



PHILADELPHIA/ORCHESTRA

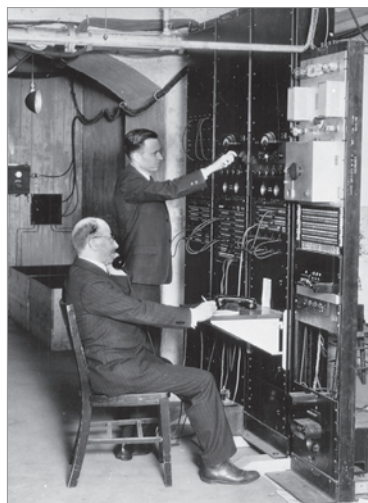
Yannick Nézet-Séguin · Music & Artistic Director

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APRIL 2025

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Specially designed art for the Mahler's Symphony No. 6 concerts, April 10–11 & 13, 2025, by Haeg Design

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From the Interim President and CEO



Dear Friends:

Art has always been, and will continue to be, a source of inspiration, connection, and profound resilience. And the art on our stages speaks volumes about who we are as an organization. Our core values—to be authentic, collaborative, exceptional, and inclusive—are integrated in everything we do. Music and Artistic Director Yannick Nézet-Séguin exhibits these values every time he is on the podium. Knowing who we are gives us the inspiration and strength to move forward with our mission, vision, and values serving as our guiding light.

Art has the power to create understanding and unity, and I have been moved to see this in action recently as we welcomed thousands of children for the Jazz for Freedom program, which takes students on a vibrant journey through the history of art and jazz in the 1920s that culminated in the Harlem Renaissance. Last month, former Principal Guest Conductor Nathalie Stutzmann led the Orchestra in Shostakovich's Fifth Symphony. Written in response to the Stalin regime, this masterpiece shines as an example of the power of music to bring us together in the face of dark and difficult times. This month we celebrate the spring residency of PHILADANCO!, known for its legacy of breaking barriers and building bridges across cultural divides with predominantly African-American traditions in dance.

We are committed to programming that speaks to the many interests of Philadelphia's communities. In the coming months, our stages will be animated by artists and events that do just that, from Paul Simon to comedian Nikki Glaser, Kristin Chenoweth with The Philadelphia Orchestra, the Martha Graham Cracker Cabaret, Yannick and the Orchestra in concert performances of Wagner's revolutionary opera *Tristan and Isolde*, the Jazz at Lincoln Center Orchestra with Wynton Marsalis, the Broadway sensation *The Wiz*, the great Joe Hisaishi with the Orchestra, and so much more. Each performance highlights the universe of world-class art forms, genres, and ideas that take shape here and speaks to our belief that the arts are a universal human right.

Please join us and celebrate art's unwavering perseverance.

Best regards,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Ryan Klein". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "R" and "K".

Interim President and CEO

The Philadelphia Orchestra

2024–2025 Season

Yannick Nézet-Séguin

Music and Artistic
Director

*Walter and Leonore
Annenberg Chair*

Marin Alsop

Principal Guest Conductor
*Ralph and Beth Johnston
Muller Chair*

Naomi Woo

Assistant Conductor

Joseph Conyers

Education and
Community Ambassador
*Mark and Tobey Dichter
Chair*

Charlotte Blake Alston

Storyteller, Narrator,
and Host
*Osagie and Losenge
Imasogie Chair*

First Violins

David Kim, Concertmaster
Dr. Benjamin Rush Chair
Juliette Kang, First
Associate Concertmaster
*Joseph and Marie Field
Chair*
Christine Lim, Associate
Concertmaster
Marc Rovetti, Assistant
Concertmaster
*Dr. James F. Dougherty
Chair*
Barbara Govatos
Robert E. Mortensen Chair
Jonathan Beiler
Hirono Oka

Richard Amoroso

*Robert and Lynne Pollack
Chair*

Yayoi Numazawa

Jason DePue

Larry A. Grika Chair

Jennifer Haas

Miyo Curnow

Elina Kalendarova

Daniel Han

Julia Li

William Polk

Mei Ching Huang

Second Violins

Kimberly Fisher, Principal

Peter A. Benoliel Chair

Paul Roby, Associate
Principal

Sandra and David

Marshall Chair

Dara Morales, Assistant
Principal

Anne M. Buxton Chair

Philip Kates

Peter A. Benoliel Chair

Davyd Booth

Paul Arnold

*Joseph Brodo Chair, given
by Peter A. Benoliel*

Boris Balter

Amy Oshiro-Morales

*Volunteer Committees
Chair*

Yu-Ting Chen

Jeoung-Yin Kim

Willa Finck

John Bian

MuChen Hsieh

Eliot Heaton

Violas

Choong-Jin Chang,
Principal

*Ruth and A. Morris
Williams, Jr., Chair*

Kirsten Johnson,
Associate Principal

Kerri Ryan, Assistant
Principal

Burchard Tang

Renard Edwards

Anna Marie Ahn
Petersen

Piasecki Family Chair

David Nicaastro

Che-Hung Chen

Rachel Ku

Marvin Moon

Meng Wang

Cellos

Hai-Ye Ni, Principal

Priscilla Lee, Associate
Principal

Yumi Kendall, Assistant
Principal

*Elaine Woo Camarda and
A. Morris Williams, Jr.,
Chair*

Richard Harlow

Kathryn Picht Read

John Koen

Derek Barnes

Alex Veltman

Jiayin He

Michael Katz

Basses

Joseph Conyers,
Principal

*Carole and Emilio
Gravagno Chair*

Gabriel Polinsky,
Associate Principal

Tobias Vigneau, Assistant
Principal
David Fay*
Duane Rosengard
Nathaniel West
Michael Franz
Christian Gray

*Some members of the string
sections voluntarily rotate
seating on a periodic basis.*

Flutes

Jeffrey Khaner, Principal
*Paul and Barbara Henkels
Chair*
Patrick Williams,
Associate Principal
*Rachelle and Ronald
Kaiserman Chair*
Olivia Staton
Erica Peel, Piccolo

Oboes

Philippe Tondre, Principal
Samuel S. Fels Chair
Peter Smith, Associate
Principal
Jonathan Blumenfeld
Edwin Tuttle Chair
Elizabeth Starr
Masoudnia,
English Horn
*Joanne T. Greenspun
Chair*

Clarinets

Ricardo Morales,
Principal
*Leslie Miller and Richard
Worley Chair*
Samuel Caviezel,
Associate Principal
*Sarah and Frank Coulson
Chair*

Socrates Villegas
Paul R. Demers, Bass
Clarinet
*Peter M. Joseph and Susan
Rittenhouse Joseph Chair*

Bassoons

Daniel Matsukawa,
Principal
Richard M. Klein Chair
Mark Gigliotti,
Co-Principal
Angela Anderson Smith
Holly Blake,
Contrabassoon

