte Ballet.

Mr. Lees has led performances with the Los Angeles Philharmonic, the Houston, Detroit, Milwaukee, North Carolina, Portland, and Flint Symphonies, and conducted debuts with the Rochester Philharmonic, the Indianapolis, Kansas City, Toledo, Vermont, and New Bedford Symphonies.

Additional engagements have taken him to the National Arts Centre Orchestra, Orchestra de Chambre de Paris, Aspen Philharmonic Orchestra, Cabrillo Festival Orchestra, and at the Music in the Mountains Festival & Festival Internacional de Inverno de Campos do Jordão in Brazil.

With the New York Philharmonic, St. Louis & Atlanta Symphonies, among others, Mr. Lees has also served as assistant conductor for the world's leading conductors. Only the second American Gustavo Dudamel Conducting Fellow with the Los Angeles Philharmonic, Mr. Lees made his debut with the orchestra in April 2013 and returned for concerts in February 2015.

After two summers of study with Robert Spano at the Aspen Music Festival, Mr. Lees was winner of both the 2011 James Conlon Conducting Prize and the 2012 Aspen Conducting Prizes. In 2013, Mr. Lees returned as assistant conductor for the Aspen Music Festival and School.

Mr. Lees holds bachelors and master's degrees from the University of Michigan. He lives in Charlotte with his wife, soprano Lindsay Kesselman, and their son Rowan.

## Francene Marie Morris

host

*The Francene Marie Show* airs on six Beasley Media Group radio outlets. The weekly hour show covers diverse issues for a varied demographic. Before moving to Charlotte from Kansas City, Missouri, Morris was in the modeling industry. At an early age, Morris knew she would end up on stage. She started a speaking circuit known as the Esteem Enhancer, creating space for women to express themselves and grow into new careers.



With experience in second careers herself, Francene Marie is approaching 23 years in broadcasting as an award-winning host. She mentors and teaches future broadcasters at The Carolina School of Broadcasting and writes communication curricula for various learning institutions. She holds a bachelor's degree in Communications.

Francene Marie laughs that she survived raising two children, born 17 years apart, steering both into the arts and sciences fields. She is pleased to find her "new family" in the Charlotte Symphony.

## Gary Fry

composer/arranger

Emmy Award-winning composer Gary Fry joins the Charlotte Symphony's *Magic of Christmas* having achieved success in the fields of both symphonic and commercial music. As composer/arranger for the Chicago Symphony's *Welcome, Yule!* Christmas concerts for 19 years, Fry has become the most-performed living composer by that ensemble. He has written over 100 works for them, as well as for the Dallas and Colorado symphony orchestras, the Boston, Philadelphia, and New York pops orchestras, among others.



Fry has composed for film, television, live theater, ballet, and more than 2500 radio and television commercials for McDonald's, Sears, Kellogg's, and hundreds of other national advertisers. He received a 2006 Emmy Award for his work for Chicago's CBS affiliate WBBM-TV. Air travelers hear Fry's electronic version of Gershwin's *Rhapsody in Blue* when passing through the United Airlines terminal at Chicago O'Hare. Recently his arrangement of Leonard Cohen's "Hallelujah," sung by Chicago's Apollo Chorus, was featured on the Netflix series *Sense8*.

Gary and his wife Carol are delighted to be new residents of the Charlotte area.