PSO
PENSACOLA SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

Peter Rubardt, Music Director

CELEBRATING 100 YEARS OF MUSIC

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Support

WELCOME

We are glad that you are here, and we look forward to sharing meaningful musical experiences together!

Please reach out to us with any comments or suggestions about enhancing your experience.

Our Team

Music Director
Peter Rubardt

Executive Director
Bret Barrow

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Brittany Merideth

Advancement & External Relations
Hannah Denaro

Community Engagement
Jimmy Poteat

Librarian
Monika Durbin

Music Education
Julie Martin Green

Patron Development & Communications
Courtney Dell

Patron Services
Kiara Colón

Personnel Manager
Dale Riegle

Contact us

Phone: 850.435.2533

Email: info@pensacolasymphony.com

Physical Address: 205 East Zaragoza Street | Pensacola, FL 32502

Mailing Address: P.O. Box 1752 | Pensacola, FL 32591

Cover Photo by Meg Burke Photography

Photo by Meg Burke Photography

PETER RUBARDT Music Director

Peter Rubardt has earned wide acclaim for powerful and insightful performances that inspire passionate responses to symphonic music. In addition to his long-standing position as music director of the Pensacola Symphony, he also serves as the music director of the Meridian and Gulf Coast Symphonies in Mississippi. Throughout his career he has worked successfully to deepen the relationships between communities and their orchestras, leading to growing audiences and a broad base of support. A gifted speaker about music as well as a performer, he actively engages audiences and community groups in the appreciation of symphonic music. Also busy as a guest conductor, Rubardt recently debuted with the Wisconsin Chamber Orchestra, Lake Placid Sinfonietta, Alabama Symphony, Fort Worth Symphony, and Augusta Symphony, among others.

Now in his twenty-ninth season as music director of the Pensacola Symphony Orchestra, Rubardt continues to grow the organization through a wide range of classical, pops, and educational programs. He is currently active in the PSO's major endowment campaign celebrating the 100th anniversary. He played a central role in designing the orchestra's innovative "Beyond the Stage" program, partnering with a range of local organizations to bring music to hospitals, schools, and neighborhoods around the community. Previously he was at the forefront of the effort that successfully renovated the historic Pensacola Saenger Theatre, giving the orchestra increased visibility and vitality. He played a key role in the creation of an hour-long documentary in collaboration with WSRE public television.

Prior to his appointment in Pensacola, Rubardt served four seasons as associate conductor of the Syracuse Symphony Orchestra and three seasons as resident conductor of the New Jersey Symphony Orchestra, conducting numerous classical and pops performances, regional tours, and educational programs with both orchestras. He has also conducted the Utah Symphony, Alabama Symphony, and the Louisiana, Rochester, and Las Vegas Philharmonic Orchestras, The Louisville Orchestra, Jacksonville Symphony Orchestra, Richmond Symphony, Japan's Hiroshima Symphony Orchestra, Century Orchestra Osaka, Yamagata Symphony, Hyogo Performing Arts Center Orchestra (where he performed for Her Imperial Highness Princess Hitachi of Japan), Kansai Philharmonic Orchestra, and Nova Filarmonia Portuguese, with which he toured Portugal several times, as well as the orchestras of Acadiana, Anchorage, Annapolis, Augusta, Bangor, El Paso, Lubbock, Peoria, Portland, Quad Cities, Rogue Valley, South Dakota, Southwest Florida, Spokane, and Youngstown, among others. From 1991-96, he served as music director of the Rutgers Symphony.

A native of Berkeley, California, Rubardt holds a doctor of musical arts in orchestral conducting from The Juilliard School, where he was the recipient of the Bruno Walter Fellowship. A Fulbright Scholar, he studied piano and conducting at the famed Vienna Hochschule fur Musik and pursued further studies at the Tanglewood Music Center and the Los Angeles Philharmonic Institute. He has participated in the masterclasses of Leonard Bernstein, Seiji Ozawa, André Previn, and Herbert Blomstedt; his major teachers have included Otto-Werner Mueller, Sixten Ehrling, Michael Senturia, and David Lawton. He was selected by the League of American Orchestras to perform in the National Conductor Preview with the Jacksonville Symphony.

Rubardt has served on the faculties of The Juilliard School, Rutgers University, and the State University of New York at Purchase. In addition to Juilliard, he has received awards and degrees in music from the State University of New York at Stony Brook and the University of California at Berkeley. Rubardt has recorded for Pantheon Records International. He resides in Pensacola with his wife Hedi Salanki, a Distinguished University Professor in the Dr. Grier Williams School of Music at the University of West Florida.

LETTER FROM OUR MUSIC DIRECTOR

It is not often that one has an opportunity to be part of a 100th anniversary. It is a rare occasion to look into the past and to walk in the footsteps of people who shaped the organization's first century. We know who the Pensacola Symphony's music directors have been, and we can track many of the performance venues. Together, Grier Williams and I account for close to half of that history. We know what was played at those concerts, and who the guest artists were, but what really intrigues me is thinking about the audience and the volunteers.

Orchestras are founded from the deep and lasting commitment of a community. That commitment must be renewed and affirmed with every concert of every season, every fundraiser, annual fund drive, ticket sold, and youth concert played. When it comes to the arts, Pensacola has excelled: symphony, opera, theatre, ballet, chorus, visual arts, and fine arts education. The arts are thriving here, and this community has proven time and again that we hold them as a core value.

The other exciting part of having a 100th anniversary is asking what we want the Pensacola Symphony to look like for the next 100 years. We have been considering that question, and the answers are clear:

- Deep devotion to pursuing artistic excellence of the highest order
- Passionate commitment to experience music with our community, including free concerts in parks, libraries, and galleries, and music education for all stages of life
- A greatly expanded program to inspire young people through music, including the long-anticipated debut of the Pensacola Symphony Youth Orchestra

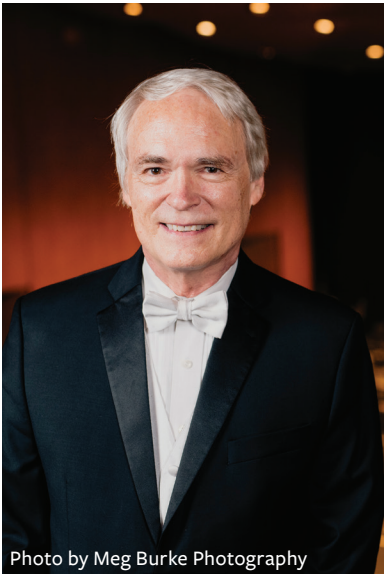

Photo by Meg Burke Photography

Not coincidentally, those are the three pillars of our 100th anniversary endowment campaign, and together they point to a worthy continuation of our extraordinary legacy.

I am so very grateful to be part of an organization that brings such joy to so many people, and I'm thrilled by both the past and the future of this orchestra. Thank you for joining us for this concert, for this season, and for the Pensacola Symphony Orchestra's next century!

Musically Yours,

Peter Rubardt
Music Director

MEET THE MUSICIANS

FIRST VIOLIN
Leonid Yanovskiy, *Concertmaster*
Pensacola Symphony Orchestra Guild Chair
Petra Bubanja, *Associate Concertmaster*
Enen Yu, *Concertmaster*, *Pensacola Opera Productions*
Maeanna Callahan
Edward Charity
Burcu Goker
Molly Hollingsworth
Lambert Hsieh
William Jackson
Alexandra Khaimovich
Gosia Leska
Natasha Marsalli
Tania Moldovan
Zully Morales
Ingrid Roberts

SECOND VIOLIN
Grace Kim, *Principal*
Brian Brown
Juliana Gaviria
Ellen Grant
Danielle Harrelson
Joe Ortiguera
Ramel Price
Sara Rodriguez
Miranda Rojos
Erika Sciascia
Barbara Withers

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Audrey Naffe, *Principal*
Marion Viccars Chair
Victor Andzulis
Iris Bobren
Amaro Dubois
Courtney Grant
Jim Lichtenberger
Ashley Overby
Daniela Pardo
Dave Rebeck

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Aleksandra Gregg, *Principal*
Helen N. Williams Chair
Andrea Beltran-Landers, *Associate Principal*
Litvak Family Chair
Lucas Canada
Chun-hsin Chang
Juan Jose Gutierrez
Paul Hanceri
Scott Kluksdahl
Daniel Martinez
Angelese Pepper
Ryan Snapp
Zlatina Staykova

BASS
Marcos Machado, *Principal*
Samuel Dahmer
Tod Leavitt
Mia Mangano
Sophia Scarano

FLUTE
Stephanie Riegle, *Principal*
Bethany Witter Wood
Gay and Bruce Burrows Chair
Sarah Jane Young
Mary Elizabeth Patterson Chair
Monika Durbin

PICCOLO
Sarah Jane Young, *Principal*

OBOE
Matt Fossa, *Principal*
Margaret Cracchiolo
Bobby and Suzanne Kahn Chair
Jillian Camwell
Asher Kelly

ENGLISH HORN
Margaret Cracchiolo

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Richard Jernigan, *Principal*
Newell Hutchinson
Robert and Roberta Manning Chair
Kim Whaley
Melissa Turner
Rachael Webb

E♭ CLARINET
Newell Hutchinson

BASS CLARINET
Melissa Turner
Kim Whaley

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Paul W. Runge and Phyllis G. Runge Chair
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Kristina Nelson

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Dave Camwell, *Principal*
Chris Sacco

HORN
Josiah Bullach*
James Baker*
Angela Finley*
Jodi Graham Wood
Stuart Kinney
Tony Chiarito
Kevin Fails

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Dale Riegle, *Principal*
Marea Jo Milner Chair
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Monroe and Mallory Lee Chair
Joshua Bledsoe

BASS TROMBONE
Wess Hillman

TUBA
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TIMPANI
Laura Noah, *Principal*

PERCUSSION
Jordan Wood, *Principal*
Adam Blackstock
Matt Greenwood
Jordan Hale
Pete Krostag
Brian Nozny
Zachary Webb

HARP
Katie Ott, *Principal*
Rebekah Atkinson

PIANO
Blake Riley, *Principal*

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Monika Durbin, *Librarian*
Dale Riegle, *Personnel Manager*

VIRTUAL PRODUCTION
Quinton Williams, *Video Director*
Jeff Jordan, *Audio Engineer*

** Co-Principal*
Claudio Torres Jr., MD Chair

Pensacola Philharmonic Orchestra, 1926

THE 100-YEAR HISTORY OF THE PSO

Instrumental music performances and music study clubs began to appear in Pensacola during the late 1800s and early 1900s. By 1919, the Pensacola Music Study Club was formed, and in 1925, Edwin and Louise Northup began hosting regular music gatherings with friends in their home on the southwest corner of Spring and Gregory Streets (today the Pensacola Victorian Bed and Breakfast). In 1926, representatives of the Civic Music Association of America came to Pensacola to sell memberships that gave exclusive access to performances of classical music through a series of concerts featuring national talent. During their initial campaign, they were able to sell 800 memberships for the traveling series at $5 each. The Pensacola Philharmonic Orchestra was first formed in 1926 by German immigrant John W. Borjes as a reaction to the visiting concert series. Professor Borjes, who studied music at the storied conservatory in Leipzig, Germany, recognized the need for Pensacola to have an institution of its own that could develop local talent and provide access to symphonic music for the entire community. We know from Borjes' comments that he formed the ensemble with a hope "to demonstrate to this city that it is not necessary to go out of town to get good music." Having been music director of orchestras at New York's Shubert Theatre and Memphis' Orpheum Theatre no doubt gave Borjes the requisite experience and credibility this new venture required. Members of this early ensemble included many members of the twenty-piece Saenger Theatre Concert Orchestra, among others. Their debut performance, a free concert that took place

at Pensacola High School, was well received, as documented in the local newspaper.

From those early years, the Pensacola Philharmonic Orchestra transitioned through a few name changes. Under the baton of Dr. John Venetozzi in the 1950s, the organization emerged as the Greater Pensacola Symphony Orchestra, our legal name to this day. The Ladies Auxiliary of the Orchestra formed in 1956, and later the Pensacola Symphony Orchestra Guild formed in 1973.

After a major renovation effort in 1982, the Saenger Theatre became the concert home of the orchestra while under the direction of Dr. Grier Williams. Dr. Williams led the PSO until 1996. During that time, he was also the founder of the music department at the University of West Florida and music director of First Presbyterian Church. He also brought together a group of singers that would later become the Pensacola Children's Chorus.

In 1997, the Pensacola Symphony welcomed Peter Rubardt as our new music director. Since that time, Dr. Rubardt has played a central role in increasing the organization's impact through a wide range of classical, pops, and community engagement programs.

Now in our 100th season, the PSO continues to seek ways to fulfill our mission of promoting the well-being of the Greater Pensacola community through excellence in live symphonic music and lifelong learning through engaging musical activities. From the stage, PSO's goal is to provide the Pensacola community with transformative musical experiences through performances with world-renowned artists. Our "Beyond the Stage" program brings musical experiences to the Pensacola community in virtual and in-person settings that include schools, retirement communities, health care facilities, and galleries. As we look to the future, we continue to expand our support of young musicians through the establishment of the Pensacola Symphony Youth Orchestra, broaden our service in the community, and maintain and build the artistry that is central to the organization.

SEASON CALENDAR

October 4, 2025 – 7:30 p.m.
Masterworks
Opening Night!

October 16, 2025 – 11 a.m.
Free Community Performance
PSO at the Library
West Florida Public Libraries – Pensacola Branch

October 26, 2025 – 3 p.m.
Free Community Performance
PSO in the Park
Museum Plaza

November 2, 2025 – 4 p.m.
Chamber Orchestra Concert
Vivaldi's *The Four Seasons*
The Sanctuary Event Space

November 8, 2025 – 7:30 p.m.
Masterworks
Classically Connected

November 9, 2025 – 1:30 p.m.
Free Community Performance
Great Gulfcoast Arts Festival
Fountain Park

November 15, 2025 – 3 p.m.
Music for Families
First Baptist Church of Pensacola

November 16, 2025 – 3 p.m.
Youth Orchestra Concert
University of West Florida

December 5, 2025 – 1 p.m.
Free Community Performance
Classical Sounds at Bayview
Bayview Senior Resource Center

December 31, 2025 – 7 p.m.
Pops!
Celebrate the New Year!

January 10, 2026 – 7:30 p.m.
Masterworks
Beethoven & Blue Jeans

January 31, 2026 – 7:30 p.m.
Chamber Orchestra Concert
Mozart Madness
First Baptist Church of Pensacola

February 7, 2026 – 7:30 p.m.
Pops!
Icon: The Voices That Changed Music

February 15, 2026 – 3 p.m.
Free Community Performance
Christ Church

February 20, 2026 – 11 a.m.
Free Community Performance
PSO at the Library
West Florida Public Libraries – Bellview Branch

March 7, 2026 – 7:30 p.m.
Masterworks
Mahler Symphony No. 2, "Resurrection"

March 22, 2026 – 3 p.m.
Free Community Performance
PSO in the Park
Museum Plaza

March 28, 2026 – 7:30 p.m.
Add-On Concert
Symphonic Spectacular: Gil Shaham Plays Brahms

April 12, 2026 – 3 p.m.
Youth Orchestra Concert
University of West Florida

April 25, 2026 – 7:30 p.m.
Masterworks
100th Anniversary Gala Concert

May 8, 2026 – 1 p.m.
Free Community Performance
Classical Sounds at Bayview
Bayview Senior Resource Center

May 17, 2026 – 11 a.m.
Special Event
Jazz Brunch
Pensacola Country Club

BEYOND THE STAGE

Since 1926, musicians in our community have been performing, teaching, and sharing music under the auspices of this orchestra. The legacy of this work creates a solid foundation on which we continue to build. Your involvement and generosity make it possible for the Pensacola Symphony Orchestra to move beyond the stage and join with key community partners in providing meaningful musical experiences during every stage of life.