Horns

Jennifer Montone,
Principal
*Gray Charitable Trust
Chair*
Jeffrey Lang, Associate
Principal
*Hannah L. and J. Welles
Henderson Chair*
Christopher Dwyer
Chelsea McFarland
Ernesto Tovar Torres

Trumpets

Esteban Batallán,
Principal
*Marguerite and Gerry
Lenfest Chair*
Jeffrey Curnow,
Associate Principal
Anthony Prisk

Trombones

Nitzan Haroz, Principal
*Neubauer Family
Foundation Chair*
Matthew Vaughn,
Co-Principal
Jack Grimm

Blair Bollinger, Bass
Trombone
*Drs. Bong and Mi Wha
Lee Chair*

Tuba

Carol Jantsch, Principal
*Lyn and George M. Ross
Chair*

Timpani

Don S. Liuzzi, Principal
Dwight V. Dowley Chair
Angela Zator Nelson,
Associate Principal

Percussion

Christopher Deviney,
Principal
Charlie Rosmarin,
Associate Principal
Angela Zator Nelson

Piano and Celesta

Kiyoko Takeuti

Keyboards

Davyd Booth

Harp

Elizabeth Hainen,
Principal

Librarians

Nicole Jordan, Principal
Holly Matthews

Stage Personnel

Dennis Moore, Jr.,
Manager
Francis "Chip" O'Shea III
Aaron Wilson

*On leave

Music and Artistic Director



Landen Nordeman

Yannick Nézet-Séguin is currently in his 13th season with The Philadelphia Orchestra, serving as music and artistic director. An inspired leader, Yannick, who holds the Walter and Leonore Annenberg Chair, is both an evolutionary and a revolutionary, developing the mighty “Philadelphia Sound” in new ways. His collaborative style, deeply rooted musical curiosity, and boundless enthusiasm have been heralded by critics and audiences alike. The *New York Times* has called him “phenomenal,” adding that “the ensemble, famous for its glowing strings and homogenous richness, has never sounded better.”

Yannick has established himself as a musical leader of the highest caliber and one of the most thrilling and sought-after talents of his generation. He became the third music director of New York’s Metropolitan Opera in 2018. In addition, he has been artistic director and principal conductor of Montreal’s Orchestre Métropolitain since 2000. In 2017 he became the third-ever honorary member of the Chamber Orchestra of Europe. He served as music director of the Rotterdam Philharmonic from 2008 to 2018 (he is now honorary conductor) and was principal guest conductor of the London Philharmonic from 2008 to 2014. He has made wildly successful appearances with the world’s most revered ensembles and at many of the leading opera houses.

Yannick has shown a deep commitment to expanding the repertoire by embracing an ever-growing and diverse group of today’s composers and by performing the music of under-appreciated composers of the past. In 2018 he signed an exclusive recording contract with Deutsche Grammophon. Under his leadership The Philadelphia Orchestra returned to recording with 14 releases on that label, including *Florence Price Symphonies Nos. 1 & 3*, which won a GRAMMY® Award for Best Orchestral Performance in 2022.

A native of Montreal, Yannick studied piano, conducting, composition, and chamber music at Montreal’s Conservatory of Music and continued his studies with renowned conductors, most notably Carlo Maria Giulini; he also studied choral conducting with Joseph Flummerfelt at Westminster Choir College. Among Yannick’s honors are an appointment as Companion of the Order of Canada; Companion to the Order of Arts and Letters of Quebec; an Officer of the Order of Quebec; an Officer of the Order of Montreal; an Officier de l’Ordre des Arts et des Lettres; *Musical America’s* 2016 Artist of the Year; ECHO KLASSIK’s 2014 Conductor of the Year; a Royal Philharmonic Society Award; Canada’s National Arts Centre Award; the Prix Denise-Pelletier; the Oskar Morawetz Award; and honorary doctorates from the University of Quebec, the Curtis Institute of Music, Westminster Choir College of Rider University, McGill University, the University of Montreal, the University of Pennsylvania, Laval University, and Drexel University.

To read Yannick’s full bio, please visit philorch.org/conductor.

Marian Anderson Hall

Adrian Segel Collection/Philadelphia Orchestra Archives



Marian Anderson with Music Director Eugene Ormandy during a Philadelphia Orchestra rehearsal at the Academy of Music in December 1938

On June 8, 2024, Verizon Hall at the Kimmel Center for the Performing Arts was officially rededicated as Marian Anderson Hall in honor of the legendary Black contralto, civil rights icon, and Philadelphian. The first major concert venue in the world to honor Marian Anderson—85 years after she was barred from performing at Constitution Hall in Washington, D.C., because of her race—the hall is a permanent monument to its namesake’s artistry and achievements, a reflection of the inclusive future she helped to engender, and an active testament to the intersection of music, art, and positive social impact. We look forward to honoring Marian Anderson in perpetuity with a venue that reflects the ideals by which she lived her life: equity, justice, freedom, and the belief that the arts are for everyone.

Marian Anderson Hall was named in her honor by a visionary \$25-million philanthropic gift from Richard Worley and Leslie Miller. Worley has been a member of The Philadelphia Orchestra’s Board of Trustees since 1997 and served as board chair from 2009 to 2019. Miller is a former Kimmel Center trustee and previous acting president of the Kimmel Center. They are among the largest donors in Philadelphia Orchestra history. Additional generous support for Marian Anderson Hall was given by Sidney and Caroline Kimmel.

A Century of Recording

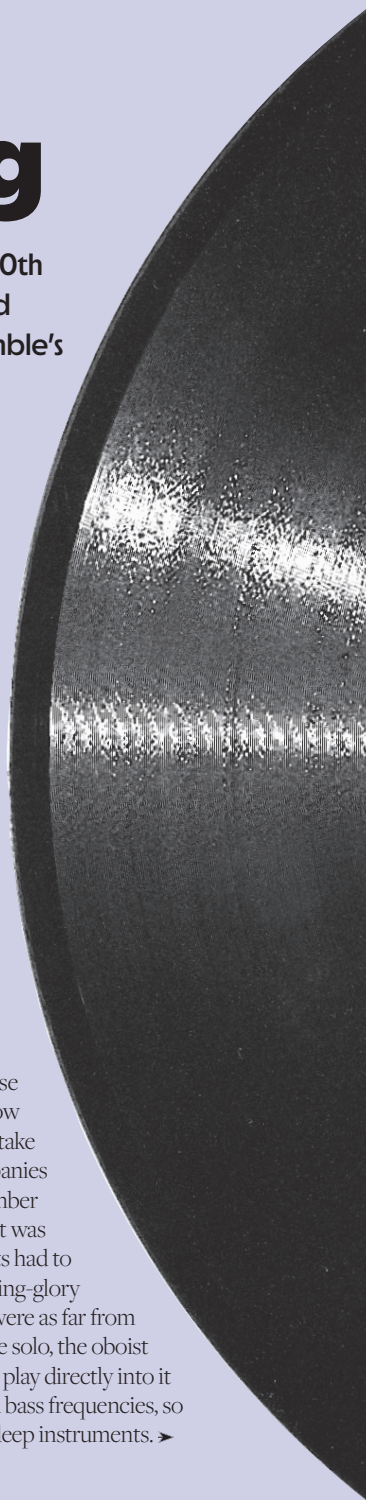
As The Philadelphia Orchestra celebrates the 100th anniversary of being the first orchestra to record electronically, we take a look back at the ensemble's early and unprecedented recording history

