For over 20 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. As the *Boston Globe* said, “It’s a cheering thought that this kind of missionary enterprise did not pass from this earth with Leonard Bernstein. Rob Kapilow is awfully good at what he does. We need him.”

Kapilow’s range of activities is astonishingly broad, including his What Makes It Great?® presentations (now for over fifteen seasons in New York and Boston), his family compositions and Family Musik® events, his “Citypieces”, 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, both geographically and culturally: 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, his audiences are diverse and unexpected, but invariably rapt and keen to come back for more.

A frequent guest speaker for museums, business groups, foundations, hospitals, law schools, math departments and conferences, Rob Kapilow is constantly finding connections and intersections between music and the outside world, making art essential to everyday life.

Kapilow’s popularity and appeal are reflected in notable invitations and achievements: he appeared on NBC’s *Today Show* in conversation with Katie Couric; he presented a special What Makes It Great?® event for broadcast on PBS’s *Live From Lincoln Center*; and he has written two highly popular 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. He is currently working on a new book for Norton/Liveright on music from the American Songbook entitled *Listening to America* to be published in 2017.

A documentary film, named *Summer Sun, Winter Moon* after Kapilow’s choral/symphonic work of the same name, which traces the process of that work’s composition from its conception through to its premiere, has been broadcast hundreds of times on Public Television since 2009 and several short segments for PBS NewsHour are scheduled to appear this fall.

Rob Kapilow dedicates his summer months to writing and composing new music, most recently a large-scale work commissioned by the Marin Symphony to celebrate the 50th Anniversary of the Golden Gate Bridge, which was premiered to great acclaim in May 2012 and a string orchestra piece for the San Domenico Virtuoso Strings which premiered in 2014.

**What Makes It Great?**®

Kapilow’s What Makes It Great?® (WMIG) made its auspicious debut on NPR’s *Performance Today* over 20 years ago, and with its accessible ten-minute format it quickly attracted a wide base of fans and followers. Snowballing in popularity, it developed into a full-length concert evening and was soon snapped up by presenters looking to build new audiences. What Makes It Great?® has sold out regular subscription series in places as diverse as Kansas City, MO, Cerritos, CA, as well as at New York’s Lincoln Center, the Celebrity Series of Boston, and the Smithsonian Institution in Washington DC and the National Gallery of Canada. The latest installment of WMIG concerts is now being presented by the Toronto Symphony, and will include Mozart’s *Eine Kleine Nachtmusik*, the Beethoven Violin Concerto and Copeland’s *Appalachian Spring*.

In 2008, PBS’s *Live From Lincoln Center* broadcast a special What Makes It Great?® show, bringing it to TV screens throughout the US; worldwide audiences were also able to see and experience Kapilow’s trademarked presentations when Lincoln Center inaugurated a series of WMIG video podcasts. Kapilow designed a series of WMIG events especially for teenagers, and, in 2005, he introduced them to thousands of middle- and high-school children in collaboration with the Toronto Symphony Orchestra, in a series that has continued on an annual basis and has been repeated around North America. Kapilow’s Bernstein “Songbook” event at Lincoln Center has been selected as one of the *New York Times*’s “Top Ten Moments” of theater offerings. In the fall of 2015, a new series will be launched by WWFM radio which will broadcast one live WMIG program a month during the 15-16 season.

Rob Kapilow’s What Makes It Great?® programs are available on CD, on the Vanguard Everyman Classics label. In discs devoted to Mozart’s *Eine kleine Nachtmusic* and the “Jupiter” Symphony, Kapilow breaks the music down in a listener-friendly way – pulling themes apart, demonstrating how the tunes might sound in lesser hands, guiding listeners through the maze of melodies – and then finishes up with a complete performance of the work. In addition, in 2015, Kapilow began a new series of downloadable WMIG audiobook programs in partnership with Roven Records and Audible available worldwide at Audible.com

**FamilyMusik**®

Rob Kapilow, affectionately nicknamed America’s “pied piper of classical music,” has found many new young fans through his family compositions and presentations.

Kapilow’s most recent family piece is an orchestration of *Paddywak, a Tap Dance Concerto*, co-commissioned by the Toronto Symphony and the National Arts Centre Orchestra in Ottawa, which Kapilow has presented in Canada in both French and English. Prior to that, he was commissioned by Lincoln Center in New York to write *Jabberwocky* for the 2009 re-opening of Alice Tully Hall, in collaboration with Music in the Morning in Vancouver and the Celebrity Series of Boston. Kapilow has written numerous other commissioned works, including the first musical setting of a Dr. Seuss work, *Green Eggs and Ham*. Kapilow’s inimitable presentation, “Green Eggs and Hamadeus”, which features his own work alongside Mozart’s *Eine kleine Nachtmusik* in a lively mix of discussion and performance, is available on CD on the Vanguard Classics label. In 2015, he recorded his settings of Chris Van Allsburg’s *Polar Express* featuring baritone Nathan Gunn and Dr. Seuss’ *Gertrude McFuzz* featuring soprano Isabel Leonard for Roven Records.