52
Community Partner Organizations

190
Events

435
Musicians Service Hours

PROGRAMS FOR YOUTH

From instrument petting zoos and cafeteria concerts for young students to the establishment of the Pensacola Symphony Youth Orchestra, the PSO's programs teach and inspire young people to find joy in music throughout their lives.

PARTNERS

Classical Conversations, Milton and Pace
Escambia County Public Schools
Montessori School of Pensacola
Okaloosa County School District
Pensacola Christian College
Santa Rosa County District Schools
Umbrella Academy
West Florida Homeschool Education Music Association

PROGRAMS AROUND OUR COMMUNITY

Small ensembles of PSO musicians perform around the community in libraries, parks, galleries, retirement communities, community centers, and workplaces to connect music to spaces where people play, live, and work.

Collaborating with service organizations, municipalities, and military welfare departments, the musicians of the PSO create meaningful musical moments for families and adults with support needs, unhoused adults, and military children and spouses.

PARTNERS

Alfred-Washburn Center
ARC Gateway
Arcadia Senior Living, Pace
Azalea Trace
Bayview Senior Resource Center
The Beacon at Gulf Breeze
Bright Bridge Ministries
First United Methodist Church
Gulf Coast Kids House
HCA Florida West Hospital
Hurlburt Field Youth Program
Ministry Village at Olive Baptist Church
Naval Air Station Pensacola
Pensacola Museum of Art
Rotary Club of Pensacola
Sodalis Senior Living, Milton
Solaris Healthcare
St. John the Evangelical Church
University of West Florida Leisure Learning
University Pines
The Waterford at Creekside
Wesley Haven Villa
West Florida Public Libraries
Willowbrooke Court at Azalea Trace
WSRE Amazing Kids Day for Children with Autism
YourLife of Pensacola

PROGRAMS IN CLINICAL SETTINGS

For children and expectant mothers experiencing medical treatments and hospitalization, people experiencing memory loss, and patients in hospice care, live music soothes emotions, increases comfort, promotes quality of life, enhances family bonds, eases anxiety, and creates a calm environment. Our musicians partner with healthcare teams to address the social, emotional, physical, and relationship needs of patients and families.

PARTNERS

Ascension Sacred Heart Perinatal Unit
The Council on Aging
Nemours Children's Specialty Care
The Residence
Studer Family Children's Hospital at Ascension Sacred Heart
VITAS Hospice at Ascension Sacred Heart

SUPPORTERS

These engagements would not be possible without our generous donors and additional community support. We are grateful to the following individuals, organizations, and businesses for their investment:

Azalea Trace - ACTS Retirement Life
Blues Angel Music
Emerald Coast Hospice
Erskine Benefits LLC, Aaron Erskine
Genuine Replacement Parts
Kia Autosport of Pensacola
The Montessori School of Pensacola
Schmidt's Music
And Additional Support from the Jazz Brunch

To support a partnership, please contact Hannah Denaro, Advancement and External Relations, at hdenaro@pensacolasymphony.com or 850.435.2533 ext. 100.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The board of directors plays an active role in strategic thinking, financial and legal oversight, and relationship building for the organization. Their vast experience and passion for serving our community through music are essential in addressing the PSO's challenges and opportunities. Members serve a three-year, renewable term and meet regularly to discuss the direction of the PSO, ensuring that our resources are most effectively allocated toward the fulfillment of our mission.

Executive Committee

Jack Zoesch, *President*
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John O'Connor, *Treasurer*
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Charles F. Beall Jr., *Immediate Past President*
Tom Bailey

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Bret Barrow, *Executive Director*
Mrs. Jean N. Norman, *Guild President*
Sarah Horne, *Advisory Council Chair*

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2019-22	Mr. Charles F. Beall Jr.

ADVISORY COUNCIL

This group of stakeholders meets quarterly for programming about our artistic imperatives, audience development, and community engagement. With open discussions and opportunities to engage with our musicians, partners, and staff, Advisory Council meetings provide an important space to evaluate the effectiveness of current programs, empower advocacy, and influence the future direction of the orchestra.

Sarah Horne, *Chair*
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If you are interested in learning more about involvement with the Pensacola Symphony, contact Hannah Denaro, Advancement and External Relations, at hdenaro@pensacolasymphony.com or 850.435.2533 ext. 100.

PSO GUILD

The Pensacola Symphony Orchestra Guild is a group of dynamic individuals who are passionate about the orchestra and its mission. The Guild has been one of the biggest supporters of the orchestra for the last five decades. Operating as a separate non-profit organization from the PSO, the Guild's mission is to educate and enrich the community by supporting the orchestra through volunteer and fundraising efforts, such as musician hospitality and music in education support. For more information, visit psog.org.

Mrs. Jean N. Norman
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First Vice President/Programs

Cindy Law
Assistant Treasurer/Special Events

Meredith McCarthy
Second Vice President/Luncheons

Pat Stephenson
Secretary

ANNUAL FUND DONORS

We are deeply grateful to the following individuals who support our concert season and services to the community through their generous contributions to the Annual Fund. The following is a list of donors through July 31, 2025.

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Tad and Lisa Ihns

$15,000+
Mrs. Edward J. Galbavy
Jessica Lee

$10,000+
Tom and Nora Bailey
Charles F. Beall Jr.
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Robert W. and Gloria B. Turner
And one who wishes to remain anonymous

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Drs. Barry and Lori Ripps
And one who wishes to remain anonymous

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Ellen Vinson
Peter Young
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And two who wish to remain anonymous

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Joe and Bradley Vinson
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Janice Zoesch
And six who wish to remain anonymous

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As we celebrate our 100th anniversary season, we recognize the individuals and organizations who have supported our endowment campaign to advance artistic integrity, provide broader access, and expand educational programming. Providing permanent support for programming, this campaign lays the foundation for the next century.

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Gifts to the Annual Fund are a valuable part of the continuation of the organization's mission, but there are certain gifts that elevate the experience that the orchestra can bring to our community. With a visionary spirit, donors can support the appearance of world-class guest artists, such as Gil Shaham, on the Saenger stage and special events that expand the reach of the orchestra.

We would like to recognize and thank the following donors who have invested in transformational artistic experiences as of July 31, 2025:

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PSO JAZZ BRUNCH SPONSORS

In the spring of 2025, we hosted the third annual Jazz Brunch, benefiting our Beyond the Stage program for community engagement and education. The event at Pensacola Country Club featured performances from Ike Sturm, Arta Jekabsone, Jesse Lewis, Zach Harmon, the West Florida High School String Quintet, Stephanie Riegle, and Monika Durbin. We extend our sincere gratitude to the people and businesses listed below who made this event a success.

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IRA charitable giving is a way you can transfer funds from your IRA directly to the orchestra while realizing some important tax benefits. If you are currently receiving a Required Minimum Distribution (RMD) from your IRA, you can reduce your taxable income and may lower the taxable portion of your Social Security.

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The Symphony always recommends that you consult your tax professional for the most up-to-date and personalized information about giving benefits.

OPENING NIGHT!

Saturday, October 4, 2025, 7:30 p.m.

Peter Rubardt, Conductor
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Alexander Borodin
(1833–1887)

Polovtsian Dances from *Prince Igor*

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The Enchanted Lake, op. 62

Pyotr Ilych Tchaikovsky
(1840–1893)

Selections from *Swan Lake* Suite, op. 20a
I. *Scène*
III. *Danse des cygnes*
IV. *Scène* (*Pas d'action*)
II. *Valse*

INTERMISSION

Manuel de Falla
(1876–1946)

Nights in the Gardens of Spain
I. *In the Generalife*
II. *Distant Dance*
III. *In the Gardens of the Sierra de Córdoba*

Featuring Chaeyoung Park, Piano

The second and third movements are played without pause.

Maurice Ravel
(1875–1937)

Rapsodie espagnole
I. *Prélude à la nuit*
II. *Malagueña*
III. *Habanera*
IV. *Feria*

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Chaeyoung Park

Piano

Chaeyoung Park, first prize winner of the 2022 Young Concert Artists Susan Wadsworth International Auditions and finalist in the 2023 Rubinstein Piano Competition, is celebrated for her expressive and thoughtful playing, praised by the *New York Concert Review* as a pianist who "does not play a single note without thought or feeling." Her repertoire spans from French Baroque to contemporary works by composers such as Unsuk Chin.

As a recitalist, chamber musician, and concerto soloist, Park has performed at major venues, including Carnegie Hall's Stern Auditorium, Bravo! Vail Music Festival, and the Gilmore Rising Stars Series. Her recent concerto engagements include performances with the Charlotte Symphony Orchestra, Israel Philharmonic Orchestra, Redlands Symphony Orchestra, and The Israel Camerata Jerusalem.

In 2019, Park made history as the first female Korean pianist to win the Hilton Head International Piano Competition, leading to her Carnegie Hall solo debut and a performance of Beethoven's Piano Concerto No. 4 with the Hilton Head Symphony Orchestra.

An enthusiastic chamber musician, she has participated in programs such as Ravinia's Steans Institute, Music@Menlo, and Yellow Barn, collaborating with young artists and working with legends such as Leon Fleisher and Gary Hoffman. Her chamber music performances have been featured at venues such as WNYC/WQXR's Greene Space and the Harvard Club in New York City. She also collaborated with cellist Zlatomir Fung as part of the Celebrity Series in Boston. Recent highlights include debuts at Merkin Hall and The Kennedy Center's Terrace Theater, along with performances at the Gina Bachauer International Piano Festival, Rockport Music, and a return to the Schiermonnikoog Music Festival. In 2024-25, she appeared at The Morgan Library and Museum's Encore Series, Sanibel Island's BIG ARTS, and the Dame Myra Hess Series, with concerto engagements with the Maryland Symphony Orchestra, Eugene Symphony, Topeka Symphony Orchestra, and others.

Park holds an Artist Diploma from The Juilliard School, where she studied with Robert McDonald, and is a recipient of the Gina Bachauer Scholarship, Kovner Fellowship, and the Arthur Rubinstein Prize.

Chaeyoung Park appears by arrangement with Young Concert Artists, Inc., www.yca.org.

OPENING NIGHT!

Alexander Borodin
Polovtsian Dances from *Prince Igor*

Alexander Borodin was born in St. Petersburg, Russia, on November 12, 1833, and died in St. Petersburg, on February 27, 1887. Polovtsian Dances from* Prince Igor *is scored for two flutes, piccolo, two oboes, English horn, two clarinets, two bassoons, four horns, two trumpets, three trombones, tuba, timpani, snare drum, tambourine, triangle, glockenspiel, cymbals, bass drum, and strings.

Alexander Borodin's opera *Prince Igor*, which many consider to be his finest work, remained unfinished when he died suddenly of a heart attack in 1887. The composer had worked on the project intermittently for eighteen years, but his duties as a chemist and chemistry teacher at the Medical-Surgical Academy in St. Petersburg, Russia, left little time for musical pursuits. He based his libretto, also incomplete, on a scenario by Vladimir Stasov—champion of all things Russian in art, literature, and music. The scenario, in turn, drew on an anonymous, supposedly twelfth-century epic, *The Lay of the Host of Igor*.

Composer and friend Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov had intermittently tried to push Borodin into completing *Prince Igor*. In 1885 he even began assembling a vocal score, which included adding musical details of his own. Many years earlier, in 1879, he had helped Borodin orchestrate the opera's Polovtsian Dances for a performance at Balakirev's Free Music School in St. Petersburg. After Borodin's death Rimsky-Korsakov was the natural choice to complete the opera, which he did with the help of the brilliant young Alexander Glazunov. The entire opera was eventually performed in 1890, but alternate versions that aim to restore some of the original music pruned by Rimsky-Korsakov and Glazunov have continued to appear. A definitive version may never be reached, though all agree that Borodin's opera well deserves its place in the repertoire.

The opera's plot involves Russian Prince Igor's failed campaign against the nomadic Polovtsians, which results in his and his son Vladimir's captivity. Vladimir falls in love with Konchakovna, daughter of Khan Konchak, who would let Igor go if he would agree to a nonaggression pact. Igor proudly refuses and soon escapes. Vladimir stays, however, and is spared by the Khan who even blesses his marriage to his daughter. Igor returns home, to the great joy of his wife Yaroslavna, and all the people rejoice.

Much of Act II takes the form of scenic tableaux, as in French grand opera, to give exotic color to the Polovtsian element and provide choreographic diversion. The famous Polovtsian Dances with chorus that are often excerpted for concert performance occur at the end of the act when the Khan, far from mistreating Igor, orders entertainment from his slaves and offers him his pick of maidens. The dances have become so popular that they are most often heard in orchestral performances without chorus.

The first dance of the Act II finale features a gently flowing introduction over a steady drone and a lovely melody originally for the women's chorus. This memorable tune became ultra-famous as "Strangers in Paradise" in the Broadway musical *Kismet*. The following energetic orchestral dance for the men is full of offbeat accents and little whirling gestures. The following dance raises the roof in praise of Khan Konchak, with insistent rising figures capped by long-held chords over tumultuous descents in the orchestra. Another fast-paced dance for the boys, full of

repeating patterns and a little four-note pizzicato descent, brings lusty praise for the Khan. Borodin ends by bringing back the preceding dances in colorful succession and whipping up the whole into a grand climax.

Anatoly Lyadov
The Enchanted Lake, op. 62

Anatoly Lyadov was born in St. Petersburg, Russia, on May 11, 1855, and died in Polynovka, Novgorod district, on August 28, 1914. **The Enchanted Lake** ***is scored for three flutes, two oboes, three clarinets, two bassoons, four horns, timpani, bass drum, harp, celesta, and strings.***

Having studied at the St. Petersburg Conservatory with Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov, Anatoly Lyadov would later return to teach, where one of his pupils was the young Sergei Prokofiev. Lyadov distinguished himself not only as a teacher but as a conductor, composer, and collector of folk songs. Known for his laziness and painful shyness, he was expelled from the Conservatory as a student for not attending classes. (He was later readmitted.) He planned an opera under the provisional title *Zoryushka*, but in thirty-five years it never materialized—his orchestral pieces *The Enchanted Lake* and *Kikimora*, composed in 1909, may have been intended for the opera. Indolence also cost him the commission for The *Firebird*—Sergei Diaghilev offered it to Igor Stravinsky only when Lyadov's procrastination forced him to bow out.