By Steve Holt

Until 1877, and Thomas Edison's invention of the phonograph, the only way to hear music was live: in a concert hall, a salon, perhaps a house party. Today, we take for granted that we can carry with us, in pocket or purse, a relatively tiny device capable of holding more music than we can listen to in a lifetime. It's been quite a journey from then to now. And The Philadelphia Orchestra has been there almost every note of the way.

That 1877 phonograph was shockingly primitive by today's standards. The original recording medium was tin foil, which unfortunately lasted only a few playbacks before it crumbled. Edison, Alexander Graham Bell, and many other scientists and inventors continued to improve on the device. But as veteran engineer Ward Marston explains, even as late as 1917, when The Philadelphia Orchestra made its first recordings (under Music Director Leopold Stokowski), conditions were less than ideal.

It wasn't quite a full complement of musicians, maybe 80 or so. They were crammed into a very small studio in Camden, New Jersey, a former church that had been remodeled for that purpose by the Victor Talking Machine Company. We actually don't know a lot about how the recordings were made, because they didn't take a lot of photographs. They didn't want competing record companies to learn any tricks of the trade! But years later, I did talk to a number of players who had made those early recordings. They told me it was very difficult and tremendously stressful. The softer instruments had to be placed closer to the recording horn [think of the large, morning-glory speakers on early Victorolas] while the brass, being the loudest, were as far from the horn as possible. And then if there was, for example, an oboe solo, the oboist would have to get up out of his chair, walk over to the horn, and play directly into it when it was time for the solo! It was also very difficult to record bass frequencies, so the string bass parts had to be reinforced using tubas, or other deep instruments. ➤





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Victrola

Reg. U.S. Pat. Off. M. de F. N. Ind. Rights. No. 6035, 17 de Enero, 1906.

Price \$1

Hungarian Dance No. 5
(Brahms)

Philadelphia Symphony Orchestra
Leopold Stokowski, Conductor

64752

THIS RECORD IS PATENTED BY U.S. PATENTS OWNED BY THIS COMPANY.

VICTOR TALKING MACHINE CO. Camden N.J.
AS FOLLOWS: NO. 739,318, DATED SEPTEMBER 22, 1903; NO. 778,976, DATED JANUARY 3, 1905; AND NO. 836,059, DATED AUGUST 11, 1906.

The Philadelphia Orchestra's
first commercial recording,
Brahms's Hungarian Dance No. 5



Unfortunately, the resulting records simply didn't sound like a live performance, because the recording system couldn't capture all the frequencies an orchestra produces. Another problem: It was impossible to tell if a "take" was acceptable until after it had been recorded. That left a lot of recordings on the cutting-room floor.

Despite all these difficulties, Stokowski was determined to use this new technology to bring the music of his Philadelphia Orchestra to the wider world. Those numerous first sessions in 1917 produced usable recordings of only a handful of works: Brahms's Hungarian Dance No. 5, the Scherzo from

Mendelssohn's *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, Gluck's "Dance of the Blessed Spirits" from *Orfeo ed Euridice*, and "Anitra's Dance" from Grieg's *Peer Gynt*.

Stokowski and the Orchestra kept at it in the ensuing years, recording composers from Wagner to Schubert to Stravinsky. Sergei Rachmaninoff even recorded his Second Piano Concerto with the Philadelphians and Stokowski—only the second and third movements were initially released.

Then, one hundred years ago, in 1925, the "Big Bang" of recorded music exploded on the scene. The Bell Telephone Laboratories had developed an electrical recording process, using microphones instead of the primitive, giant horns of earlier days. On April 29, 1925, with Stokowski on the podium, The Philadelphia Orchestra recorded Saint-Saëns *Danse macabre* and the "Polovtsian Dances" from Borodin's *Prince Igor*. Gone was the poor frequency response, replaced by a stunning and vivid realism.

Over the next several years, disc after disc flew out of the studio: Dvořák's "New World" Symphony; Tchaikovsky's *Nutcracker* Suite; Stravinsky's *Firebird* Suite; and the first complete American recordings of Brahms's Symphony No. 1, Beethoven's Symphony No. 7, Rimsky-Korsakov's *Sheherazade*, Franck's Symphony in D major, and Stokowski's own signature transcription for orchestra of Bach's Toccata and Fugue in D minor.



Leopold Stokowski and The Philadelphia Orchestra during a recording session in the Academy of Music

The sound technology continued to improve. Engineers on both sides of the Atlantic experimented with microphone placement, different recording media, and other innovations to improve the sound quality for people listening to records at home.

By 1931, Bell Labs had set up its latest recording equipment in the basement of the Academy of Music. The concert hall became a hi-tech sound lab, where Bell engineers could work on creating longer-playing records (the then-standard 78 rpm record could only hold a few minutes of music per side); develop stereo recording (to recreate the impression of hearing instruments in their respective spaces in the concert hall); and even learn how to transmit an orchestra concert over telephone lines.

Stokowski was keeping up on all these developments, to ensure his orchestra could take full advantage of them. In April 1931, he began recording with Bell Labs's latest: a new way of transferring sound to the grooves of an acetate disk. Later, when Stokowski heard a playback of Berlioz's *Roman Carnival Overture*, recorded with the Orchestra in December 1931 using the new techniques, he called it the finest recording he had ever heard.

From those now seemingly primitive beginnings, the list of Philadelphia Orchestra breakthroughs in electronic media has continued to grow, from performing the soundtrack to *Fantasia* in 1939, to being the first orchestra on nationwide television in 1948, and the first major American orchestra to give a live concert cybercast on the internet in 1997, and on to the present day.

The Philadelphia Orchestra is commemorating all these sonic breakthroughs by reaching as far into the technological past as possible. According to Andrew Mellor, the Orchestra's audio producer and engineer, recreating the 1925 breakthrough would be prohibitively expensive, due to the elaborate machinery involved. But for a recording of Ravel's *Alborada del gracioso* (part of a program conducted this past January/February by Daniele Rustioni), Mellor produced a two-microphone capture of the Orchestra using 1930s techniques, while simultaneously recording the concert using modern methods. On May 11 and 12, as part of its regular Philadelphia Orchestra broadcasts, WRTI will air *both* versions of the Ravel piece. Like time travelers, listeners will be able to experience the Philadelphia Sound as it was emerging into the modern era.