Kapilow’s *Green Eggs and Ham* has achieved great popularity in the theater world, prompting *Boston Globe* music critic Richard Dyer to name it the most popular children’s piece since *Peter and the Wolf*. Other compositions include Dr. Seuss’s *Gertrude McFuzz*; a Christmas-Hanukkah pair of pieces (Chris Van Allsburg’s *Polar Express*, for the Celebrity Series of Boston, and *Elijah’s Angel*, a setting of the children’s book by Michael Rosen); and Kapilow’s first opera, *Many Moons*, based on the James Thurber story, with a libretto by Hilary Blecher. Another popular family piece by Kapilow is *Play Ball!*, a setting of “Casey at the Bat”, which was performed at Lincoln Center as part of their Family Musik® series.

**“Citypieces” and Commemorative Compositions**

Involving large communities in the inspiration and compositional process of his commemorative works, Kapilow has left a profound mark on the nation’s cities and regions. His most recent project, *The Golden Gate Opus*, is a piece for orchestra, chorus and recorded natural sound commissioned by the Marin Symphony to celebrate the 75th Anniversary of the Golden Gate Bridge. To capture the authentic sounds of the bridge in this new piece, The Marin Symphony and Rob Kapilow teamed up to gather input from locals, visiting the surrounding communities and schools, and asking the question “what does the bridge sound like to you?” Premiered in May 2012 to overwhelming critical and popular success, the composition captures the sounds, history and legacy of the iconic landmark. The creation of this piece is also the subject of an upcoming documentary film.

After receiving great acclaim for “Citypiece: *DC Monuments*” (a millennium composition commissioned by the Kreeger Museum for the Kennedy Center and the National Symphony Orchestra), Kapilow reprised his interactive compositional format in a state-wide project commissioned by the Louisiana Philharmonic Orchestra and the State of Louisiana, as part of the 2003 celebrations for the bicentennial of the Louisiana Purchase. The work was toured throughout the state of Louisiana.

Another such project examined and reflected on the historic impact of the Lewis and Clark expedition (commemorating its bicentennial) from the perspective of the Native American Indians. Co-commissioned by the St. Louis Symphony, the Carlsen Center (on behalf of the Kansas City Symphony), and the Louisiana Philharmonic, the large choral/orchestral work, *Summer Sun, Winter Moon*, received its premiere performances in the fall and winter of 2004. Kapilow invited Darrell Kipp, a writer and educator from the Blackfeet Tribe of Montana, to collaborate as librettist. A documentary film, also named *Summer Sun, Winter Moon*, followed the composition’s process from conception to premiere, and has been broadcast more than 250 times on PBS since 2009. Independent filmmaker Hugo Perez has produced and directed the documentary for New York-based illume productions; the documentary has received the prestigious and competitive honor of completion funds from the Independent Television Service (ITVS) arm of PBS.

Kapilow has conducted many 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. He is the conductor/creative director of FamilyMusik® for the Celebrity Series of Boston and at New York’s Lincoln Center, and has been conductor/director of FamilyMusik® for New York’s 92nd Street Y, co-director of the Rutgers SummerFest Festival, assistant conductor of the Opera Company of Boston, Music Director of the touring company Opera New England, and conductor of the Kansas City Symphony’s summer FamilyFare program. He was also music director of the Yale Symphony Orchestra for five seasons.

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 the Eastman School of Music. After graduating from Eastman, he returned to Yale, where he was assistant professor for six years at the university.

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, leading to engagements with many of America’s major orchestras, including the Philadelphia Orchestra. As a composer, Kapilow was a featured on Chicago Public Radio’s prestigious “Composers In America” series and is a recipient of an Exxon “Meet-the-Composer” grant and numerous ASCAP awards.

Rob Kapilow has conducted many of North America's finest orchestras including the Philadelphia Orchestra, the National Symphony, the St. Louis, Atlanta, Toronto, and Detroit Symphonies as well as the National Art Centre Orchestra, the Calgary Philharmonic, and the St. Paul Chamber Orchestra. He is an exclusive Schirmer composer and his many compositions have been performed by nearly every major American orchestra as well as orchestras in Europe, Asia and Australia.

He lives in River Vale, NJ, with his wife and three children.