Lyadov's shyness kept him from commenting on social and political issues, and he preferred the imaginary world to reality. "Give me a fairy tale, a dragon, a water sprite, a wood demon—give me something that is unreal, and I am happy." Many of his works reflect his fascination with Russian fairy tales. He called *The Enchanted Lake* "a fairy-tale picture," inspired initially by a lake on his wife's estate but enhanced by his own imagination:

> *I know such a lake, a simple Russian lake in a forest, beautiful in its peaceful surroundings. One had to feel the changes that take place in color, light, shadows, and air, in the constantly changing silence, and in the apparent immobility. I began to look for a description of such a lake in Russian fairy tales. But Russian fairy tales do not stop the story in order to describe natural phenomena which I needed for the music. I wanted a description where everything came to a standstill, then suddenly something rustles, a breeze glides over.*

Composed in 1909 but drawing on sketches from his projected opera *Zoryushka*, *The Enchanted Lake* paints an extremely peaceful mood picture that aptly fits this description. Short fleeting motives and harmonies that are indebted both to Richard Wagner and Claude Debussy evoke the effects of light, shadows, and air on the water. Ripples become apparent as various "nature" motives emerge from the oscillating accompaniment patterns. Harp, celesta, and muted strings add color to the watery effects.

Lyadov dedicated *The Enchanted Lake* and *Kikimora* to composer Nicolay Tcherepnin. Both works were premiered not in Russia but in the United States on a concert by the Russian Symphony Orchestra on November 16, 1910, in New York.

Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky

Selections from *Swan Lake* Suite, op. 20a

Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky was born in Kamsko-Votkinsk, Vyatka province, Russia, on May 7, 1840, and died in St. Petersburg, on November 9, 1893. **Swan Lake** ***Suite is scored for two flutes, piccolo, two oboes, two clarinets, two bassoons, four horns, two trumpets, two cornets, three trombones, tuba, timpani, triangle, bass drum, cymbals, tambourine, castanets, harp, and strings.***

In 1871 Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky spent a particularly pleasant summer break at his sister's home in Kamenka, Russia, where he loved to dream up family activities for his nieces and nephews. This was most likely when he composed his little ballet on the subject that several years later would become his first full-length ballet, *Swan Lake.* Tchaikovsky's nephew Yury left a delightful account of this production, for which Tchaikovsky's brother Modest danced the role of the Prince, his ten-year-old niece Tatyana presumably danced Odette, seven-year-old Anna played a cupid, Uncle Vasily Davydov designed the scenery—which included several large wooden swans—and Tchaikovsky himself demonstrated the steps and pirouettes required of the dancers.

When Tchaikovsky received a commission for a ballet in the spring of 1875, he doubtless remembered the subject of this family divertissement. He may have even borrowed some of its music—most likely the iconic oboe theme representing the swans—though no proof exists. Two other early works provided themes for *Swan Lake*—his failed first opera, *The Voyevoda*, and his ill-fated second opera, *Undine*, which was initially accepted but never produced.

Busy with other projects, Tchaikovsky eventually completed *Swan Lake* late in April 1876. The premiere at Moscow's Bolshoi Theater on March 4, 1877, met with a distinct lack of success. Critics blamed the unimaginative choreography by Julius Reisinger, the poor scenery and costumes, the lack of first-rate dancers, the inexperience of conductor Oleg Ryabov—and Tchaikovsky's score, though one report noted many beautiful moments. The orchestra musicians complained of the music's complexity, and the dancers were indeed challenged by Tchaikovsky's innovations, which required new technical standards.

Swan Lake did, however, stay in the Bolshoi's repertoire until 1883—in a version mangled with insertions from other ballets. Tchaikovsky never saw a satisfying complete performance, but in 1888 he experienced "one brief moment of unalloyed happiness" at a performance in Prague of the second act alone. *Swan Lake's* great success did not begin until two years after his death when a new production was mounted with the libretto revised by Modest Tchaikovsky and choreography by Marius Petipa and Lev Ivanov. Though still mutilated by cuts, additions, and reordering, the music at last began to be recognized for its daring achievement.

The story revolves around Prince Siegfried, who must take a bride, and Odette, a princess turned into a swan by an evil sorcerer. After she and her swan maidens fly over the Prince's coming-of-age banquet, he goes out hunting and finds them swimming on a nearby lake. When Odette appears to him in human form, he falls instantly in love. She confides that they regain their human form only at night, and the enchantment can be broken only by a lover who has never pledged himself to another. The next day at the ball where the Prince is to choose a

bride, he declares his love to a woman dressed in black whom he mistakes for Odette. Instead, she is Odile, daughter of the sorcerer, sent to trick him into breaking his vow to Odette. Devastated, he rushes to find Odette, who already knows that the spell cannot now be broken. The original ballet ends with the ill-fated lovers sinking into the lake, whereas later productions have adopted endings ranging from romantic apotheosis to "happily ever after."

Tchaikovsky wanted to make a concert suite but never did, so in 1900 his publisher Jurgenson published a six-movement suite. A second version in eight movements appeared in 1954 from Moscow publisher Muzgis, omitting one of Jurgenson's numbers and adding three national dances numbers from the ball scene.

Tonight's selections begin with the haunting oboe solo over rippling harp figuration that represents Odette and the swans throughout, heard here as in the second act (*Scène*). The next movement (*Danse des cygnes*) comes from a variation danced in Act II by four swans holding hands across their bodies and making quick steps in exact unison to music with the quality of a Russian folk dance—rhythmic and slightly exotic. The following Scène (*Pas d'action*) comprises the poignant music for the moonlit pas de deux danced by Odette and Siegfried in Act II. Harp effects, violin solos, and a tender violin and cello duet create the romantic atmosphere. Our set concludes with the famous waltz—brimming with Tchaikovsky's captivating rhythmic ingenuity—that originated in the Prince's birthday celebration in Act I (*Valse*).

Manuel de Falla

Nights in the Gardens of Spain

Manuel de Falla was born in Cadiz, Spain, on November 23, 1876, and died in Alta Gracia, Córdoba province, Argentina, on November 14, 1946. **Nights in the Gardens of Spain** ***is scored for three flutes, third doubling piccolo, two oboes, English horn, two clarinets, two bassoons, four horns, two trumpets, three trombones, tuba, timpani, cymbals, suspended cymbal, triangle, harp, celesta, and strings.***

Spanish composer Manuel de Falla (properly Falla and not de Falla when only the surname is used) went to Paris in 1907, returning to Madrid in 1914 with the outbreak of World War I. In Paris he formed friendships with Claude Debussy, Paul Dukas, and Maurice Ravel that greatly influenced his career and his music. Falla worked on his *Noches en los jardines de España* (*Nights in the Gardens of Spain*) intermittently for six years, beginning in Paris in 1909 and completing it in 1915 after his return to Spain. The great Spanish composer Isaac Albéniz urged Falla to orchestrate his *Nights*, but it was Catalan pianist Ricardo Viñes, famous for his premieres of works by Debussy and Ravel, who suggested its final scoring for piano and orchestra; the work is dedicated to Viñes. The premiere was given in Madrid on April 6, 1916, by pianist José Cubiles with the Orquesta Sinfónica de Madrid conducted by Enrique Fernández Arbós.

According to Falla's sister, *Nights in the Gardens of Spain* was inspired in part by three poems in the *Cantos de vida y esperanza* by Nicaraguan writer Rubén Darío—two *Nocturnos* and *Canción de otoño en primaver*a. The images of night, distance, and passing youth in these poems may indeed lie at the heart of these sensuous, mysterious, occasionally sad pieces, which Falla originally called

Nocturnes. Falla himself wrote:

> *The end for which this work was written is no other than to evoke places, sensations, and sentiments. The themes employed are based on the rhythms, modes, cadences, and ornamental figures that distinguish the popular music of Andalusia, though they are rarely heard in their original forms; and the orchestra frequently employs . . . certain effects peculiar to the popular instruments used in those parts of Spain. The music has no pretensions to being descriptive; it is merely expressive. But something more than festivals and dances has inspired these "evocations in sound," for melancholy and mystery also have their part.*

The composer employed the subtitle "Symphonic Impressions" for his *Nights in the Gardens of Spain*, emphasizing the notion that though the piano is prominent—and the part is a dazzling one—it was still conceived as part of the general instrumental texture rather than as a concerto solo. Many of its passages, in fact, are written in imitation of folk accompaniments.

The first movement, In the *Generalife,* refers to the garden of the famous Alhambra palace, built by Moorish kings in the thirteenth century. Out of a distinctive viola tremolo played *sul ponticello* (on the bridge) grows a wonderful series of "variations" in kaleidoscopically changing orchestral colors. Horn passages as if from the distance, repeated-note themes colored by English horn and pizzicato strings, rippling and repeated-note piano figuration, solo-string texture, a mournful bassoon call, and the full orchestra rising to a "Wagnerian" climax—these are just a few of the elements contributing to a rich show of virtuosity.

An eerie insect-like buzzing opens the *Distant Dance*, with the winds entering as if from afar. Very soon the action moves to the foreground, with much brilliant writing for the piano. Themes of various dance types appear—the second, Falla explained, is related to the second phrase of the first movement's main theme and later becomes the principal theme of the third movement. The end of the second movement and the transition to the third offer some of the most striking music of the score and certainly some of the eeriest. "The second and third movements," wrote the composer, "are joined without interruption by means of a bridge in which, beneath a tremolo on the violins in highest register, are sprinkled, like distant echoes, the notes that began the fundamental theme of the *Distant Dance*."

The third movement, *In the Gardens of the Sierra de Córdoba*, begins with a burst from the orchestra, setting the scene for what some commentators have likened to a *zambra*, a night festival of singing and dancing—banned by Philip II in the sixteenth century, but still carried on by the Gitanos. The movement vibrates with the excitement of flamenco-style dancing and singing. Falla's wild *estribillo* (refrain), which recurs in the manner of a classic rondo theme, is interspersed with contrasting episodes—some sweet, some foreboding, and some luxurious—and also with recurring martial music marked by dissonant parallel seconds in the horns. The revelry fades into the night with a vague sense of yearning.

Maurice Ravel
Rapsodie espagnole

Maurice Ravel was born in Ciboure, Basses Pyrénées, France, on March 7, 1875, and died in Paris, on December 28, 1937. **Rapsodie espagnole** ***is scored for two flutes, two piccolos, two oboes, English horn, two clarinets, bass clarinet, three bassoons, sarrusophone (or contrabassoon), four horns, three trumpets, three trombones, tuba, timpani, bass drum, cymbals, suspended cymbals, triangle, tambourine, castanets, snare drum, tam-tam, xylophone, two harps, celesta, and strings.***

1907 might be called Maurice Ravel's "Spanish year": his two major compositions that year were the *Rapsodie espagnole*, his first published work for full orchestra, and his first opera *L'heure espagnole*. The Spanish quality of his *Rapsodie* was lauded by Spanish composer Manuel de Falla in *La revue musicale* in 1939:

> *It surprises one by its (genuinely) Spanish character. In absolute agreement with my own intentions (and diametrically opposed to Rimsky-Korsakov in his Capriccio) this "Hispanization" is not achieved merely by drawing upon popular or "folk" sources (except the jota in Feria) but rather through the free use of the modal rhythms and melodies and ornamental figures of our "popular" music, none of which has altered in any way the natural style of the composer.*

Written in just thirty days—possibly to scoop Claude Debussy's *Ibéria* begun in 1906 but not completed until 1908, to which it would inevitably be compared—the *Rapsodie* is in four movements, styled upon actual Spanish dances. Ravel had been familiar with the music of Spain since his childhood, from his mother's singing. His interest surfaced in his composition as early as 1895 with his famous *Habanera* for two pianos (part of his *Sites auriculaires*), which became embroiled in controversy when Debussy was accused of plagiarizing it in his *Soirées dans Grenade*. Ravel orchestrated his *Habanera* for inclusion as the third movement of the present work, carefully preserving the date 1895 in the score.

The opening movement, *Prélude à la nuit*, presents its all-important descending four-note motive in a muted nocturnal atmosphere, beginning ppp (triple piano) and never rising above mezzo forte. The sense of an enormous orchestra never intrudes.

The Spanish flavor becomes more pronounced in *Malagueña* with its characteristic trumpet, violin, and English horn themes and its colorful splashes of percussion. Ostinatos (repeating patterns) play an important role again, and the four-note motive from the first movement makes a pronounced reappearance. At the premiere on March 28, 1908, this movement pleased the Ravel supporters in the balcony but met with disfavor from the conservatives in the orchestra seats; it was encored after a loud voice (reportedly composer, pianist, and critic Florent Schmitt) from above was heard: "Play it once more for those below who have not understood!"

The sultry languor of the *Habanera* is enhanced by Ravel's orchestral palette. Recognizing its importance within his output, Ravel later wrote that the *Habanera*, "with its ostinato pedal point and its chords with multiple appoggiaturas [contained] the germ of several elements which were to predominate in my later compositions."

Feria is the longest and most dazzling of the movements—a Spanish festival, as its title suggests. The gaiety is interrupted by a quieter section featuring Ravel's much-favored English horn, and then the work winds up to whirlwind finish.

—©Jane Vial Jaffe

CLASSICALLY CONNECTED

Saturday, November 8, 2025, 7:30 p.m.

Peter Rubardt, Conductor
Ilya Yakushev, Piano

Joseph Haydn (1732–1809)
Symphony No. 102 in B-flat major, Hob. I:102
I. Largo - Allegro vivace
II. Adagio
III. Menuetto. Allegro - Trio
IV. Finale. Presto

Ralph Vaughan Williams (1872–1958)
Fantasia on a Theme by Thomas Tallis

INTERMISSION

Darius Milhaud (1892–1974)
The Creation of the World, op. 81a
Overture. Modéré
I. *The Chaos Before Creation*
II. *The Birth of Plants and Animals*
III. *The Birth of Man and Woman*
IV. *The Desire*
V. *The Kiss*

The movements are played without pause.

Dmitri Shostakovich (1906–1975)
Piano Concerto No. 1 in C minor, op. 35
I. Allegro moderato
II. Lento
III. Moderato
IV. Allegro con brio

Featuring Ilya Yakushev, Piano
With Alan Tolbert, Trumpet Solo

The movements are played without pause.

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Ilya Yakushev
Piano

Russian pianist Ilya Yakushev, with many awards and honors to his credit, continues to astound and mesmerize audiences at major venues on three continents.

During the 2024-25 season, Yakushev performed as piano soloist with Youngstown Symphony Orchestra, Cheyenne Symphony Orchestra, Panama City Symphony, St. Petersburg Philharmonic Orchestra, and Glacier Symphony in addition to more than 40 recitals in North America and Europe. Highlights of his 2025-26 season include return appearances with the Pensacola Symphony Orchestra, Wisconsin Chamber Orchestra, and San Luis Obispo Symphony.

In February 2014, British label Nimbus Records published his *Prokofiev Sonatas Vol. 1* CD. *American Record Guide* wrote "Yakushev is one of the very best young pianists before the public today, and it doesn't seem to matter what repertoire he plays – it is all of the highest caliber." *Volume 2* was published in January 2017, as well as an all-Russian repertoire CD in September 2017.