Steve Holt, managing partner at re:Write, is a veteran journalist and musician.



Bell Telephone Laboratories
engineers in the basement of
the Academy of Music, 1933

Courtesy: AT&T Archives, R. H. H. Center

Musicians Behind the Scenes

Eliot Heaton Violin



Where were you born?

I was born and raised in Geneva, New York, a small city in the Finger Lakes region.

What is your most treasured possession?

It's definitely my violin, although it feels more like a buddy than a possession. We have been through a huge number of failures and successes together, and we spend long hours together every day shut in a room trying to figure out our way through great pieces of music.

Tell us about your instrument.

I play a violin made by Joseph Curtin, an outstanding luthier who lives in Ann Arbor, Michigan. It has a big, warm open sound and is beautiful to look at, and I believe that I am the first person to own it.

What's in your instrument case?

There's the violin, two bows, rosin, nail clippers, a few different mutes, a granola bar, and behind the bows I have a quotation from *Moby Dick* that my violin teacher gave me when I graduated from college.

What piece of music never fails to move you?

When I really need a boost in inspiration or emotional investment in music, I put on Christian Ferras playing the slow movement of the Sibelius Violin Concerto. It works every time!

What do you love most about performing?

I like the feeling that we are all having this experience at exactly the same time. All of the ears in the audience and the different voices in the orchestra come together in the same moment to create the music that the composer describes in the score, and being a part of that makes me feel connected to a large group of people in a really positive and unique way.

Do you play any other instruments?

My hometown did not have a strings program so I grew up playing the trombone in the school band.

What are you reading right now?

I'm just finishing the last book in *Narratives of Empire* by Gore Vidal [*The Golden Age*]. I've been on those for a while and am open to suggestions of what to start next.

What do you like to do in your spare time?

My wife and I have two cats who give us endless entertainment. I also play a lot of tennis and have been very happy to discover that Philly has such a robust tennis scene.

What advice would you give to aspiring young musicians?

Feed your musical imagination by listening to as many great performances and recordings as you can find. You can only play as well as what your ear can imagine, so give it good material to work with!

Noted in Passing

The Philadelphia Orchestra mourns the passing of former Philadelphia Orchestra Board Chair Peter Benoliel on February 17, 2025.



Peter Benoliel with the Orchestra's second violin section, taken in April 2024

Born in Philadelphia, Mr. Benoliel attended Princeton University, majoring in philosophy, and upon graduation served in the United States Navy before joining Quaker Chemical, built by his father and uncle, first as a chemist, then as president and chief executive officer, chair of the board, and finally, chair emeritus. He served on a number of corporate boards, including as chair of the Federal Reserve Bank of Philadelphia, and was very active in many cultural and philanthropic organizations, including the Free Library of Philadelphia Foundation, the Philadelphia Chamber Music Society, the Philadelphia Museum of Art, the Grand Teton Music Festival, and the Settlement Music School, which named its Germantown branch after him this past January.

Mr. Benoliel wanted to be a violinist, beginning lessons at the age of eight, and remained an enthusiastic violinist throughout his life. He devoted his time, talent, and treasure to The Philadelphia Orchestra in numerous ways. He served on the Board for decades and was chair from 1995 to 2000. He served as chair of the endowment campaign from 2003 to 2008, which exceeded its original goal. He also made significant financial contributions to the Orchestra, endowing three chairs in the second violin section, those held by Principal Second Violin Kimberly Fisher, Philip Kates (which will be named for him upon his retirement), and Paul Arnold (named in honor of Joseph Brodo, a former member of the Orchestra's second violin section). He worked diligently to ensure that the Orchestra would remain a cultural treasure for future generations.

2024–2025 | 125th Season
Marian Anderson Hall

The Philadelphia Orchestra

Thursday, April 3, at 7:30

Friday, April 4, at 2:00

Saturday, April 5, at 8:00

Yannick Nézet-Séguin Conductor

Juliette Kang Violin

Assiginaak *Eko-Bmijwang* (As Long in Time as the River Flows)

First Philadelphia Orchestra performances

Bartók Violin Concerto No. 2

I. Allegro non troppo

II. Andante tranquillo—Allegro scherzando—Tempo I

III. Allegro molto

Intermission

Stravinsky *The Firebird* (complete ballet)

This program runs approximately two hours.

These concerts are supported by the **James and Agnes Kim Foundation**.

These concerts are part of the **Ellenberg Philadelphia Orchestra Soloist Spotlight Series**.

These concerts are also part of the Peter A. Benoliel Violin Concerts, established in his honor by **Dr. Richard M. Klein**.

The April 5 concert is sponsored by **Christos Coutifaris and Deborah Driscoll in honor of Natalie Kim**.

Barbara Assiginaak's *Eko-Bmijwang* (As Long in Time as the River Flows) is a highlight of the Marian Anderson Artistic Initiative, supported in part by the **Wyncote Foundation**. The Marian Anderson Artistic Initiative showcases composers and artists who embody Ms. Anderson's passion for increasing inclusivity, diversity, equity, and access in the performing arts, contributing to the advancement of a more representative art form.

Philadelphia Orchestra concerts are broadcast on WRTI 90.1 FM on Sunday afternoons at 1 PM and are repeated on Monday evenings at 7 PM on WRTI HD 2. Visit www.wrti.org to listen live or for more details.



The Philadelphia Orchestra

The world-renowned Philadelphia Orchestra strives to share the transformative power of music with the widest possible audience, and to create joy, connection, and excitement through music in the Philadelphia region, across the country, and around the world. Through innovative programming, robust education initiatives, a commitment to its diverse communities, and the embrace of digital outreach, the ensemble is creating an expansive and inclusive future for classical music and furthering the place of the arts in an open and democratic society. In June 2021 the Orchestra and its home, the Kimmel Center, united. Today, The Philadelphia Orchestra and Ensemble Arts brings the greatest performances and most impactful education and community programs to audiences in Philadelphia and beyond.

Yannick Nézet-Séguin is now in his 13th season with The Philadelphia Orchestra, serving as music and artistic director. His connection to the ensemble's musicians has been praised by both concertgoers and critics, and he is embraced by the musicians of the Orchestra, audiences, and the community. In addition to expanding the repertoire by embracing an ever-growing and diverse group of today's composers, Yannick and the Orchestra are committed to performing and recording the works of previously overlooked composers.

