

# PHILADELPHIA /ORCHESTRA

Yannick Nézet-Séguin  
Music & Artistic Director

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## 2025–26 Season



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.

The Philadelphia Orchestra takes great pride in its hometown, performing for the people of Philadelphia year-round, at the Kimmel Center for the Performing Arts, throughout 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. Previously the Orchestra performed at the Academy of Music, a National Historic Landmark and the oldest continuously operating opera house in the nation. The Orchestra also performs for Philadelphia audiences during the summer months at the Highmark Mann Center for the Performing Arts, as well as in venues across the region. Many of these performances are part of the ensemble's educational and community initiatives, creating greater access to, and engagement with, classical music.

### **Artistic Leadership**

Yannick Nézet-Séguin is now in his 14th season with The Philadelphia Orchestra, serving as music and artistic director. He joins a remarkable list of music directors spanning the Orchestra's 125 seasons: Fritz Scheel, Carl Pohlig, Leopold Stokowski, Eugene Ormandy, Riccardo Muti, Wolfgang Sawallisch, and Christoph Eschenbach. Under this superb, forward-looking guidance, The Philadelphia Orchestra has represented an unwavering standard of excellence in the world of classical music—and continues to do so today.

Widely recognized for his consummate artistry, 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. His collaborative style, deeply rooted musical curiosity, and boundless enthusiasm, paired with a fresh approach to orchestral programming, have been heralded by critics and audiences alike. In addition to expanding the repertoire by embracing an ever-growing and diverse group of today's composers, Yannick and the Orchestra are dedicated to performing and recording the works of previously overlooked composers, including William Dawson, Louise Farrenc, Clara Schumann, Lili Boulanger, William Grant Still, and Florence Price. The Orchestra's recording of Price's First and Third symphonies on the Deutsche Grammophon label won a GRAMMY® Award and a Diapason d'or. Yannick and the Orchestra are also committed to commissioning new works that contribute to the future of classical music, an important part of the Orchestra's mission. Commissioned works throughout its history include Samuel Barber's *Toccata festiva*, Luciano Berio's *Epiphanies*, Krzysztof Penderecki's Piano Concerto ("Resurrection"), Jennifer Higdon's Concerto for Orchestra, Tan Dun's *Nu Shu: The Secret Songs of Women*, Valerie Coleman's *Umoja: Anthem for Unity*, Gabriela Lena Frank's *Picaflor: A Future Myth*, and John Adams's *The Rock You Stand On*.

### **An Ambassador at Home and Abroad**

The Philadelphia Orchestra believes deeply in the power of music to connect people and the role cultural diplomacy can play in affecting change. Through concerts, national and international tours, residencies, and recordings, the Orchestra is a global ambassador and one of our nation's greatest cultural exports. It performs annually at Carnegie Hall, the Saratoga Performing Arts Center in New York, and the Bravo! Vail Music Festival in Colorado.

The Orchestra also has a rich history of touring, having first performed outside Philadelphia four days after its inaugural concert in 1900. In 1973, The Philadelphia Orchestra became the first American orchestra to perform in the People's Republic of China, launching a now-five-decade commitment of people-to-people exchange through music.

### ***Building Philadelphia through Education and Community***

The Philadelphia Orchestra and Ensemble Arts's classical music, jazz, musical theater, and community engagement programs infuse the arts into the everyday lives of Philadelphians—on its stages, across neighborhoods, and in schools—so that every citizen sees themselves in the cultural life of our city.

The Orchestra's award-winning programs connect, uplift, and celebrate nearly 40,000 Philadelphians and 250 schools from diverse communities annually through inclusive arts education and vibrant engagement that reflect our city's voices and expand access to creative opportunities. Students, families, and other community members can enjoy free and discounted experiences with The Philadelphia Orchestra through programs such as the Jane H. Kesson School Concerts, Family Concerts, Open Rehearsals, PlayINs, and Our City, Your Orchestra community concerts. Additionally, the Orchestra's musicians, in their own dedicated roles as teachers, coaches, and mentors, serve a key role in cultivating young musician talent and a love of classical music through such programs as All City Fellowships, nurturing and celebrating the wealth of musicianship in the Philadelphia region.

The Orchestra also engages audiences more deeply through Free Educator Tickets, Student Circle for students ages 14+, and free PreConcert Conversations.

### ***A Trailblazer in Innovation and Collaboration***

The Philadelphia Orchestra has long pushed the boundaries of convention in the classical music realm, presenting the world or American premieres of such important works as Mahler's Symphony No. 8 ("Symphony of a Thousand"), Stravinsky's *The Rite of Spring*, Schoenberg's *Gurrelieder*, and Rachmaninoff's Symphonic Dances. The Orchestra made movie history by performing the soundtrack to Walt Disney's legendary animated film *Fantasia*, with Stokowski. The ensemble has also performed music that responds to issues of our time, such as Davóne Tines's *Sermon*, dedicated to the memory of Breonna Taylor; the world premiere of John Luther Adams's *Vespers of the Blessed Earth*, a response to humanity's impact on the Earth; and the world premiere of Robin Holcomb's *Paradise*, inspired by the catastrophic fire in and around Paradise, California, in 2018.

The Orchestra maintains a strong commitment to collaborations with cultural and community organizations on a regional and national level and has partnered with the Metropolitan Opera, digital artist Refik Anadol, Brian Sanders' JUNK, Philadelphia Ballet, the University of Michigan, FringeArts, Philadanco, Opera Philadelphia, the Curtis Institute of Music, and Ridge Theater Company, among many others.

The Orchestra returned to recording in 2013 under Yannick's leadership with a CD on the Deutsche Grammophon label of Stravinsky's *The Rite of Spring* and Leopold Stokowski transcriptions of works by Bach and Stravinsky. To date there have been an additional 14 releases, including Rachmaninoff's Rhapsody on a Theme of Paganini and all four piano concertos with pianist Daniil Trifonov; Bernstein's MASS; Mahler's Symphony No. 8; Florence Price's First and Third symphonies, which won a GRAMMY Award for Best Orchestral Performance; and Price's Fourth Symphony paired with William Dawson's *Negro Folk Symphony*. These continue the Orchestra's remarkable history in this area, having made its first recording in 1917 and amassing an enormous discography in the intervening years.

The Orchestra also makes live recordings available on popular digital music services such as Apple Music, Spotify, and Amazon, among others. Beginning in Yannick's inaugural season the Orchestra also returned

to the radio airwaves, with weekly broadcasts on WRTI-FM. In 2017 the Orchestra launched a national radio series on SiriusXM, making it the only American orchestra to provide exclusive content to SiriusXM on a regular basis.

These initiatives continue a legacy that boasts an extraordinary record of media firsts, including being the first symphonic orchestra to make electrical recordings (in 1925), the first to perform its own commercially sponsored radio broadcast (in 1929, on NBC), the first to perform on the soundtrack of a feature film (Paramount's *The Big Broadcast of 1937*), the first to appear on a national television broadcast (in 1948, on CBS), and the first major orchestra to give a live cybercast of a concert on the internet (in 1997).

For more information on The Philadelphia Orchestra, please visit [www.philorch.org](http://www.philorch.org).

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*Photo by Jeff Fusco*