In past seasons, he has performed in various prestigious venues worldwide, including Glinka Philharmonic Hall (St. Petersburg), Victoria Hall (Singapore), Weill Recital Hall at Carnegie Hall (New York City), Davies Symphony Hall (San Francisco), and Sejong Performing Arts Center (Seoul, Korea). His performances with orchestra include those with the Mariinsky Theatre Orchestra, St. Petersburg Philharmonic, San Francisco Symphony, BBC Concert Orchestra, Boston Pops, Rochester Philharmonic Orchestra, Utah Symphony, and many others.

Winner of the 2005 World Piano Competition, Yakushev received his first award at age twelve as a prizewinner of the Young Artists Concerto Competition in his native St. Petersburg. In 1997, he received the Mayor of St. Petersburg's Young Talents Award, and in both 1997 and 1998, he won First Prize at the Donostia Hiria International Piano Competition in San Sebastian, Spain. In 1998, he received a national honor, The Award for Excellence in Performance, presented to him by the Minister of Culture of the Russian Federation in Moscow. Most recently, Yakushev became a recipient of the prestigious Gawon International Music Society's Award in Seoul, Korea.

Yakushev attended the Rimsky-Korsakov College of Music in St. Petersburg, Russia, and subsequently came to New York City to attend Mannes College of Music at The New School, where he studied with legendary pianist Vladimir Feltsman.

Yakushev is a Yamaha artist.

CLASSICALLY CONNECTED

Joseph Haydn

Symphony No. 102 in B-flat major, Hob. I:102

Joseph Haydn was born in Rohrau, Lower Austria, on March 31, 1732, and died in Vienna, on May 31, 1809. Symphony No. 102 is scored for two flutes, two oboes, two bassoons, two horns, two trumpets, timpani, and strings.

Upon the death in 1790 of his longtime employer Prince Nikolaus Esterházy, Joseph Haydn was invited by impresario and violinist Johann Peter Salomon to spend his first season in London. Haydn became the toast of the town and had to impose limits on social demands in order to protect his health and his time for composing and rehearsing. As Salomon's composer-in-residence he presided at the keyboard for the weekly Salomon Concerts, which consisted of a remarkable variety of music: symphonies, concertos, vocal pieces, and chamber music.

Haydn's new London Symphonies provided the cornerstones for these concerts from the 1791 to 1794 seasons, but despite their success and Haydn's popularity, Salomon had to cancel his 1795 concerts owing to the difficulties of hiring singers from abroad. Deftly pivoting, Haydn composed his last three London Symphonies, Nos. 102–104, for the so-called Opera Concerts. This new series, which only lasted two seasons, took place in the new Concert Hall of the King's Theatre with a magnificent orchestra of sixty players—a plentiful number for the time.

The London Symphonies show the world-famous composer at the height of his powers, unafraid to experiment and to astound, consistently producing masterpieces for his adoring public. Among them, Symphony No. 102 has always been a favorite of the cognoscenti—the esteemed Donald Francis Tovey went so far as to put it among the top three of Haydn's 600 or so instrumental works (along with his F-major String Quartet, op. 77, No. 2, and Symphony No. 104). Yet this remarkable work has historically been performed fewer times than some of the other London Symphonies—perhaps, sad to say, because it carries no nickname.

Symphony No. 102 received its premiere with "rock star" Haydn conducting from the keyboard on February 2, 1795, at the newly rebuilt King's Theatre Concert Hall. The next day the *Morning Chronicle* reported: "The last movement was encored; and not withstanding an interruption by the accidental fall of one of the chandeliers, it was performed with no less effect." In his biography based on twenty-nine conversations with Haydn between 1805 and 1809, Albert Christoph Dies gave more details, recounting in part that the eager crowd had rushed forward to fawn over Haydn, leaving the seats empty where the chandelier then crashed:

> *As soon as the first moment of fright was over and those who had pressed forward could think about of the danger they had luckily escaped, . . . several people uttered the state of their feelings with loud cries of "Miracle! Miracle!" Haydn himself*

was deeply moved and thanked the merciful Providence that had allowed him in a certain way to be the cause of or the means of saving the lives of at least thirty people.

Dies' description of the event was then applied erroneously to Symphony No. 96, and—since it was a decade-later recollection—seemingly mistook the timing of the crowd rush as happening when Haydn first sat down at the keyboard rather than after the last movement and before its encore.

Averted disasters aside, the musical miracles of Symphony No. 102 are astounding. The first movement's poignant slow introduction with its solemn long-held octaves and delicately arching motive heads into dusky chromatic territory before a delightful flute arpeggio beckons the boisterous energy of the main Vivace. Haydn's touted "monothematicism" produces instant variety as each component gesture ingeniously takes on new guises as the movement progresses, all wrapped up in one of his loudest (despite well-placed contrasts), most witty, and propulsive essays in sonata form. Surely Ludwig van Beethoven was impressed by Haydn's imaginative development and coda, which itself features yet more dramatic development.

For his miraculous Adagio, Haydn borrowed and orchestrated the slow movement from his Piano Trio in F-sharp minor, written earlier that year (or perhaps the year before) and dedicated to his London "sweetheart" Rebecca Schroeter. His symphonic scoring was extraordinary for the time and still reminds us of Haydn's limitless imagination. The first violins carry the ornate melody, but a solo cello adds figural interest in the middle register, and most unusual is his addition of muted trumpets and timpani, which impart a novel color, especially near the end. Haydn's form is unique and complex—rhapsodic-sounding but unfolding in a kind of free variation form that might be mapped A1–A2–A3–A4.

Haydn's Menuetto projects the impression of a stomping peasant dance, but with sophisticated rhythmic shifts that wittily undermine the 3/4 meter. The trio section provides a lyrical contrast and lighter scoring.

The sonata-rondo Finale is one of Haydn's fastest, most humorous movements, and yet drama still plays its role here, especially in its buildups and harmonic surprises—no wonder it was encored! The "kittenish" rondo theme (Tovey's apt description because it charms but can still spring like a lion) is recognizable throughout but with ingenious alterations, such as a clever fugue in the development section. Before the merry theme can conclude the recapitulation, however, Haydn comes to an abrupt halt and with one of his greatest jokes, sometimes called the Bassoon Joke, launches the coda and emphatic conclusion.

Ralph Vaughan Williams

Fantasia on a Theme by Thomas Tallis

Ralph Vaughan Williams was born in Down Ampney, Gloucestershire, England, on October 12, 1872, and died in London, on August 26, 1958. **Fantasia on a Theme by Thomas Tallis** ***is scored for strings.***

Painfully aware that England's musical reputation had suffered greatly since the death of Henry Purcell in 1595, Ralph Vaughan Williams and his contemporaries sought to reestablish a national voice by turning to music of former periods of glory. One way in which he became exposed to vast amounts of old music was by sifting through folk song and church collections for the creation of a new edition of the English Hymnal. The daunting job detracted from work on his own original compositions but served him well in the end. "I wondered then if I was wasting my time. But I know now that two years of close association with some of the best (as well as some of the worst) tunes in the world was a better musical education than any amount of sonatas and fugues."

The Fantasia on a Theme by Thomas Tallis came about as a direct result of that task. Vaughan Williams had found nine melodies by Tallis in the 1597 *English Psalter*, the third of which—a melody in the Phrygian mode—inspired his first great orchestral work. Vaughan Williams clearly saw something in the melody that had little to do with its original text: "Why fumeth in sight: the Gentiles spite, In fury raging stout?" His *Fantasia* exudes peace and serenity—perhaps poignancy, but hardly any "raging."

He completed the work in June 1910 and conducted the London Symphony in its first performance at the Three Choirs Festival on September 6 in Gloucester Cathedral. The *Fantasia* caused a sensation, bringing him national, then international recognition. One of the contributing factors to its great initial success was Vaughan Williams' foreknowledge of the acoustics of the cathedral. He had in mind not only the resonance of the large space, but also the style of Renaissance church music consisting of spatially separated choirs. The *Fantasia* is scored for two main groups—a small string ensemble and a full string orchestra, from which a solo string quartet is extracted, sometimes forming a third group.

The piece begins with a magical narrowing wedge of chords, from which the *Tallis* tune enters in fragments before coming together in the cellos, violas, and second violins. A second version of the melody, now with violins, leads to an interlude in which the two "choirs" are treated responsorially. Members of the solo quartet, led off by the viola, launch a more active central section, playing variants of the *Tallis* theme. The music builds to an impassioned climax, following which the two choirs answer one another with extreme dynamic shifts and striking harmonic contrasts. The piece subsides with fragments of the *Tallis* melody, ending with its last sweet chord fading away to silence.

Darius Milhaud

The Creation of the World, op. 81a

Darius Milhaud was born in Aix-en-Provence, France, on September 4, 1892, and died in Geneva, Switzerland, on June 22, 1974. **The Creation of the World** ***is scored for two flutes, first doubling piccolo, oboe, two clarinets, alto saxophone, bassoon, horn, two trumpets, trombone, timpani (two extra high timpani), tambourine, cowbell, woodblock, cymbals, snare drum, tenor drum, tambourin provençal, bass drum, piano, two violins, cello, and bass.***

Often considered a folklorist, Darius Milhaud succeeded in achieving a synthesis between popular culture and high art. Not only did he draw extensively on his native Provençal culture for his compositions, but he assimilated North and South American

music—exemplified by *Le boeuf sur le toit* (*The Ox of the Roof*), *Kentuckiana*, *Carnaval à la Nouvelle-Orléans*, *Le bal martiniquais* (*The Martinique Ball*), and *La création du monde* (*The Creation of the World*). He was particularly attracted by jazz, as were many composers just after World War I. The instrumentation, the rhythms, and the melodies all appealed to him; further, because of his Jewish heritage, he identified with jazz, a music of another dispossessed and persecuted race.

Milhaud had first been exposed to jazz when he heard an American band playing in London. In 1922 he arrived in New York for a series of United States engagements and absorbed as much jazz as he could, from the Leo Reisman band and Paul Whiteman orchestra to the bands in Harlem clubs. Back in Paris he was asked to create a ballet for Swedish producer Rolf de Maré, in collaboration with writer Blaise Cendrars, scene designer Fernand Léger, and choreographer Jean Börlin.

Two years before, Cendrars had published an anthology of Black folklore, which included *Cosmogonic Legends*. From this section he fashioned the scenario of the ballet, summarized by Claude Rostand as follows:

"Heaven and earth have just separated. Nzamé, Mébère and N'Kwa, the three creation deities, stand in a dramatic setting high in the mountains. They perform magic incantations, then depart. The Great Fetishes appear and create the insects and the apes. The birds of rain pass across the stage. The animals begin to form a circle which slowly turns into a dance around the inner group of birth-giving beings crowded into the middle of the scene. At each turn a new creature rushes out from the center, mingling with the dance, which he leads in his turn. The Nguils, the Imprecators, the Sorcerers, the Hypnotists, the Vampyrs and the Fetishists, male and female, join in the dance, which builds up to the point of frenzy. The deities disappear at the sound of a great tam-tam. The circle stops and opens. A monstrous leg appears, backs stretch, a hairy head is seen, two arms reach forth, two breasts stand out: it is Man, it is Woman—Sékoumé and Mbongwé. They stand facing each other. The dance begins again, very calm. The couple is lost in a kiss, transported as if by a wave. Moon and stars begin to glow: it is the springtime of human existence."

Léger's scenery and costumes were based on African art. Milhaud found here the perfect chance to employ the jazz idioms that he had been assimilating, in conjunction with traditional "art music" techniques, such as the fugue that begins after the "overture" as the curtain rises. *The Creation of the World* is scored in the style of jazz bands as an ensemble of soloists, including two flutes, oboe, two clarinets, bassoon, horn, two trumpets, trombone, piano, large battery of percussion, two solo violins, saxophone (taking the viola's traditional place), cello, and bass.

The Creation of the World was premiered in Paris by the Ballet suédois on October 25, 1923. Milhaud's music was criticized as frivolous and more suited to the popular dance hall than the ballet theater or concert hall, but, as Milhaud wrote in his autobiography *Notes without Music*: "Ten years later the selfsame critics were discussing the philosophy of jazz and learnedly demonstrating that *La création* was the best of my works."

Dmitri Shostakovich

Piano Concerto No. 1 in C minor, op. 35

Dmitri Shostakovich was born in St. Petersburg, Russia, on September 25, 1906, and died in Moscow, on August 9, 1975. Piano Concerto No. 1 is scored for solo trumpet (as well as solo piano) and strings.

Dmitri Shostakovich wrote his First Piano Concerto in the spring of 1933, just after he had completed his opera *Lady MacBeth of the Mtsensk District*, but before the storm of governmental disapproval broke over it. The contrast between the intense opera and the lighthearted, sometimes parodistic Piano Concerto could not be more extreme. The Concerto contains Neoclassic elements and clear transparent textures in which the piano is often engaged in two-voice counterpoint.

The most unusual feature of the First Piano Concerto is its scoring: solo piano, solo trumpet, and strings. The trumpet part is so extensive that when Shostakovich was the piano soloist, he liked to seat the trumpet player in front next to the piano. The Concerto was premiered on October 15, 1933, with the Leningrad Philharmonia conducted by Fritz Stiedry; Shostakovich played the solo piano part and A. Schmidt the solo trumpet. The Concerto was a success with Russian audiences, and American appreciation for the work began soon after Eugene List performed it with Leopold Stokowski and the Philadelphia Orchestra.

The two solo instruments open the work with a brief flourish, the piano with rapid descending and ascending scales and the trumpet with a muted angular figure. The piano then states the first theme, which is soon played in altered form by the violins. In a section marked *Allegro vivace,* the lively second theme is introduced in the bass of the piano—the first few bars of this theme are completely triadic or scalar and subsequently appear in fanfare-like fashion in the trumpet. After a much developmental interplay, the more sober opening theme returns.

The second movement, which follows without pause, is a kind of *valse triste* (sad waltz) providing a striking contrast to the brilliance of the first movement. After the climax of the middle section, the trumpet plays the return of the opening melody. The cellos assume melodic importance in tandem with the solo piano at the close of the movement.

The brief rhapsodic third movement consists of an unaccompanied cadenza, a middle string section, and more cadenza accompanied by the strings. It functions as a slow introduction to the breathless, giddy finale, to which it leads without pause.

Shostakovich gives the trumpet ample opportunity for virtuosity amid the fun of the last movement, which includes music akin to a Franz Liszt Hungarian Rhapsody, some tunes that might be at home in a musical comedy, and a brief quotation from a Joseph Haydn piano sonata. An especially comical moment occurs with the piano crashing in on a G-sharp seventh chord in the midst of a jaunty but quiet trumpet solo. Apparently Shostakovich had not originally provided a piano cadenza. When a pianist friend complained, the composer replied, "This is not a concerto like one of Tchaikovsky's or Rachmaninoff's with runs all over the instrument to show you can play scales." In the end though, he did write one—not a traditional cadenza based on the movement's materials but giving ironic treatment to the theme from Ludwig van Beethoven's Rondo known as *Rage Over a Lost Penny*.

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Michael Andrew
Vocals

For two years, Michael Andrew was the headline singer and bandleader at the world-famous Rainbow Room atop Rockefeller Center in New York City, where he entertained audiences nightly and hosted a live radio broadcast, *Live from the Rainbow Room*. He was also the bandleader and singer at Merv Griffin's Coconut Club at The Beverly Hilton in California. While on *Larry King Live*, Griffin called Andrew "one of the great singers of all time."