Your Philadelphia Orchestra takes great pride in its hometown, performing for the people of Philadelphia year-round, at the Kimmel Center for the Performing Arts, around the community, over the airwaves, and online. The Kimmel Center has been the ensemble's home since 2001, and in 2024 Verizon

Hall at the Kimmel Center was officially rededicated as Marian Anderson Hall in honor of the legendary contralto, civil rights icon, and Philadelphian. The Orchestra's award-winning education and community initiatives engage over 50,000 students, families, and community members of all ages through programs such as PlayINs; side-by-sides; PopUP concerts; Our City, Your Orchestra Live; the free annual Martin Luther King, Jr., Tribute Concert; School Concerts; sensory-friendly concerts; open rehearsals; the School Ensemble Program; All-City Orchestra Fellowships; and residency work in Philadelphia and abroad.

Through concerts, tours, residencies, and recordings, the Orchestra is a global ambassador and one of our nation's greatest exports. It performs annually at Carnegie Hall, the Mann Center, the Saratoga Performing Arts Center, and the Bravo! Vail Music Festival. The Orchestra also has a rich touring history, having first performed outside Philadelphia in its earliest days. In 1973 it was the first American orchestra to perform in the People's Republic of China, launching a now-five-decade commitment of people-to-people exchange.

Under Yannick's leadership, the Orchestra returned to recording with 14 celebrated releases on the Deutsche Grammophon label, including the GRAMMY® Award-winning *Florence Price Symphonies Nos. 1 & 3*. The Orchestra also reaches thousands of radio listeners with weekly broadcasts on WRTI-FM and SiriusXM. For more information, please visit www.philorch.org.

PHILADELPHIA ORCHESTRA/125

YANNICK NÉZET-SÉGUIN
MUSIC & ARTISTIC DIRECTOR



The GRAMMY® Award-winning Orchestra celebrates
125 years in this unforgettable 2025–26 season.

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Appointed first associate concertmaster of The Philadelphia Orchestra in 2005, Canadian violinist **Juliette Kang** enjoys an active and varied career. Previously assistant concertmaster of the Boston Symphony and a member of the Metropolitan Opera Orchestra, she has appeared in solo engagements with the San Francisco, Baltimore, Omaha, and Syracuse symphonies; l'Orchestre National de France; the Boston Pops; and every major orchestra in Canada.

Internationally she has performed with the Czech and Hong Kong philharmonics; the Vienna Chamber Orchestra; and the Singapore and KBS (Seoul) symphonies. She has given recitals in Philadelphia, Paris, Tokyo, and Boston. Ms. Kang won first prize at the 1994 International Violin Competition of Indianapolis and was presented at Carnegie Hall in a recital that was recorded live and released on CD. She has also recorded the Schumann and Wieniawski concertos with the Vancouver Symphony for CBC Records. In 2012 she was again a featured soloist at Carnegie Hall with her hometown orchestra, the Edmonton Symphony, and that season made her Philadelphia Orchestra subscription debut.

Ms. Kang has been involved with chamber music since studying at the Curtis Institute of Music. Festivals she has participated in include Bravo! Vail, Kingston (RI), Marlboro (VT), Moab (UT), Skaneateles (NY), and Spoleto USA (SC). In New York she has performed with the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center; at the Mostly Mozart Festival with her husband, cellist Thomas Kraines; and at the Bard Music Festival. With Philadelphia Orchestra colleague violist Che Hung Chen, pianist Natalie Zhu, and cellist Clancy Newman she is a member of the Clarosa Quartet, dedicated to exploring and enriching the piano quartet repertoire.

After receiving a Bachelor of Music degree at age 15 from Curtis as a student of Jascha Brodsky, Ms. Kang earned a Master of Music degree at the Juilliard School under the tutelage of Dorothy Delay and Robert Mann. She was a winner of the 1989 Young Concert Artists Auditions, and she subsequently received first prize at the Menuhin Violin Competition of Paris in 1992. She lives in Queen Village with her husband and two daughters.

Peter A. Benoliel Violin Concerts

A passionate violinist from early childhood, Peter A. Benoliel joined the Philadelphia Orchestra Board of Directors in 1980 and served as chair from 1995 to 2000. His huge contributions to the Orchestra as a leader and philanthropist are paralleled only by his deep love for the violinists who help bring the famous Philadelphia Sound to the world.

Framing the Program

Parallel Events

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The Anishinaabe composer Barbara Assiginaak was born on Manitoulin Island in Lake Huron. Much of her music explores the “rhythms and flow of life within nature” and in *Eko-Bmijwang* (As Long in Time as the River Flows), which opens the concert today, she imagined a “journey through a dream-memory experience of time.”

By the time Béla Bartók wrote his Second Violin Concerto in the late 1930s he was a famous composer at the height of his powers, but soon to enter his trying final years of exile and ill health. He had written a violin concerto 30 years earlier, but it was unknown and unperformed. His new effort came at the behest of a good friend, the noted violinist Zoltán Székely, who premiered the vibrant Second Concerto in Amsterdam in 1939. The dance rhythms and melodic contours of Hungarian folk music infuse the work.

The concert concludes with Igor Stravinsky’s *Firebird*, which proved to be the young Russian composer’s breakout success in 1910. Impresario Sergei Diaghilev commissioned the work for his Ballets Russes in Paris and the praise it immediately enjoyed led to *Petrushka* the following year and then to *The Rite of Spring* in 1913. Today’s performance of *Firebird* offers the relatively rare chance to hear the luminous complete score to this revolutionary work, rather than one of the suites Stravinsky later extracted from it and that are usually performed in concert.

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The Music

Eko-Bmijwang (As Long in Time as the River Flows)

Barbara Assiginaak

Born on Manitoulin Island, Ontario, Canada, in 1966

Now living there



The composer and performer Barbara Assiginaak is Anishinaabe (Odawa, Ojibwe, and Potawatomi), born on Manitoulin Island (“Mnidoo Mnissing”—Spirit Island or Land of the Great Spirit). The Anishinaabe name translates to “the spirit that is lowered from above,” and the language has no direct translation for “good-bye,” with the belief that their culture, land, and people stay in one’s heart long after departure.

Currently assistant professor and coordinator of composition at Wilfrid Laurier University in Ontario, Assiginaak balances composing with performing, teaching, spending time with elders in traditional ceremonies, and engaging in environmental activities and activities rooted in traditional Anishinaabeg teachings. She began her musical career during childhood, playing and composing on traditional wood flute and singing her own songs with the *dewe’igan* (hand drum) of the Anishinaabe people.

Assiginaak obtained an Associate Diploma in piano performance from the Royal Conservatory of Music in Toronto and a Bachelor of Music in composition from the University of Toronto. She continued studies in Europe with diplomas from the Centre Acanthes in France and the Musikhochschule in Munich, Germany. She has been a resident composer for the Toronto Symphony, and as an educator and committed environmentalist, she’s been active in Canada’s Truth and Reconciliation Commission. She is a member of the Order of Canada, recognized for her “diverse contributions to contemporary music as a classically trained musician rooted in Anishinaabe teachings.” Assiginaak founded the ensemble ERGO in 1999 to promote the creation and performance of diverse contemporary compositions, with a particular focus on women composers and musicians of Indigenous and diverse cultural backgrounds globally.

A Connector among Peoples Assiginaak is creatively rooted in Anishinaabe traditional music and draws inspiration from sounds in nature, including the elemental sounds of murmuring water, wind, and birdsongs, to create works signaling the “ancient foreknowledge, contained in star patterns above, that has always been available to us.” As a direct descendant of hereditary chiefs who were signatories of Ontario’s major treaties, and as a child and grandchild of residential school survivors, Assiginaak centers much of her creative output on these histories. She writes, “As an Anishinaabekwe, my life work is rooted in traditional Anishinaabeg teachings and draws on the wisdoms that the non-

human beings teach us. Teaching and learning embody dialogue—respecting, listening, guiding, and humility. Every person has a creative inner voice that is unique, and which holds a wider purpose beyond the self.”

Assiginaak looks to the Anishinaabeg oral tradition of creating songs as a basis for composition, incorporating complex pentatonicism and including slides and pitch bends, as well as the wide timbral range of sounds available in the voice and on acoustic instruments. She approaches instrumental composition in an organic way, working directly on the instruments exhaustively first to understand their true nature and unique sound capabilities.

A Closer Look *Eko-Bmijwang* was premiered on August 8, 2021, by the Orchestre Métropolitain, conducted by Yannick Nézet-Séguin, in Joliette, Quebec, as part of the Lanaudière Festival. As Assiginaak writes, “I imagined this short work as a journey through a dream-memory experience of time, beginning with a canoe entering the calm waters in the midst of thick fog just under the light of Nokomis (Grandmother Moon). Soon, with the coming dawn, the mists rise and the waters dance under the light of Giizis (Grandfather Sun) and enliven those many creatures that dwell within and around. As the waters of this great river change their flow, their speed, and sometimes the direction of their current, the traveler is reminded that all humans—the last to arrive after all other beings—are not there to dominate and control the spirit and life of nibi (water).”

Eko-Bmijwang includes microtonal shadings of pitch, natural harmonics, and extended instrumental techniques, such as woodwinds and brass playing on detached mouthpieces. Violins at times play extremely high indefinitely pitched sounds, and Assiginaak has scored glissandos within these ranges discerned by the human ear more as color or other sensory differences than specific pitches. Birds depicted include the songs of sparrows, robins, and orioles; laughing loons; quacking ducks; and the crying of an eagle.

“I always aim for a connectivity between the human and non-human aspects of life as intertwined,” Assiginaak writes. “Most often the basis of a piece of music will be a song of my own—often influenced or inspired by sounds I hear in my time spent outdoors within nature in remote areas ... this reflects my own personal need to feel interconnected with the rhythms and flow of life within nature.”

—Nancy Plum

Nancy Plum has been a program annotator for 30 years and has written notes for The Philadelphia Orchestra, the Kimmel Center, Carnegie Hall, and Philadelphia Singers, among others. She has been a music critic in Princeton for more than 35 years and is a member of the Philadelphia Chorale. She wrote a history of the U.S. Air Force Singing Sergeants and is completing a book about an incident in the Cuban underground in the 1950s.

Eko-Bmijwang was composed in 2021.

These are the first Philadelphia Orchestra performances of the piece and the first time the ensemble has performed anything by the composer.

The score calls for piccolo, two flutes, two oboes, English horn, two clarinets, two bassoons, four horns, two trumpets, three trombones, tuba, timpani, percussion (bass drum, chiffon fabric, Chinese lion cymbals, deer toes shaker, large slapstick, suspended cymbals, tam-tam, temple blocks, two small flat rocks, vibraphone), harp, and strings.

Performance time is approximately six minutes.

The Music

Violin Concerto No. 2

Béla Bartók

Born in Nagyszentmiklós, Hungary (now Romania), March 25, 1881

Died in New York City, September 26, 1945



With Europe poised on the brink of another world war, Béla Bartók must have known that his days in Hungary were numbered. He had guaranteed a difficult political position for himself through his outspoken criticism of the wave of the fascism that had begun to spill over into his own nation's politics. Not even his privileged position as Hungary's premier composer and pianist could protect him against the vicious attacks in the press that began to complicate his life in the mid-1930s, after he had defended the beleaguered

Arturo Toscanini and had refused to perform in Germany altogether.

Eventually Bartók abandoned his homeland, but not until his ailing mother died in late 1939 would his conscience allow him to leave. Throughout the 1930s, he continued to find the presence of mind to compose, and the results include several of his best scores: the *Music for Strings, Percussion, and Celesta*; the *Sonata for Two Pianos and Percussion*; the *Divertimento*; *Contrasts*; the *Concerto for Orchestra*; and the *Second Violin Concerto*.

A Towering Achievement Bartók's musical conquests of the 1920s—the stage works, the orchestral music, three incisive concertos—had won him several important and lucrative commissions. As a result, nearly all of his works after 1930 were written on demand, including the *Second Violin Concerto* we hear today. We owe its existence in part to Zoltán Székely, who in addition to being one of Hungary's leading violinists was also one of Bartók's closest friends. Like Bartók, he was a traveling virtuoso, and when he asked the composer to write a concerto for him, what he wanted was a standard, three-movement work that could join the other masterpieces of the repertoire. Székely tried to fend off Bartók's suggestion for a set of variations for violin and orchestra—and although the composer was forced to comply with his instructions, he managed inconspicuously to create a hybrid, a work that was both three-movement concerto and theme and variations.

Bartók completed the *Concerto* in December 1938, and Székely performed it in Amsterdam the following April, with Willem Mengelberg conducting the Concertgebouw Orchestra. Bartók could not attend, but he later confessed great pleasure with the work when he finally heard it performed in the United States in 1943. "I was very happy that there is nothing wrong with the scoring, nothing

needs to be changed,” he wrote to his friend Joseph Szigeti, “even though orchestral ‘accompaniment’ is a very delicate business.”

It is one of the towering achievements of the 20th century. But it was not immediately loved by the critics, and the cantankerous Bartók could not restrain himself from commenting on this. “The critics ran true to form,” he wrote. “I would not even mention them but for the brutishness of one: he doesn’t believe that this work will ever *displace* the Beethoven, Mendelssohn, or Brahms concertos. How could one write such a stupid thing? What fool would want to displace these works with his own?!”