A frequent symphonic pops guest artist, Andrew has appeared with symphonic orchestras in Akron, Albuquerque, Birmingham, Charlotte, Houston, Jacksonville, Long Beach, Melbourne, Missoula, Orlando, Palm Beach, Palm Springs, Pasadena, Philadelphia, Providence, San Antonio, Sarasota, and other cities across America.

His hit musical, *Mickey Swingerhead and the Earthgirls*, led to the formation of his swingin' eight-piece band, Swingerhead, which toured all over the country. Andrew formed The Atomic Big Band, an eighteen-piece band that has performed in Hollywood for the premier of the Warner Bros. movie, *Poseidon*, and continues to play engagements from presidential inaugural balls to high society fundraisers.

On the other side of the curtain, as a music producer, composer, lyricist, and book writer, he has created shows paying tribute to the writers of the Great American Songbook, including Johnny Mercer, Sammy Cahn, and George and Ira Gershwin. He has produced music for *Menopause the Musical*, *Interstellar Cinderella*, and his own musicals, *Jack and the Beanstalk* and *Mickey Swingerhead and the Earthgirls*, as well as a new adaptation of Charles Dickens' *A Christmas Carol*, the national tour of *A Charlie Brown Christmas*, and Mitch Albom's *Hockey – The Musical!*

Andrew has produced music for several films, including *Inglorious Basterds*, *HeartBreakers*, and the Aaron Sorkin biopic *Being the Ricardos*.

Andrew starred in the world premiere of *The Nutty Professor*, written by Marvin Hamlisch and Rupert Holmes, directed by Jerry Lewis. He received rave reviews from the press including: "...terrific lead performance" (*Time Magazine*); "...astonishing..." (*The Tennessean*); "Andrew creates his own glittering path..." (*ArtsNash*); "Star-Making...Andrews' virtuoso performance is startling in its complexity... clearly this is a role he was born to play" (*Broadway World*); and "One of the best talents to come down the pike in 50 years" (Jerry Lewis on Playbill.com).

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BEETHOVEN & BLUE JEANS

Saturday, January 10, 2026, 7:30 p.m.

Peter Rubardt, Conductor
Timothy McAllister, Saxophone

Ludwig van Beethoven (1770–1827) — Symphony No. 2 in D major, op. 36
I. Adagio molto – Allegro con brio
II. Larghetto
III. *Scherzo.* Allegro – Trio
IV. Allegro molto

INTERMISSION

Gioachino Rossini (1792–1868) — Overture to *William Tell*

Wojciech Kilar (1932–2013) — *Orawa*

John Williams (b. 1932) — Three Escapades from *Catch Me If You Can*
I. *Closing In*
II. *Reflections* (*Father's Theme*)
III. *Joy Ride* (*The Float*)

Featuring Timothy McAllister, Saxophone

Kenneth Fuchs (b. 1956) — *Rush*
I. *Evening*
II. *Morning*

Featuring Timothy McAllister, Saxophone

Timothy McAllister
Saxophone

Today's most celebrated classical saxophonist Timothy McAllister is an acclaimed soloist, soprano chair of the GRAMMY-winning PRISM Quartet, and champion of contemporary music credited with more than fifty recordings and 200 premieres of new compositions by eminent and emerging composers worldwide. McAllister has appeared with more than forty of the world's most prominent orchestras in more than twenty countries, from the Chicago Symphony Orchestra to the BBC Symphony Orchestra at the Proms. Following his premiere of John Adams' Saxophone Concerto with the Sydney Symphony Orchestra under the baton of the composer, he performed the Concerto and Adams' *City Noir* on the 2015 GRAMMY Award-winning recording with the St. Louis Symphony and David Robertson. His recent recordings of Kenneth Fuchs' Saxophone Concerto, *Rush*, with JoAnn Falletta and the London Symphony Orchestra and his reprise of *City Noir* with the Berlin Philharmonic under Gustavo Dudamel both appeared on 2019 GRAMMY-nominated albums, with the Fuchs winning for "Best Classical Compendium." Recent performances included the China premiere of the Adams Saxophone Concerto with Edo de Waart and the Hong Kong Philharmonic and the Belgium premiere of Guillaume Connesson's Saxophone Concerto: *A Kind of Trane* under Stéphane Denève and the Brussels Philharmonic, on the Deutsche Grammophon label.

As guest soloist, other recent engagements include the symphonies of Albany, Buffalo, Detroit, Houston, Indianapolis, Milwaukee, Seattle, and St. Louis, among many others. In 2022, he premiered John Corigliano's *Triathlon: Concerto for Saxophonist and Orchestra* with Giancarlo Guerrero and the San Francisco Symphony to widespread acclaim. He was also featured in the United States premiere of Tyshawn Sorey's *Adagio* (*For Wadada Leo Smith*) for alto saxophone and orchestra with the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra in 2023.

A widely respected teacher of his instrument, McAllister is Professor of Saxophone at the University of Michigan School of Music, Theatre and Dance, and he appears at summer festivals and courses worldwide. He holds degrees from the University of Michigan, having studied with legendary saxophonist Donald Sinta.

BEETHOVEN & BLUE JEANS

Ludwig van Beethoven

Symphony No. 2 in D major, op. 36

Ludwig van Beethoven was born in Bonn, Germany, and baptized on December 17, 1770. He died in Vienna, Austria, on March 26, 1827. Symphony No. 2 in D major is scored for two flutes, two oboes, two clarinets, two bassoons, two horns, two trumpets, timpani, and strings.

Ludwig van Beethoven began his Second Symphony in 1801, composing the bulk of it in 1802. Sketches for the work mingled with sketches for many other works, among them the three violin sonatas, op. 30, and the three piano sonatas, op. 31, thus illustrating Beethoven's habit of working on three or four pieces simultaneously. The Second Symphony was first performed on April 5, 1803, at the Theater an der Wien on a typically mammoth program that also included his, by then, familiar First Symphony and two other premieres: the Third Piano Concerto, with himself as soloist, and the oratorio *Christus am Öelberge*. Several of his other works had also been scheduled but were omitted due to the already lengthy program. A very confident Beethoven had doubled and even tripled some of the ticket prices for the event; he was rewarded with remarkable artistic and monetary success.

It later became apparent that Beethoven had weathered a great emotional crisis. 1802 was the year he penned the famous "Heiligenstädter Testament." The heartrending document was addressed to his two brothers Carl and Johann (curiously only blank spaces were left wherever Johann's name should have appeared), but it was not intended to be read until after his death. In it, Beethoven revealed the depths of his despair over the progress of his deafness:

> *What humiliation when someone, standing beside me, heard a flute from afar off while I heard nothing, or when someone heard a shepherd singing, and again I heard nothing! Such experiences have brought me close to despair, and I came near to ending my own life—only my art held me back, as it seemed impossible to leave this world until I have produced everything I feel it has been granted to me to achieve. . . . Joyfully I go to meet Death—should it come before I have had an opportunity of developing all my artistic gifts, then in spite of my hard fate it would still come too soon, and no doubt I would like to postpone its coming—Yet even so I should be content, for would it not free me from a condition of continual suffering?*

The Testament wavers between thoughts of imminent death and death in the distant future. This in no way diminishes the sense of Beethoven's anguish but suggests various ways the document can be interpreted—not only as a farewell or an explanation of his antisocial behavior, but also as the acceptance of misery, which provides new resolution.

The cheerful, untroubled Second Symphony was completed shortly after the October 6 Testament. Its apparent total detachment from the predominantly dark mood of this period in the composer's life might be puzzling, yet he had said that his affliction bothered him least when playing or composing. Indeed, this was a productive period. Upon his return to Vienna, just eight days after the Testament, he was writing to Breitkopf & Härtel about two sets of piano variations, opp. 34 and 35, "worked out in quite a new manner."

The Symphony begins with the largest slow introduction to date. Its broad scope ranges from simple lyricism, to dramatic outbursts, to an imposing D-minor unison climax, perhaps a foretaste of the Ninth. The main portion of the movement is tightly organized around the first Allegro theme. The second theme offers contrast of a martial rather than lyrical nature, as if the exuberance and drive of the movement cannot be suppressed even momentarily. The virtuosic writing continues to challenge modern orchestras.

The slow movement, leisurely following sonata form, is surely one of the most luxurious of all time. Its smooth melodies and peaceful lines have often caused it to be lifted and performed separately on programs of popular orchestral works. The last two movements each involve, besides grandeur, different forms of musical wit. In the *Scherzo* a few well-chosen surprises are contained within a very economical format; in the finale, Beethoven romps with an almost ferocious humor. The giocoso main theme is reiterated many times with intervening playful episodes, in rondo fashion. The opening motive provides thematic fragments for tossing about right through to the end of the broad coda.

In view of the work's favorable reception in 1803 and its celebrated status today, it is fascinating to read that it was not universally admired. A Viennese critic in 1804 wrote:

> *Beethoven's Second Symphony is a crass monster, a hideously writhing wounded dragon, that refuses to expire, and though bleeding in the finale, furiously beats about with its tail erect (quoted in Nicolas Slonimsky, Lexicon of Musical Invective, 1965).*

Gioachino Rossini

Overture to *William Tell*

Gioachino Rossini was born in Pesaro, Italy, on February 29, 1792, and died in Paris, France, on November 13, 1868. Overture to* William Tell *is scored for flute, piccolo, two oboes, second doubling English horn, two clarinets, two bassoons, four horns, two trumpets, three trombones, timpani, triangle, cymbals, bass drum, and strings.

First produced at the Paris Opéra on August 3, 1829, *William Tell* was the last opera Gioachino Rossini would write, though he lived almost forty more years. Acclaimed as a masterpiece, Tell received some 500 performances at the Opéra alone during his lifetime. Nonetheless, the opera has since failed to find more than a token place in the repertoire. The quality of the libretto—by Étienne de Jouy and revised by Hippolyte-Louis-Florent Bis—was partly to blame, but the chief stumbling block was its inhibiting, if glorious, five-hour length. The Overture, however, achieved enormous success as a separate concert piece, and its popularity mushroomed in the twentieth century from its use in movies, cartoons, and television shows. Countless people know the Overture's closing section simply as "the Lone Ranger's theme."

The complicated story of the opera, based on Friedrich Schiller's play, revolves around the fourteenth-century Swiss uprising against Austrian oppression. In particular it deals with Swiss patriot Arnold von Winkelried, who loves Mathilde, sister of the Austrian tyrant Albrecht Gessler, and of course with the heroism of William Tell. With his mighty bow and arrow, Tell famously shoots an apple from his son's head in Act II, but he also escapes from prison and fires an arrow into Gessler's heart at the end.

Rossini laid out the Overture in four programmatic sections—slow, fast, slow, fast. The first section portrays the beautiful serenity of the Swiss landscape, beginning with a luscious passage famous for its five solo cellos. The second depicts an Alpine storm, and the third returns to pastoral tranquility. Here the alphorn call of the Swiss herdsman to his cattle, the Ranz des vaches, is represented by the English horn. A trumpet fanfare—a call to revolt—announces the celebrated final section, which we have come to hear as galloping, but which originated in a quickstep march that Rossini had composed for a military band in Venice. At one time he had incorporated this music into *William Tell's* second act finale but ultimately kept it solely as the Overture's stirring conclusion.

Wojciech Kilar

Orawa

Wojciech Kilar was born in Lwów (now L'viv, Ukraine), on July 17, 1932, and died in Katowice, Poland, on December 29, 2013. **Orawa** ***is scored for strings.***

Polish composer Wojciech Kilar is best known for his film music, having composed more than 100 film scores for such acclaimed Polish directors as Krzysztof Kieślowski, Krzysztof Zanussi, Kazimierz Kutz, and Andrzej Wajda. His music for Francis Ford Coppola's *Bram Stoker's Dracula* (1992) brought him mainstream international attention, resulting in scores for such films as Roman Polanski's *Death and the Maiden* (1994), Jane Campion's *Portrait of a Lady* (1996), Polanski's *The Pianist* (2002), and James Gray's thriller *We Own the Night* (2007).

Like many other film composers, Kilar also composed successfully and distinctively for the concert hall. He was trained as a youth at the Katowice Academy and the State Higher School of Music in Kraków before becoming one of the first Polish composers to attend the prestigious Darmstadt Summer School (1957). He also studied with the renowned Nadia Boulanger in France and in 1960 won the Lili Boulanger Prize (named for Nadia's sister, also a composer) for his *Oda Béla Bartók in memoriam* (1957) for violin, brass, and percussion. Recipient of numerous other prizes and honors, Kilar was awarded the Order of the White Eagle, Poland's highest honor, the year before his death.

Many of Kilar's works feature rhythmic propulsion, supercharged bass lines, and avant-garde harmonies, whereas later in life he opted for a simpler style, especially for works incorporating folk, patriotic, and religious themes. Kilar originally composed *Orawa* in 1986 for string orchestra as fourth in a series of works inspired by the folk music of the region and river of that name in the Tatra mountains between Slovakia and Poland. The premiere took place in Zakopane by the Polish Chamber Orchestra conducted by Wojciech Michniewski on March 10, 1986. One of Kilar's most popular pieces, *Orawa* has since been arranged for such diverse ensembles as string quartet, twelve saxophones, eight cellos, and an accordion trio, among others.

Orawa begins with two simple folklike phrases, which Kilar builds in post-minimalist style with increasingly fuller orchestrations to a huge climax suggesting the rugged beauty of the region. Kilar was particularly proud of this work, admitting in a 1997 interview, "*Orawa* is the only piece in which I wouldn't change a single note, though I have looked at it many times. . . . What is achieved in it is what I strive for—to be the best possible Kilar."

John Williams
Three Escapades from *Catch Me If You Can*

John Williams was born in New York City, New York, on February 8, 1932. **Escapades** ***is scored for three flutes, third doubling piccolo, two oboes, second doubling English horn, two clarinets, second doubling E-flat clarinet, bass clarinet, two bassoons, second doubling contrabassoon, four horns, three trumpets, three trombones, tuba, timpani, vibraphone, glockenspiel, marimba, chimes, xylophone, suspended cymbal, bass drum, bell tree, sleigh bells, triangle, chimes, tambourine, harp, piano/celesta, and strings.***

The music of John Williams is more widely known than that of any other film composer—period. His scores for the *Star Wars* movies, the *Indiana Jones* series, *Superman*, *Close Encounters of the Third Kind*, *E.T.*, *Jaws*, *Jurassic Park*, the *Harry Potter* series, *Schindler's List*, *Saving Private Ryan*, and myriad television shows, such as *Lost in Space* and four different Olympics, have made his name recognized in households throughout the world. Williams' credits include over one hundred feature films, a mind-boggling achievement, to which he has more recently added the music for *Star Wars: Episode VIII*, Steven Spielberg's *The Papers*, and the fifth *Indiana Jones* installment.

Having almost singlehandedly shaped the movie and television music of the past four decades, Williams has been recognized in the industry with five Academy Awards (nominations for fifty, second only to Walt Disney), twenty-two Grammys, four Golden Globes, three Emmys, seven awards from the British Academy of Film and Television Arts, several gold and platinum records, and many honorary degrees and other awards, among them Kennedy Center Honors in 2004 and the American Film Institute's Life Achievement Award in June 2016.

Alongside his monumental contribution to film and television music, Williams has also penned substantial output for the concert hall—sixteen concertos (including the recent *Markings*, premiered by Anne-Sophie Mutter and the Boston Symphony Orchestra), many fanfares, a piano sonata, and several chamber works. He also served as the conductor of the celebrated Boston Pops for thirteen years (1980–93) and has guest-conducted many of the world's major orchestras.

Williams made his European conducting debut in 2020—with the Vienna Philharmonic. The album from those concerts became 2020's best-selling orchestral album, and the orchestra commissioned him to write a piece to replace Richard Strauss's 1924 fanfare at the annual Philharmoniker Ball. His second European engagement, with the Berlin Philharmonic, took place in 2021, and he returned to conduct the Vienna Philharmonic the following year in celebration of his 90th birthday. He was also royally honored at Tanglewood.

Escapades originated in Williams' nineteenth collaboration with Spielberg, *Catch Me If You Can* (2002). The story revolves around Frank W. Abagnale, a con man who already at the age of twenty-one had passed himself off as an airline pilot, a surgeon, and a lawyer, and had stolen millions by forging checks. Williams features the alto saxophone in three sections that form a kind of mini concerto. The first, *Closing In*, based on the film's main theme, draws on cool jazz as the FBI pursues Abagnale, and the second, *Reflections* (*Father's Theme*), with its poignant introspection, stems from the point in the movie when Abagnale's family life begins to crumble. The energetic final movement, *Joy Ride* (*The Float*), accompanies the extended

scene where the quick-witted Abagnale, after his unsuccessful attempt to pass off checks, seizes his opportunity to pose as a Pan Am pilot, enabling him to cash payroll checks and actually fly as an assistant pilot.

Kenneth Fuchs

Rush

Kenneth Fuchs was born in Dumont, New Jersey, on July 1, 1956. **Rush** ***is scored for two flutes, piccolo, two oboes, English horn, three clarinets, two bassoons, four horns, three trumpets, three trombones, tuba, timpani, bongos, crash cymbals, glockenspiel, marimba, suspended cymbal, tambourine, triangle, vibraphone, xylophone, percussion, harp, and strings.***

American composer Kenneth Fuchs says, "I was first inspired to become a composer through my early exposure to band music in high school." After being mentored there by Bentley Shellahamer, Fuchs studied composition with Alfred Reed at the University of Miami School of Music and played under the great band director Frederick Fennell. He then entered The Juilliard School, first as a student of David Diamond, then Vincent Persichetti, and after Persichetti's death, Milton Babbitt. He was also greatly influenced by "Color Field" painter Helen Frankenthaler, which led to other inspirations from visual art, poetry, and prose.

Fast forwarding to Fuchs' five albums with JoAnn Falletta for Naxos, the last of these—including *Rush*—won the 2018 Grammy for Best Classical Compendium. Since then, Chandos Records released his *Cloud Slant*, *Orchestral Works, Volume 1* (2023), and in 2024 he became the first living American composer recorded by the renowned Sinfonia of London under the direction of the esteemed John Wilson. Fuchs has also had three of his string quartets recorded by the American String Quartet, and he composed three chamber musicals with Pulitzer Prize–winning playwright Lanford Wilson. Fuchs has also been active as an educator and administrator, who now teaches composition at the University of Connecticut.

In 2011–12, Fuchs composed *Rush*, his concerto for alto saxophone and band, for Ryan Janus—then principal saxophonist of the United States Air Force Academy Band at Peterson Air Force Base in Colorado Springs—and a consortium of thirty-seven saxophonists and conductors throughout the United States. Fuchs writes that *Rush*, which he arranged for orchestra in 2012–13, "is composed in two movements, each about seven minutes in duration, connected by an extended cadenza for the saxophone soloist.

"The first movement (*Evening*), which begins with a short cadenza that introduces the thematic material of the work, is a rhapsodic Adagietto with transparent textures. The second movement (*Morning*), which begins with an extended cadenza that introduces blue notes into the harmonic language, is cast in the form of a jazz-inflected passacaglia. The full ensemble begins the Allegro section with a series of syncopated chords, and the soloist then intones the passacaglia theme proper. The ensemble takes up the theme and with the soloist weaves an elaborate tapestry of ten variations based on the theme and the syncopated chords. The soloist concludes the concerto with a bravura display."

—©Jane Vial Jaffe

ICON: THE VOICES THAT CHANGED MUSIC

Saturday, February 7, 2026, 7:30 p.m.

Peter Rubardt, Conductor
Capathia Jenkins, Vocals
Ryan Shaw, Vocals
Calli Graver, Background Vocals
Rajdulari, Background Vocals

Various	*ICON Overture*
George Merrill/Shannon Rubicam Arr. Lucas Waldin	*I Wanna Dance with Somebody*
Billy Joel Arr. Lucas Waldin	*Movin' Out (Anthony's Song)*
Sonny Bono Arr. Lucas Waldin	*I Got You Babe*
John Lennon/Paul McCartney Arr. Lucas Waldin	*Hey Jude*
Elton John/Bernie Taupin Arr. Lucas Waldin	*Your Song*
Bob Crewe/Kenny Nolan Arr. Lucas Waldin	*Lady Marmalade*
Glen Ballard/Siedah Garrett Arr. Lucas Waldin	*Man in the Mirror*
Otis Redding Arr. Lucas Waldin	*Respect*

INTERMISSION

Bernard Edwards/Nile Rodgers Arr. Lucas Waldin	*I'm Coming Out*
Nickolas Ashford/Valerie Simpson Arr. Lucas Waldin	*You're All I Need to Get By*

Chuck Jackson/Marvin Yancy Arr. Lucas Waldin	*This Will Be (An Everlasting Love)*
Otis Blackwell/Elvis Presley Arr. Lucas Waldin	*All Shook Up*
Jim Weatherly Arr. Lucas Waldin	*Best Thing That Ever Happened to Me*
Stevie Wonder/Lee Garrett/ Syreeta Wright/Lula Mae Hardaway Arr. Lucas Waldin	*Signed, Sealed, Delivered, I'm Yours*
John Kander/Fred Ebb Arr. Graham Hall	*New York, New York*
Richard Kerr/Will Jennings Arr. Lucas Waldin	*I'll Never Love This Way Again*
Prince Arr. Lucas Waldin	*Purple Rain*
Jeff Barry/Ellie Greenwich/Phil Spector Arr. Lucas Waldin	*River Deep – Mountain High*

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Capathia Jenkins
Vocals

Born and raised in Brooklyn, singer and actor Capathia Jenkins premiered her new show, *Icon: The Voices That Changed Music*, with the Princeton Symphony Orchestra, with subsequent performances with the Houston Symphony, Baltimore Symphony, Reno Philharmonic, North Carolina Symphony, Anchorage Symphony, and several others. She premiered her solo show, *She's Got Soul*, with the Houston Symphony in October 2022, followed by performances with the Cleveland Orchestra, Seattle Symphony, Baltimore Symphony, Utah Symphony, Indianapolis Symphony, Naples Philharmonic, and Philly Pops, among many others.

Jenkins starred as Medda in the hit Disney production of *Newsies* on Broadway. She made her Broadway debut in *The Civil War*, where she created the role of Harriet Jackson. She then starred in the Off-Broadway 2000 revival of *Godspell*, where she wowed audiences with her stirring rendition of *Turn Back, O Man* which can still be heard on the original cast recording. She returned to Broadway in *The Look of Love* and was critically acclaimed for her performances of the Burt Bacharach and Hal David hits. Jenkins then created the roles of The Washing Machine in *Caroline, Or Change* and Frieda May in *Martin Short: Fame Becomes Me*, where she sang *Stop the Show* and brought the house down every night. In 2007 she went back to Off-Broadway and starred in *(mis)Understanding Mammy: The Hattie McDaniel Story*, for which she was nominated for a Drama Desk Award. She was also seen in Nora Ephron's *Love, Loss, and What I Wore*.

An active concert artist, Jenkins has appeared with numerous orchestras around the world, including the Chicago Symphony, Cincinnati Pops (with John Morris Russell), Cleveland Orchestra, Hong Kong Philharmonic, Houston Symphony, National Symphony, Philly Pops, Pittsburgh Symphony (with Marvin Hamlisch), San Diego Symphony, San Francisco Symphony, and many others. She was also a soloist with the Festival Cesky Krumlov in the Czech Republic multiple times. In October 2025, Jenkins will travel to Bratislava to perform at the Concert Hall of the Slovak Philharmonic. Jenkins had the great honor of performing in the *Broadway Ambassadors to Cuba* concert as part of the Festival de Teatro de La Habana. She has performed at Carnegie Hall with the New York Pops multiple times and sang in a tribute to Marvin Hamlisch at the Library of Congress.

She is a founder and board member of Black Theatre United.

Ryan Shaw
Vocals

Ryan Shaw is a three-time GRAMMY-nominated artist for his solo projects, Columbia Records' *This is Ryan Shaw*, his *In Between*, and Dynotone's *Real Love*.

Shaw has shared the world stage with such artists as Van Halen, Bonnie Raitt, John Legend, B.B. King, and Jill Scott. His music has been featured on FOX's *So You Think You Can Dance* and ABC's *Dancing with The Stars*, *Grey's Anatomy*, and *Lincoln Heights*, and in the films *My Blueberry Nights*, *Bride Wars*, and *Sex and the City*. Shaw has been a featured guest on national television talk shows. He starred as Judas in the Lyric Opera of Chicago's Olivier Award-winning London production of *Jesus Christ Superstar*, as the original Stevie Wonder in *Motown: The Musical* on Broadway, and as the Soul of Michael Jackson in *Thriller Live* on London's West End. Shaw debuted at Radio City Music Hall in the Dream Concert benefit for the Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial. His Carnegie Hall appearances include an *Elton John and Bernie Taupin Tribute*, *A Celebration of The African American Cultural Legacy*, and a Nat King Cole tribute concert with the New York Pops. His concert schedule includes New York Central Park's SummerStage, *Nat King Cole at 100* with the National Symphony Orchestra at The Kennedy Center as well as with the Nashville Symphony, and *Aretha: A Tribute*, and *Icon: The Voices That Changed Music*.

Shaw's solo orchestral show, *Ryan Shaw: Masters of R&B,* recently premiered at the Ferguson Center for the Performing Arts with the Virginia Symphony Orchestra and is now being presented by numerous orchestras around the country. He has also been a featured artist with the Houston Symphony for their *R&B Mixtape* concert as well as the soloist for the Houston Symphony's 4th of July Celebration.

Shaw's recent and upcoming symphonic performances include the Anchorage Symphony, Arkansas Symphony, Calgary Philharmonic, The Cleveland Orchestra, Colorado Symphony, Dallas Symphony, Des Moines Symphony, Evansville Philharmonic, The Florida Orchestra, Gulf Coast Symphony, Harrisburg Symphony, Helena Symphony, Indianapolis Symphony, Maryland Symphony, Milwaukee Symphony, Mississippi Symphony, North Carolina Symphony, Omaha Symphony, Orlando Philharmonic, Philly Pops, Seattle Symphony, Springfield Symphony, St. Louis Symphony, Tucson Symphony, Utah Symphony, Vancouver Symphony, Wheeling Symphony, and Wilmington Symphony, and among others.

Shaw was a featured guest in The 92nd Street Y's recent presentation of *Lyrics & Lyricists What's Going On?: Songs of Change*. Shaw's last album, *Imagining Marvin*, showcases Marvin Gaye hits alongside Shaw's original songs and features GRAMMY Award-winning co-writers Valerie Simpson and Rob Thomas, and special guests Derek Trucks, Rob Thomas, Robert Randolph, and Shoshana Bean. For 2025, Shaw's newest single, *Rising Up*, is an inspirational call to action. The full album will be released in early 2026. Simultaneously with *Rising Up*, Shaw recently released a new duo album with Ray Angry titled *OFF Broadway*. This project features contemporary and progressive soul versions of classic Broadway songs spanning 70 years.

MAHLER SYMPHONY NO. 2, "RESURRECTION"

Saturday, March 7, 2026, 7:30 p.m.

Peter Rubardt, Conductor
Martha Guth, Soprano
Susan Platts, Mezzo-Soprano
UWF Singers & The Choral Society of Pensacola
Peter Steenblik, University of West Florida Director of Choral Activities & The Choral Society of Pensacola Artistic Director

Gustav Mahler (1860–1911)

Symphony No. 2 in C minor, "Resurrection"

I. Allegro maestoso: With a thoroughly serious and solemn expression
II. Andante moderato: Very leisurely! Never rush!
III. In calm, flowing movement
IV. "Urlicht" (Primordial light): Very solemn but simple; choral style; don't drag
V. In the tempo of the scherzo

This concert will be performed without intermission.

Martha Guth
Soprano

Juno-nominated soprano Martha Guth has numerous recital and concert highlights, including Wigmore Hall, Lincoln Center, Washington National Cathedral, Sinfonia Smith Square, Toronto Symphony Orchestra, the Ravinia Festival, Lincoln Trio, Chicago Philharmonic, Voices of Ascension, and many more. Her interpretations have been called "magical" (*Opera Now*); "truly amazing" (*Montreal Gazette*) and "thrilling" (*The Globe and Mail*), and her concerts have been recorded and broadcast by the CBC Radio/Radio Canada, the BBC, and the WDR in Germany. She is proud to have worked under the batons of maestros Seiji Ozawa, Robert Spano, Helmuth Rilling, John Nelson, Richard Bradshaw, and Alan Gilbert, among many others.

As a young artist, Guth won first prize at both the Wigmore Hall International Song Competition and the Concours musical international de Montréal, launching a performance career specializing in concert and song repertoire. Her deep interest in art song led her to co-found Sparks & Wiry Cries with friend and collaborator pianist Erika Switzer. The non-profit is dedicated to art song, spanning publication, live performance, and commission of new works. Sparks is the force behind the popular regional songSLAMs that are presented in partnership with other song organizations and universities all over the world, from Slovenia to the United Kingdom, Canada, and every region of the United States. The group presents its own sparksLIVE events every January in NYC. In 2023, as Co-Director of Sparks & Wiry Cries, Martha led a partnership with The Metropolitan Museum of Art, the Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture, and the Philadelphia Chamber Music Society to produce the world premiere of *Freedom on the Move: Songs in Flight* composed by Shawn Okpebholo with performers Rhiannon Giddens, Karen Slack, Will Liverman, Reginald Mobley, and Howard Watkins.

Dr. Guth is Associate Professor of Voice at the Oberlin Conservatory of Music. She has been Co-Artistic Director and Director of the Composer/Mentorship Program at SongFest and is a frequent faculty member at the Vocal Academy for The Collaborative Piano Institute, and at Opera Seme in Arezzo, Italy. She has presented lectures, masterclasses, and recitals at the University of Toronto, Indiana University, Peabody Institute, Boston Conservatory at Berklee, University of Wisconsin, University of Manitoba, University of Notre Dame, the University of Cincinnati-College Conservatory of Music, and many more.