A Closer Look Bartók’s music is always based upon a central tonality—which is not necessarily to say “in a key”—and in the opening **Allegro non troppo** that tonality is clearly B, as it is for the third movement as well. Cast in sonata form, this initial movement begins with a classic *verbunkos* rhythm, a square march meter based on a Hungarian dance used for military recruiting during the 18th century. The discursive violin solo quickly dispels the march-like mood and continues to lead the conversation throughout. Bartók biographer Halsey Stevens has shown the extent to which the material for this main subject, particularly the rising and falling fourths, derives from Hungarian folk melodies. Others have suggested that the second subject’s use of all 12 tones (albeit not in serial fashion) was a sly comment on Schoenberg’s experiments with dodecaphony.

The brief slow movement, based on G instead of B, begins with a violin subject (**Andante tranquillo**), into which is interpolated a dancelike **Allegro scherzando**. The finale (**Allegro molto**) derives its thematic material from that of the first movement; it is essentially an altered recomposition of the Concerto’s opening, in fact, employing ingeniously embellished versions of the first movement’s themes—this time mostly in triple rather than duple meter. Bartók seemed to prefer the ending as he later rewrote it, at Székely’s request, in which a playful solo flourish replaces a purely orchestral finish.

—Paul J. Horsley

Paul J. Horsley is performing arts editor for the Independent in Kansas City. Previously he was program annotator and musicologist for The Philadelphia Orchestra and music and dance critic for the Kansas City Star.

Bartók composed his Violin Concerto No. 2 from 1937 to 1938.

Yehudi Menuhin was the violinist in the first Philadelphia Orchestra performances of the work, in February 1946 with Eugene Ormandy on the podium. The most recent subscription performances were in October 2015, with Gil Shaham and Yannick Nézet-Séguin.

The Concerto is scored for an orchestra of solo violin, two flutes (II doubling piccolo), two oboes (II doubling English horn), two clarinets (II doubling bass clarinet), two bassoons (II doubling contrabassoon), four horns, two trumpets, three trombones, timpani, percussion (bass drum, cymbals, gong, snare drums, triangle), harp, celesta, and strings.

Performance time is approximately 36 minutes.

The Music

The Firebird

Igor Stravinsky

Born in Lomonosov, Russia, June 17, 1882

Died in New York City, April 6, 1971



In May 1909, the impresario Sergei Diaghilev presented the Parisian debut of his dance troupe, the astonishing Ballets Russes. This revelatory first night featured both the brilliant dancer Vaslav Nijinsky and a stunning new ballet entitled *La Pavillon d'Armide* with music by Nikolai Tcherepnin and lavish decor by Alexandre Benois. The discriminating aesthete and diarist Count Harry Kessler wrote effusively to the poet Hugo von Hoffmannstahl, "All in all, this Russian ballet is one of the most remarkable and significant artistic

manifestations of our time." The music was not the only aspect of the Ballets Russes to which Kessler reacted, however: The colorful sets and costumes designed by Léon Bakst and the revolutionary choreography by Mikhail Fokine also enthralled him.

A Third-Choice Composer The success of that first season in Paris presented Diaghilev with a pressing problem: How was he to exceed this triumph for the 1910 season? One way was to commission a new ballet based on Russian folktales, *Zhar ptitsa* (The Firebird). He had his subject; his choreographer, Fokine; his set designer, Alexander Golovin; and his costume designer, Bakst. What he needed, urgently, was a composer.

Diaghilev's first choice was again Tcherepnin, but he withdrew from the project early on. His second choice was Anatoli Liadov, a pupil of Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov who wrote enchanting tone poems on Russian subjects. Although later accounts claimed that Liadov was feckless about composing *The Firebird*, there is no documentary evidence that he agreed to write it in the first place. Running out of time, Diaghilev convinced one of Rimsky-Korsakov's last pupils, the young Igor Stravinsky, to accept the commission. Stravinsky had a very short time to compose an extended and complex score. He began work in November 1909 and finished the following May. Stravinsky worked closely with Fokine as he composed, although he overruled the choreographer's tasteless demand to have a suite of Russian dances conclude the ballet.

After stormy rehearsals, *The Firebird* proved an immense success when it was premiered in Paris on June 25, 1910; it is not an exaggeration to say that it made Stravinsky famous overnight. While the sets, costumes, and choreography received praise, the music elicited an ecstatic response from critics, colleagues, and audiences alike. Capitalizing on this newfound fame, Stravinsky later derived three suites from *The Firebird*: a short one in 1911, a more extended one in 1919 that incorporated revisions to the orchestration, and

a final version from 1945. Although one of the suites is how *Firebird* is most often heard in concert, today's performance offers the rarer chance to hear the complete ballet score.

A Closer Look The plot of *The Firebird* was drawn from a collection of folktales collected by Alexander Afanasyev. These stories feature both the Firebird and the sinister figure of Kashchei the Deathless. Stravinsky's father, the famous bass singer Fyodor, was a passionate bibliophile who had amassed a remarkable collection of Russian folktales, so the composer was surely well aware of Afanasyev's anthology. In addition, Rimsky-Korsakov had written a one-act opera in 1902 entitled *Kashchei the Deathless*, for which Stravinsky had prepared the vocal score. The influence of this opera upon the plot and music of *The Firebird* is striking.

The action of *The Firebird* is fantastical but straightforward. While out hunting, Tsarevich Ivan strays into the enchanted realm of Kashchei. He captures the Firebird, who begs for her freedom. Ivan lets her go and in return gives him one of her feathers through which he can summon her aid in times of danger. Ivan happens upon a group of princesses, who have been taken prisoner by Kashchei, and falls in love with the fairest of them. Confronted by Kashchei himself, Ivan remembers the feather and waves it to summon the Firebird. She makes Kashchei's minions dance an Infernal Dance and during the following Berceuse, he and his servants fall into a deep sleep. Ivan smashes the egg that holds Kashchei's immortality, thus destroying him. The Finale, which begins with a noble horn solo, reveals Ivan and his bride sitting in majesty on glittering thrones as the orchestra evokes the tintinnabulation of Russian church bells.

—Byron Adams

Byron Adams is emeritus distinguished professor of musicology at the University of California, Riverside. Both composer and musicologist, he specializes in French and British music of the 19th and 20th centuries. Among his publications are two edited volumes, Edward Elgar and His World (2007) and Vaughan Williams and His World (2023), which he co-edited with Daniel M. Grimley.

Stravinsky composed The Firebird from 1909 to 1910.

Music from The Firebird was first played by The Philadelphia Orchestra in November 1917, when the 1911 Suite was led by Leopold Stokowski. Since that time, barely a year has gone by when some Firebird music hasn't been heard on one of the Orchestra's concerts, whether subscription, education, summer, or tour. The most recent subscription performances of the complete ballet were in November 2019, with Stéphane Denève.

The Philadelphia Orchestra has recorded the Firebird Suite seven times: in 1924, 1927, and 1935 with Stokowski for RCA; in 1953 and 1967 with Eugene Ormandy for CBS; in 1973 with Ormandy for RCA; and in 1978 with Riccardo Muti for EMI.