Her 2025-2026 season includes recitals and masterclasses with Graham Johnson at Cornell University, Oxford International Song Festival, the Philharmonie Luxembourg, and more; recitals with Erika Switzer for the Oxford International Song Festival and Bard College; Gustav Mahler's Second Symphony with Gloria Dei Cantores and the Pensacola Symphony Orchestra, a host of projects as producer under the auspices of Sparks & Wiry Cries, and many new projects and schemes with beloved collaborators.

Susan Platts
Mezzo-Soprano

British-born, Canadian mezzo-soprano Susan Platts brings a uniquely rich and wide-ranging voice to the concert and recital repertoire. She is particularly esteemed for her performances of Gustav Mahler's works. Platts is a Rolex Mentor and Protégé Arts Initiative Fellow, which gave her the opportunity to study with world-renowned soprano Jessye Norman.

Platts has performed with, among others, the Philadelphia, Cleveland, and Minnesota Orchestras, Orchestre de Paris, BBC Symphony Orchestra, the Montreal, Vancouver, Toronto, Detroit, Milwaukee, Baltimore, and Houston Symphonies, as well as the Los Angeles and St. Paul Chamber Orchestras.

She has collaborated with many of today's leading conductors, including Marin Alsop, Sir Andrew Davis, Christoph Eschenbach, JoAnn Falletta, Jane Glover, Vladimir Jurowski, Carlos Kalmar, Keith Lockhart, Kent Nagano, Yannick Nézet-Séguin, Carlos Miguel Prieto, Peter Oundjian, Bramwell Tovey, Osmo Vänskä, and Pinchas Zukerman.

Platts' opera highlights include W.A. Mozart's *Die Zauberflöte* at London's Royal Opera House, Richard Wagner's *Die Walküre* with the London Philharmonic Orchestra, and John Adams' *Nixon in China* for BBC Proms. Orchestral highlights include Gustav Mahler's *Das Lied von der Erde* and the premiere of a new work by Howard Shore with the Toronto Symphony Orchestra, Giuseppe Verdi's Requiem with the National Arts Centre Orchestra, Edward Elgar's *The Dream of Gerontius* in Mexico City with the Orquesta Sinfónica Nacional de México, and Mahler's Third Symphony with the Royal Scottish National Orchestra.

Platts appears on Naxos releases *La Tragédie de Salomé* (Florent Schmitt) and Mahler's *Das Lied von der Erde* (chamber version). She has recorded the full version of *Das Lied von der Erde* with the Tokyo Metropolitan Symphony Orchestra, Mahler's *Lieder eines fahrenden Gesellen* with the Smithsonian Chamber Players, and Lieder of Robert and Clara Schumann and Johannes Brahms on the ATMA label.

In 2021, she pursued her love of baking and wrote a cookbook titled *Aria Ready for Dessert? – A Musician Takes Center Stage in the Kitchen*, available on Amazon. She also started a food blog called *Baking, Bits & Bobs*.

UWF Singers

Founded in 1967, the award-winning UWF Singers is the flagship choral ensemble at the University of West Florida. Made up of students representing twenty-five different academic degrees and all four colleges on campus, they have come to be known for their choral excellence. The UWF Singers have performed by invitation at the Florida Music Educators Association conference (FMEA), the Florida chapter of the American Choral Directors Association (ACDA), and with the Mobile Symphony Orchestra for the Southern Division conference of ACDA. They frequently collaborate with the Pensacola Symphony Orchestra, Pensacola Children's Chorus, and many other schools and organizations in northwest Florida.

The Choral Society of Pensacola

The Choral Society of Pensacola began in 1935, when a group of singers presented portions of Handel's *Messiah* at a meeting of the Pensacola Music Study Club. The group rehearsed in a variety of churches until 1963, when it found a home on the campus of what is now Pensacola State College (PSC). True to its mission " to strengthen and enrich our community through a variety of engaging choral experiences," The Choral Society of Pensacola is committed to choral music in a variety of styles and have presented significant classical works that area audiences might not otherwise experience in concert, for example, Carl Orff's *Carmina Burana* and J.S. Bach's *Magnificat* (both in 2024). Without neglecting the established masterworks, they have recently expanded the repertoire to include works never performed regionally, for example, *The Notebooks of Leonardo da Vinci*, a multimedia symphony for chorus, orchestra, and video, by Jocelyn Hagen (2023); *Lift Every Voice*, a celebration of music by Black composers spanning five centuries (2024); and *Suffrage Cantata* by Andrea Ramsey (2025).

MAHLER SYMPHONY NO. 2, "RESURRECTION"

Gustav Mahler
Symphony No. 2 in C minor, "Resurrection"

Gustav Mahler was born in Kalischt (now Kaliště, Czech Republic), on July 7, 1860, and died in Vienna, Austria, on May 18, 1911.

Mahler composed his Second Symphony intermittently over a period of six years, beginning in 1888. He conceived the first movement while at work on his First Symphony, amid what he called "an impetuous torrent" of creativity. His well-known obsession with death had already surfaced at the time—the wreaths of flowers he had received from the Leipzig premiere of *Die drei Pintos* seem to have brought on funereal visions. He later wrote: "I have called the first movement *Todtenfeier* [*Funeral Rites*] and, if you are interested, it is the hero of my D-major Symphony who is being borne to his grave, his life being reflected, as in a clear mirror, from a high vantage point."

Intending this large-scale sonata-form movement as the first of a larger work, Mahler nevertheless had to shelve it for five years as other commitments required his attention. He had to do much of his composing in the summer months owing to his hectic schedule as an opera conductor. He wrote the Andante and Scherzo in the summer of 1893 at Steinbach, Austria, (his country retreat for four years), though he may have brought with him ideas jotted down years earlier in Leipzig.

One of Mahler's greatest problems was how to continue with such a large-scale work having laid his hero to rest in the first movement. Though he later arrived at a programmatic explanation for the remaining movements, he could not immediately decide on their order. He eventually placed the Andante second but still toyed with reordering sections within it. In the end, despite his unhappiness about the disparity between the first two movements, he decided against any major revision, saying the work was by then "too far away from me." He sidestepped the formal issues by referring to the middle movements as "intermezzi." For performance he prescribed in the score a pause of at least five minutes at the end of the first movement. As late as 1903 Mahler still insisted on this pause, but modern performers and audiences find no problem with the sequence of events and have deemed such a lengthy pause unnecessary.

The Andante is a ländler, a simple waltzlike dance, which in Mahler's hands is tenderly touching and subtly sophisticated. The three presentations of the tranquil main melody are interrupted by two troubled trios.

Mahler was captivated, as were many nineteenth-century composers, by the popular collection of "folk" poetry *Des Knaben Wunderhorn* (*The youth's magic horn*) collected, compiled, and in many cases written by Achim von Arnim and Clemens Brentano. After setting these *Wunderhorn* texts with piano accompaniment, Mahler often rescored the songs with orchestral accompaniment, working several into his Second, Third, and Fourth Symphonies. Of the two movements in the Second that contain *Wunderhorn* songs, the *Scherzo* is a purely orchestral version of *Des Antonius von Padua Fischpredigt* (*St. Anthony of Padua's Sermon to the Fishes*), a humorous depiction of the Saint's wasted eloquence. In the Symphony the music takes on a more restless and sinister aspect owing to Mahler's imaginative orchestral effects.

The other *Wunderhorn* setting, "Urlicht" (Primordial Light)—the fourth movement's alto solo—began as a song with piano accompaniment, composed even before Mahler drafted the second and third movements. Most likely his orchestration for inclusion in the Symphony occurred

later. Unlike his *Sermon to the Fishes* orchestration, this movement retains the voice because the text is all-important for Mahler's "program": "When I conceive a great musical idea, I always come to the point where I must make the "word" the bearer of the idea. That is what must have happened to Beethoven in his Ninth."

By the end of his summer at Steinbach, Mahler had completed, orchestrated, and revised the first four movements, but the final movement still troubled him. He wanted to convey the idea of a resurrection but searched in vain for a suitable text. Then, he said, he found inspiration at the funeral of his friend and fellow conductor Hans von Bülow:

> *The mood in which I sat there and thought of the departed one was exactly that of the work that occupied me constantly then. At that moment, the chorus, near the organ, intoned the Klopstock chorale* Auferstehn*! It struck me like a bolt of lightning, and everything stood clear and vivid before my soul. The creator waits for this bolt of lightning; this is his "Holy Annunciation."*

The Klopstock ode formed the basis of the text in the last movement, though Mahler shortened it and added several verses of his own that help to clarify his message. (Mahler's own verses begin with "*O glaube, mein Herz.*") The hushed entrance of the chorus at "*Aufersteh'n*" is one of music's spine-tingling moments. He also relies on alto and soprano solos to help transmit his words.

Mahler had violently conflicting feelings about verbal guides for his music. Although he worked out elaborate programs for many of his works, including this Symphony, he often preferred not to print them. It helps to know, however, that he planned the grand-scale finale to represent the Day of Judgment, even though his use of text makes clear the aspect of Resurrection, which gave the Symphony its name. The fourth movement, as its text also reveals, depicts a soul on its way to eternity; it is the stage between the earthly existence in the first three movements and the beyond that is attained in the fifth.

The musical resurrection idea that unifies the Symphony is represented, not surprisingly, by an ascending melodic line, initially appearing in the first movement (second theme). Mahler presents it in various guises with numerous underlying harmonic colors in the choral finale. The soaring voices at *Mit Flügeln, die ich mir errungen* (*With wings, which I have won*) open the composer's vision of a musical heaven that is truly inspired and profound.

The first performance of the first three movements of the Second Symphony took place on March 4, 1895, in Berlin, conducted by Richard Strauss, one of Mahler's greatest early supporters. Although the performance was wildly acclaimed by the audience—Mahler was called out five times after the Scherzo—the critics misrepresented the premiere as a failure. Mahler conducted the first performance of all five movements on December 13, 1895, also in Berlin. Again, it was enthusiastically applauded by the audience but reviewed unfavorably.

The Second Symphony has won over most critics since that time. The only impediment to more frequent performance is the remarkable vastness of the performing forces that Mahler requires: four flutes (doubling piccolos), four oboes (third and fourth doubling English horn), three clarinets (third doubling bass clarinet), two E-flat clarinets (doubled when possible in *ff* passages), four bassoons (third or fourth doubling contrabassoon), six horns, four horns in the distance (also added to the orchestra as horns seven–ten), six

trumpets, four trumpets in the distance (two can be the fifth and sixth trumpets from the orchestra), four trombones, tuba, organ, two harps, strings ("as many as possible"; several basses should have the contra C string), two sets of three timpani, bass drum, cymbals, two tam-tams (one high and one low), triangle, snare drum (more where noted if possible), glockenspiel, three bells (steel rods of deep, inexact pitch), Rute (birch brush used to strike the side or head of a drum); in the distance: a pair of timpani, bass drum, cymbals, and triangle; (all the "in the distance" instruments appear in the fifth movement); soprano solo, alto solo, and mixed chorus.

—©Jane Vial Jaffe

SYMPHONIC SPECTACULAR: GIL SHAHAM PLAYS BRAHMS

Saturday, March 28, 2026, 7:30 p.m.

Peter Rubardt, Conductor
Gil Shaham, Violin

Johannes Brahms (1833–1897) — *Tragic Overture*, op. 81

Richard Strauss (1864–1949) — *Death and Transfiguration*, op. 24

INTERMISSION

Johannes Brahms (1833–1897) — Violin Concerto in D major, op. 77
I. Allegro non troppo
II. Adagio
III. Allegro giocoso, ma non troppo vivace

Featuring Gil Shaham, Violin

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Gil Shaham
Violin


Photo by Chris Lee

Gil Shaham is one of the foremost violinists of our time; his flawless technique combined with his inimitable warmth and generosity of spirit has solidified his renown as an American master. The GRAMMY Award-winner, also named *Musical America's* "Instrumentalist of the Year," is sought after throughout the world for concerto appearances with leading orchestras and conductors, and regularly gives recitals and appears with ensembles on the world's great concert stages and at the most prestigious festivals.

Highlights of recent years include the acclaimed recording and performances of J.S. Bach's complete sonatas and partitas for solo violin. In the coming seasons in addition to championing these solo works he will join his long time duo partner pianist, Akira Eguchi in recitals throughout North America, Europe, and Asia.

Appearances with orchestra regularly include the Berlin Philharmonic, Boston Symphony, Chicago Symphony, Israel Philharmonic, Los Angeles Philharmonic, New York Philharmonic, Orchestre de Paris, and San Francisco Symphony, as well as multi-year residencies with the Orchestras of Montreal, Stuttgart and Singapore. With orchestra, Shaham continues his exploration of "Violin Concertos of the 1930s," including the works of Samuel Barber, Béla Bartok, Alban Berg, Erich Wolfgang Korngold, and Sergei Prokofiev, among many others.

Shaham has more than two dozen concerto and solo CDs to his name, earning multiple GRAMMYS, a Grand Prix du Disque, Diapason d'Or, and *Gramophone* Editor's Choice. Many of these recordings appear on Canary Classics, the label he founded in 2004. His CDs include *1930s Violin Concertos*, *Virtuoso Violin Works*, *Elgar's Violin Concerto*, *Hebrew Melodies*, *The Butterfly Lovers*, and many more. His most recent recording in the series 1930s Violin Concertos Vol. 2, including Prokofiev's Violin Concerto and Bartok's Violin Concerto No. 2, was nominated for a GRAMMY Award. His latest recording of Beethoven's and Brahms' Concertos with The Knights was released in 2021 and was also nominated for a GRAMMY.

Shaham was born in Champaign-Urbana, Illinois, in 1971. He moved with his parents to Israel, where he began violin studies with Samuel Bernstein of the Rubin Academy of Music at the age of seven, receiving annual scholarships from the America-Israel Cultural Foundation. In 1981, he made debuts with the Jerusalem Symphony and the Israel Philharmonic, and the following year, took the first prize in Israel's Claremont Competition. He then became a scholarship student at The Juilliard School and studied at Columbia University.

Shaham was awarded an Avery Fisher Career Grant in 1990, and in 2008 he received the coveted Avery Fisher Prize. In 2012, he was named "Instrumentalist of the Year" by *Musical America*. He plays the 1699 "Countess Polignac" Stradivarius and performs on an Antonio Stradivari violin, Cremona c1719, with the assistance of Rare Violins In Consortium, Artists and Benefactors Collaborative. He lives in New York City with his wife, violinist Adele Anthony, and their three children.

Gil Shaham appears by arrangement with Opus 3 Artists.

SYMPHONIC SPECTACULAR: GIL SHAHAM PLAYS BRAHMS

Johannes Brahms

Tragic Overture, op. 81

Johannes Brahms was born in Hamburg, Germany, on May 7, 1833, and died in Vienna, Austria, on April 3, 1897.* Tragic Overture *is scored for two flutes, piccolo, two oboes, two clarinets, two bassoons, four horns, two trumpets, three trombones, tuba, timpani, and strings.

Johannes Brahms often produced works of contrasting character in pairs. During the summer of 1880 he worked simultaneously on the sunny *Academic Festival Overture*, op. 80, and on the *Tragic Overture*, op. 81. At that point, he may have intended the *Tragic Overture* to be included in incidental music for Franz von Dingelstedt's new production of Johann Wolfgang von Goethe's *Faust*, which was to take place at the Viennese Burgtheater but never materialized. Some of that material, however, was more than a decade old, sketched in the late 1860s while he was working on his *Alto Rhapsody,* op. 53—another Goethe project—and his *Liebeslieder*, op. 52. That sketch provides a clue with its repeat marks that the music was not intended for an overture at all.