Stravinsky scored the work for piccolo, three flutes (II doubling alto flute, III doubling piccolo II), three oboes, English horn, three clarinets (III doubling E-flat clarinet), bass clarinet, three bassoons (III doubling contrabassoon II), contrabassoon, four horns, three trumpets (plus three offstage trumpets), three trombones, tuba (plus four offstage Wagner tubas), timpani, percussion (bass drum, chimes, cymbals, glockenspiel, tam-tam, tambourine, triangle, xylophone), three harps, celesta, piano, and strings.

The work runs approximately 45 minutes in performance.

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Musical Terms

GENERAL TERMS

Berceuse: Lullaby

Chord: The simultaneous sounding of three or more tones

Chromatic: Relating to tones foreign to a given key (scale) or chord

Coda: A concluding section or passage added in order to confirm the impression of finality

Divertimento: A piece of entertaining music in several movements

Dodecaphony: See serialism

Glissando: A glide from one note to the next

Harmonic: (1) Pertaining to chords and to the theory and practice of harmony. (2) One of the series of tones (the so-called partial tones) which usually accompany, more or less faintly, the prime tone produced by a string, organ-pipe, human voice, etc. The partial tone is produced by the vibration of fractional parts of the string or air-column.

Harmony: The combination of simultaneously sounded musical notes to produce chords and chord progressions

Meter: The symmetrical grouping of musical rhythms

Microtone: Any musical interval or difference of pitch distinctly smaller than a semitone

Pentatonicism: The use of a five-note scale

Scale: The series of tones which form (a) any major or minor key or (b) the chromatic scale of successive semi-tonic steps

Semitone: The smallest interval of the modern Western tone system

Serialism: Music constructed according to the principle pioneered by Schoenberg in the early 1920s, whereby the 12 notes of the scale are arranged in a particular order, forming a series of pitches that serves as the basis of the composition and a source from which the musical material is derived

Sonata: An instrumental composition in three or four extended movements contrasted in theme, tempo, and mood, usually for a solo instrument

Sonata form: The form in which the first movements (and sometimes others) of symphonies are usually cast. The sections are exposition, development, and recapitulation, the last sometimes followed by a coda. The exposition is the introduction of the musical ideas, which are then “developed.” In the recapitulation, the exposition is repeated with modifications.

Suite: During the Baroque period, an instrumental genre consisting of several movements in the same key, some or all of which were based on the forms and styles of dance music. Later, a group of pieces extracted from a larger work, especially an opera or ballet.

Timbre: Tone color or tone quality

Tonic: The keynote of a scale

THE SPEED OF MUSIC (Tempo)

Allegro: Bright, fast

Andante: Walking speed

Scherzando: Playfully

Tranquillo: Quiet, peaceful, soft

TEMPO MODIFIERS

Molto: Very

Non troppo: Not too much

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If you would like more information about how to make a planned gift to the Orchestra, please contact Helen Radenkovic, managing director of philanthropic engagement, at 215.893.1819 or hradenkovic@philorch.org.

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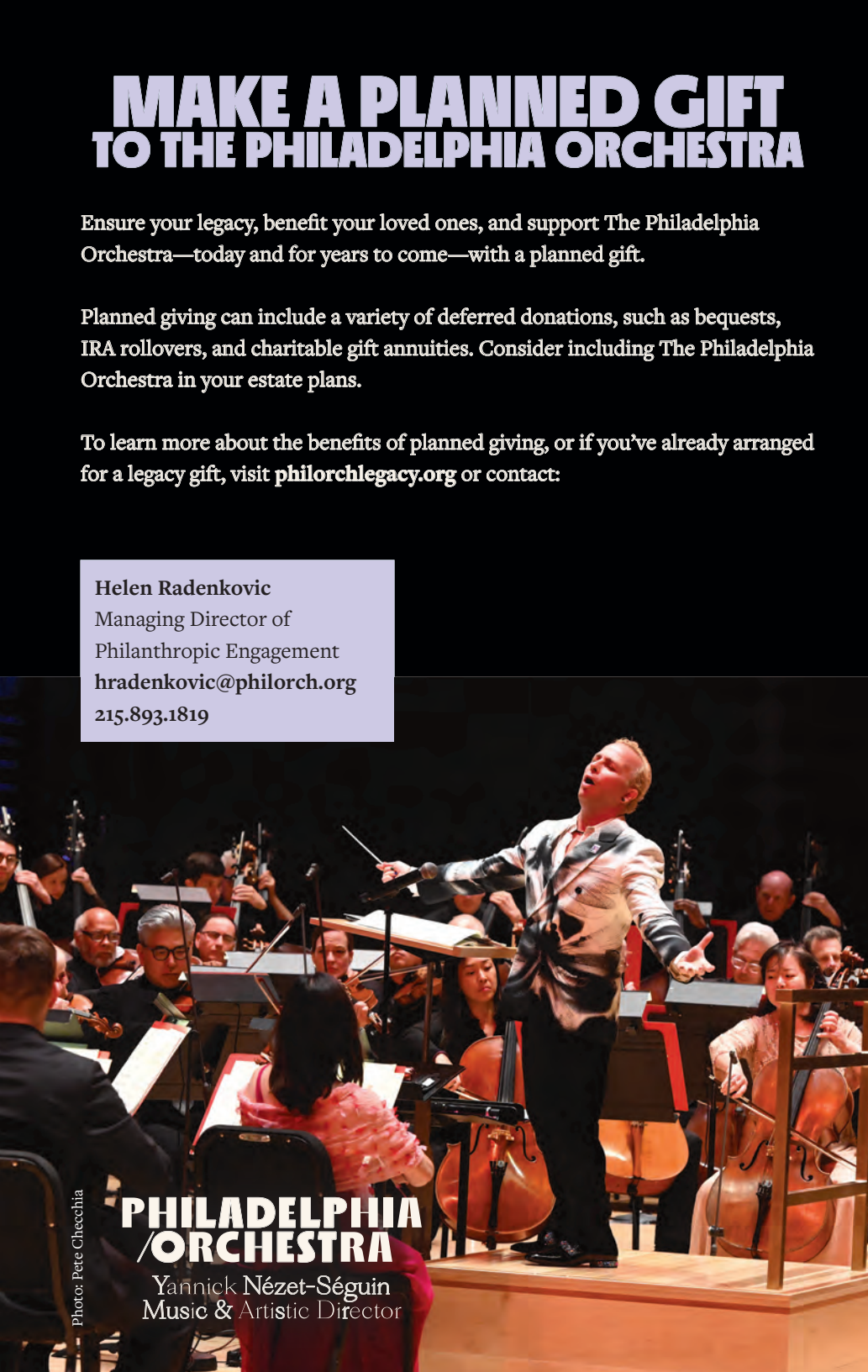
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