Whatever the work's origins, Brahms finally settled on the title *Tragic Overture*—indicative of its dark quality, but not so indicative as to suggest an actual narrative sequence of events, which would have gone completely against his nature. As in many of Brahms's works, the *Overture* contains several falling motives that contribute to the resigned quality that many commentators have described.

Brahms creates dramatic tension at the outset with the two opening chords—one somewhat unstable and the other open, so as not to indicate major or minor. He highlights the interval of their powerful descent in gentle motion within the first theme. This theme in turn contains a long-short rhythmic motive that later figures prominently in the development. This middle section is noteworthy for its slow tempo—half that of the exposition—and for its mysterious harmonic wanderings.

The recapitulation steals in quietly with the first themes disguised and abbreviated—a beloved characteristic of Brahms—before providing a guidepost with the more regular return of the second theme. A sizeable coda, signaled by the two chords from the opening, develops previous passages that did not return in the recapitulation. Among Brahms' masterful orchestration touches are the muted violins at the shrouded beginning of the recapitulation and the judicious use of trombones and tuba to impart solemnity.

Richard Strauss

Death and Transfiguration, op. 24

Richard Strauss was born in Munich, Germany, on June 11, 1864, and died in Garmisch-Partenkirchen, Bavaria, on September 8, 1949.* Death and Transfiguration *is scored for three flutes, two oboes, English horn, two clarinets, bass clarinet, two bassoons, contrabassoon, four horns, three trumpets, three trombones, tuba, timpani, tam-tam, two harps, and strings.

Richard Strauss began composing his great reflection on dying—*Tod und Verklärung* (*Death and Transfiguration*)—in Munich in 1888, completed it the following year, and conducted its premiere on June 21, 1890, in Eisenach, Germany. Although the composer was only twenty-six, the work was already his third in a series of great symphonic poems. It was the first work for which Strauss himself provided a plot; the music corresponds quite literally with his detailed synopsis. He wrote in a letter to his friend Friedrich von Hausegger in 1894:

It was six years ago when the idea came to me to write a tone poem describing the last hours of a man who had striven for the highest ideals, presumably an artist. The sick man lies in bed breathing heavily and irregularly in his sleep. Friendly dreams bring a smile to the face of the sufferer; his sleep grows lighter; he awakens. Fearful pains once more begin to torture him, fever shakes his body. When the attack is over and the pain recedes, he recalls his past life; his childhood passes before his eyes; his youth with its striving and passions and then, while the pains return, there appears to him the goal of his life's journey, the idea, the ideal which he attempted to embody in his art, but which he was unable to perfect because such perfection could be achieved by no man. The fatal hour arrives. The soul leaves his body, to discover in the eternal cosmos the magnificent realization of the ideal which could not be fulfilled here below.

The "plot" of *Tod und Verklärung* was probably inspired by Richard Wagner's *Tristan und Isolde*, which Strauss had studied as a schoolboy and heard several times in Munich in his youth. Moreover, in June 1888, the year he began his tone poem, he was thrilled by an Italian performance of *Tristan* that he saw in Bologna, Italy. Even Strauss's title may have been suggested by Wagner, because Wagner used the term *Verklärung* for what we today call the *Liebestod*.

Edward Downes, annotator for many years of the Philharmonic-Symphony Society of New York, pointed out yet another connection which occurs in the music itself. Strauss' hushed, agitated string sounds at the outset, when his hero lies breathing irregularly in his sleep, directly recall Wagner's orchestration at the point in *Tristan* in Act III at which Tristan lies hovering between life and death, hoping that Isolde will join him, and his servant Kurwenal bends over him to listen for the sound of his breathing or heartbeat.

Though one can pinpoint elements of sonata form in Strauss' large, one-movement work, many of its structural features are directly inspired by the narrative, fulfilling the definition of the terms "symphonic poem" and "program music" as invented by Liszt. Strauss himself pointed out an important aspect of his formal scheme in an unpublished note on the work, cited by biographer Willi Schuh: "*Tod und Verklärung* makes the main theme its point of culmination, and does not state it until the middle." The main theme, sometimes called the artist's "ideology theme," is characterized by an octave leap that imparts tremendous drama. The theme is presented three times in the course of the work before the coda, each in a new key and becoming more complex as the artist's vision grows.

Strauss' gorgeous orchestral texture, using his largest orchestra to date, always impresses with its idiomatic yet taxing writing for the horns, divided string parts, harp touches at judicious moments, and solo violin passages. A striking feature in this case is the spare use of percussion (not counting timpani)—only the tam-tam appears, saved for a particular passage near the end, before the final "transfigured" utterances of the "ideology theme."

For the printed program for the premiere, Strauss enlisted his friend Alexander von Ritter to write a short explanatory poem based on the outline of the plot. Strauss must have preferred the expanded version that Ritter made soon after, for it appears in the printed score. Its four divisions correspond to the four main sections of Strauss' music. Composers of programmatic

works often denied the necessity of providing detailed descriptions of the nonmusical inspirations for their works and Strauss was no exception, though his refutations were sporadic. *Death and Transfiguration* can indeed stand wonderfully on musical merit alone, but Ritter's description, as published in the score, is given here in full as Strauss presumably desired his audience to be acquainted with it.

"[Largo] In a small bare room, dimly lit by a candle stump, a sick man lies on his pallet. Exhausted by a violent struggle with death, he lies asleep. In the ghastly stillness of the room, like a portent of impending death, only the quiet ticking of a clock is heard. A melancholy smile lights the invalid's pale face: does he dream of golden childhood as he lingers on the border of life?

"[Allegro molto agitato] But death grants him little sleep or time for dreams. He shakes his prey brutally to begin the battle afresh. The drive to live, the might of death! What a terrifying contest! [brief utterance of 'Ideology theme'] Neither wins the victory and once more silence reigns.

"[Meno mosso, ma sempre alla breve] Exhausted from battle, sleepless, as in a delirium, the sick man now sees his life pass before him, step by step, scene by scene. First the rosy dawn of childhood, radiant, innocent; then the boy's aggressive games, testing building his strength—and so maturing for the battles of manhood, to strive with burning passion for the highest goals of life: to transfigure all that seems to him most noble, giving it still more exalted form—this alone has been the high aim of his whole existence. Coldly, scornfully, the world set obstacle upon obstacle in his way. When he believed himself near his goal, a thunderous voice cried: 'Hold!' But a voice within him still urged him on, crying: 'Make each hindrance a new rung in your upward climb.' Undaunted he followed the exalted quest. Still in his death agony he seeks the unreached goal of his ceaseless striving, seeks it, but alas, still in vain. Though it grows closer, clearer, grander, it never can be grasped entirely or perfected in his soul. The final iron hammer-blow of death rings out, breaks his earthly frame, covers his eyes with eternal night.

"[Moderato] But from the endless realms of heavenly space a mighty resonance returns to him bearing what he longed for here below and sought in vain: redemption, transfiguration."

Tod und Verklärung achieved great popularity during Strauss' lifetime—he often had to give an encore of it in performances that he conducted—and he quoted passages from it in some of his own subsequent scores, including *Ein Heldenleben* and the *Four Last Songs*. As the composer himself lay dying in 1949 he said to his daughter-in-law Alice, "Dying is just as I composed it in *Death and Transfiguration*."

Johannes Brahms

Violin Concerto in D major, op. 77

Joahnnes Brahms was born in Hamburg, Germany, on May 7, 1833, and died in Vienna, Austria, on April 3, 1897. The Violin Concerto is scored for two flutes, two oboes, two clarinets, two bassoons, four horns, two trumpets, timpani, and strings.

Johannes Brahms composed his Violin Concerto in D major in the summer of 1878 in Pörtschach on Lake Wörth, the same charming Austrian village where the previous summer he had composed another great D-major work, his Second Symphony. Like Ludwig van Beethoven, Felix Mendelssohn, and others before and after him, Brahms wrote his Violin Concerto with a famous violinist in mind—in this case, his friend and virtuoso violinist Joseph Joachim. On August 24, 1878, Brahms sent Joachim the violin part of the first movement of the Concerto, saying that there would be four movements and asking him in customary self-deprecatory manner if he would make technical comments.

Naturally Joachim was overjoyed and spent much time over the Concerto, responding with suggestions in letters and in person when the two met in Hamburg in September for the performance of the Second Symphony, with Brahms conducting and Joachim as concertmaster. Brahms spent much of that fall shaping the Concerto and in November wrote Joachim that "the middle movements have fallen out—naturally they were the best! I am having them replaced by a feeble Adagio," Brahms's amusing way of describing one of his most inspired slow movements. (Scholars believe one of the discarded movements, a scherzo, was later reworked for the Second Piano Concerto in B-flat Major, Op. 83.) Though Joachim did not receive the definitive solo part until December 12, and apparently not even the score by that point, he had sufficient faith in Brahms to have programmed the work for New Year's Day at the Leipzig Gewandhaus.

Occasionally Joachim's painstaking suggestions were taken by the composer; more often they were overruled or provided the impetus for an entirely new solution. This process is well documented in the correspondence and Brahms's many-layered emendations in the manuscript, a facsimile of which was published by the Library of Congress in 1979. Following Classical concerto tradition and confident in his friend's abilities, Brahms composed no cadenza for the first movement. The cadenza supplied by Joachim is most frequently performed, though others have been written including those by Ferruccio Busoni and Donald Tovey.

The Leipzig premiere was accorded respect but not enthusiasm; the Concerto fared slightly better in Vienna, after which Brahms wrote his friend Elisabet von Herzogenberg that "The cadenza went so magnificently at our concert here that the people clapped right on into my coda." Joachim, delighted with his new solo vehicle, quickly obtained the composer's permission (and the score and parts) to perform the Concerto at the Crystal Palace in London on January 24, 1879; it was there that the Concerto won its first resounding success.

Bowing to Classical tradition, Brahms opened the Concerto with a long orchestral introduction, almost an exposition in its own right. The main theme is already present in the opening measures, immediately imparting a warm glow. This movement resembles the first movement of its predecessor, the D-major Symphony, in its spacious design and leisurely ¾ meter.

The slow movement is especially noteworthy for its variation techniques. The exquisite main theme, played at the outset by the oboe supported by the other wind instruments, is expanded with the soloist's entry so that the first four-bar phrase becomes six bars and the next four-bar phrase eight. The violin throughout is concerned with artful embellishments and elaborations of the main melodic material.

The rondo finale abounds in Hungarian-style melodies, rhythmic effects, syncopations, and double stops in homage to Hungarian-born Joachim. Joachim had written a *Concerto in the Hungarian Manner* that he dedicated to Brahms, and Brahms had employed Hungarian features in several other compositions, notably the finale of his G-minor Piano Quartet, about which Joachim had commented that Brahms had beaten him at his own game. Brahms' ingenious variation technique is apparent here in the statements of the rondo theme, the last of which takes on a march-like character in 6/8 meter. The exuberant revelry contains its own winding down in the last measures of the coda before the final affirmative chords.

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100TH ANNIVERSARY GALA CONCERT

Saturday, April 25, 2026, 7:30 p.m.

Peter Rubardt, Conductor
Pensacola Symphony Youth Orchestra
Daniel Stevens, Pensacola Symphony Youth Orchestra Conductor
Pensacola Children's Chorus
Alex Gartner, Pensacola Children's Chorus Artistic & Executive Director

Antonín Dvořák
(1841–1904)

Symphony No. 9, op. 95
I. Adagio—Allegro molto
II. Largo
III. Scherzo. Molto vivace
IV. Finale. Allegro con fuoco

INTERMISSION

Leonard Bernstein
(1918–1990)

Overture to *Candide*

James Stephenson
(b. 1969)

100th Anniversary Commission

Arr. Ryan Murphy
(b. 1971)

Simple Gifts

Featuring the Pensacola Children's Chorus

John Rutter
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Look at the World

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Pensacola Symphony Youth Orchestra Saenger Theatre Debut
Repertoire to be Announced

Featuring the Pensacola Symphony Youth Orchestra

Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov
(1844–1908)

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II. *Variazioni*
III. *Alborada*
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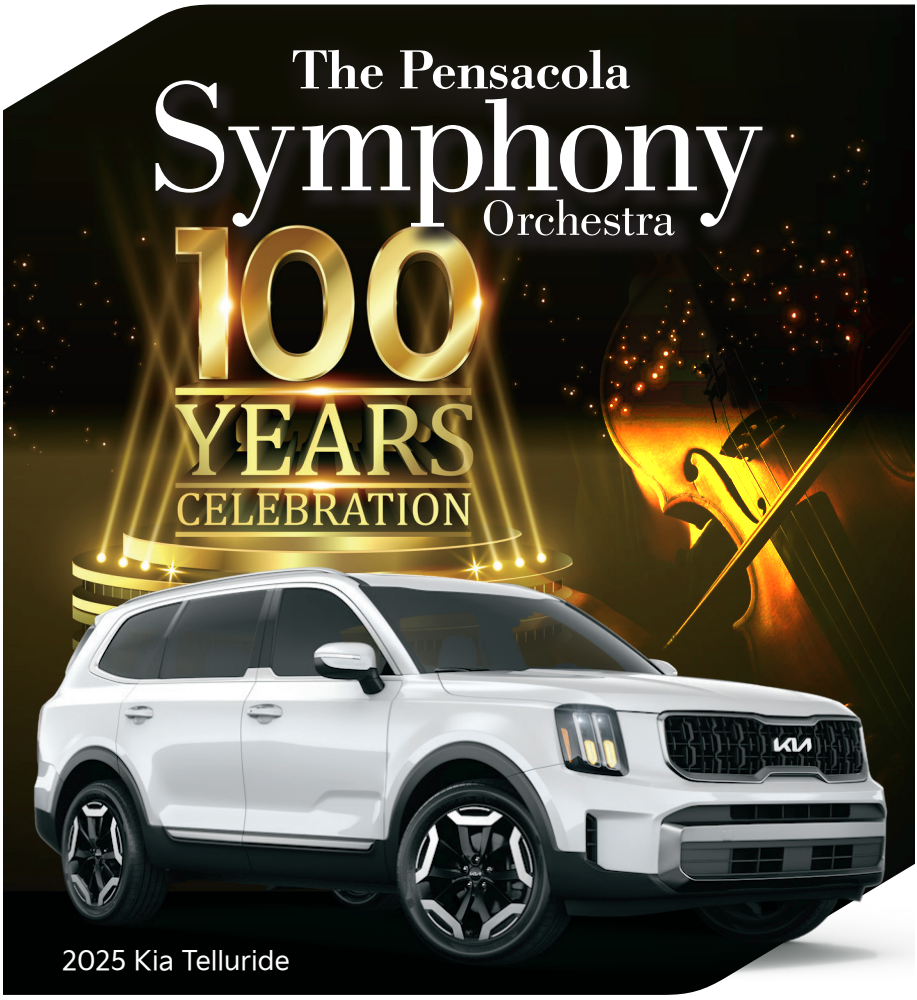

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