

PHILADELPHIA ORCHESTRA

Yannick Nézet-Séguin
Music & Artistic Director

2026–27 SEASON OPENING NIGHT CELEBRATION

**Music and Artistic Director Yannick Nézet-Séguin
and The Philadelphia Orchestra present
Beethoven's Monumental Ninth Symphony
and United States Premiere of Composer-in-Residence
Joe Hisaishi's *Orbis***

**Starring American vocalists Leah Hawkins, J'Nai Bridges, Issachah Savage, and
Ryan Speedo Green, with the Philadelphia Symphonic Choir**

**The Philadelphia Orchestra Musicians and Music and Artistic Director Yannick
Nézet-Séguin Donate Services for the Opening Night Concert**

**September 24, 2026
MARIAN ANDERSON HALL, HOME OF THE PHILADELPHIA ORCHESTRA**

(*Philadelphia*, September 9, 2026)—The GRAMMY® Award-winning **Philadelphia Orchestra** and Music and Artistic Director **Yannick Nézet-Séguin** launch the Orchestra's 2026–27 season—Nézet-Séguin's 15th—on **Thursday, September 24, 2026, at 7:00 PM** in **Marian Anderson Hall** at the Kimmel Center for the Performing Arts with an exuberant **Opening Night Celebration** that sets the tone for a season of renewal and rediscovery. Tickets to the Opening Night concert are available at www.philorch.org or 215.893.1999. Information on purchasing benefactor packages for the Opening Night Celebration is available [here](#).

Coming off a landmark season celebrating its 125th anniversary, The Philadelphia Orchestra enters its next chapter as one of Philadelphia's great legacy institutions: homegrown, world-renowned, and continually refined by generations of extraordinary musicians from across the globe. The Opening Night program sets the stage for a season that honors the Orchestra's legacy while looking boldly toward its future.

Nézet-Séguin will lead the Orchestra, the Philadelphia Symphonic Choir, and some of the world's finest classical singers in a program that pairs Beethoven's groundbreaking Ninth Symphony—his final symphony, with its inspiring choral finale—with the United States premiere of Composer-in-Residence **Joe Hisaishi's *Orbis***, which places Beethoven and the famous "Ode to Joy" in a fresh context. Lending their soaring voices to the concert are soprano **Leah Hawkins**, mezzo-soprano **J'Nai Bridges**, tenor **Issachah Savage**, and bass-baritone **Ryan Speedo Green**.

The artists bring deep connections to Philadelphia and The Philadelphia Orchestra: Hawkins and Savage are Philadelphia natives, Bridges is a Curtis Institute of Music alumna and visiting faculty member, and all four have previously performed with the Orchestra. The Philadelphia

Symphonic Choir, created by The Philadelphia Orchestra to marry gifted and unique voices with the legendary “Philadelphia Sound,” celebrates its 10th anniversary this season.

“Opening our season with Beethoven’s iconic Ninth Symphony is a special way to begin this next chapter for The Philadelphia Orchestra. This is music that speaks across generations, and pairing it with Composer-in-Residence Joe Hisaishi’s *Orbis*, a work inspired by Beethoven and presented here for the first time in the United States, brings together a piece that has long been part of the Orchestra’s musical legacy with one that points toward its future,” said Nézet-Séguin. “With these remarkable musicians, we welcome audiences to share in the joy, connection, and artistry that is at the heart of this Orchestra. I can think of no better way to welcome audiences back to Marian Anderson Hall and begin my 15th season in Philadelphia.”

“Opening Night is an invitation to experience what makes The Philadelphia Orchestra so special: a world-renowned ensemble with deep roots in Philadelphia and a sound that could only have been shaped here,” said President and CEO **Ryan Fleur**. “The spirit of this Opening Night program reflects the Orchestra itself, celebrating rich traditions and welcoming new ideas and voices that are framing the sound of orchestral music. As the Orchestra begins its next 125 years, we are excited to welcome both longtime concertgoers and new audiences to experience this legacy and to be part of its future.”

Donors who contribute at benefactor levels to support Opening Night are invited to a pre-concert reception beginning at 5:30 PM in the Tier 2 Lounge at the Kimmel Center for the Performing Arts. Following the 7:00 PM concert, benefactors will enjoy a gala dinner in the Kimmel Center’s Commonwealth Plaza featuring the culinary talents of The Philadelphia Orchestra and Ensemble Arts’s official food and beverage provider, Rhubarb Hospitality Collection by Oak View Group (RHC).

The musicians of The Philadelphia Orchestra and Music and Artistic Director Yannick Nézet-Séguin are graciously donating their services for the Opening Night concert as a benefit for the Musicians’ Retirement Fund. This year’s Opening Night Celebration is organized under the direction of Opening Night Celebration Co-Chairs Robert Heim, Philadelphia Orchestra and Ensemble Arts Board member; Christian Gray, Philadelphia Orchestra bassist; and Irina Sipe, Volunteer Committee member; as well as The Philadelphia Orchestra and Ensemble Arts Board of Trustees and dedicated members of the Volunteer Committees.

This year marks the 40th season for which The Philadelphia Orchestra’s Volunteer Committees have presented the Opening Night festivities. The Volunteer Committees were formed in 1904 and served as the first permanent organization of its kind in the United States. Since its formation, the Volunteer Committees have come to serve as a model for similar groups in the United States and abroad. The current Volunteer Committees for The Philadelphia Orchestra include Central, Main Line, New Jersey, Rittenhouse Square, and Starlight Circle. Through their endeavors over the past century, thousands of members of the Volunteer Committees have given countless hours and innumerable talents in service to The Philadelphia Orchestra and the people of the greater Philadelphia region.

Opening Night

September 24 at 7:00 PM—Thursday evening—Marian Anderson Hall at the Kimmel Center for the Performing Arts

Yannick Nézet-Séguin Conductor
Leah Hawkins Soprano
J'Nai Bridges Mezzo-Soprano
Issachah Savage Tenor
Ryan Speedo Green Bass-Baritone
Philadelphia Symphonic Choir
Joe Miller Director

Hisaishi *Orbis*—United States Premiere
Beethoven Symphony No. 9 (“Choral”)

Beethoven’s mighty Ninth Symphony brings more beauty than it seems possible for the heart to hold, leaving the listener exalted and uplifted. Yannick conducts a soaring performance featuring some of today’s most virtuosic voices, culminating in the beloved “Ode to Joy.” Your evening begins with Joe Hisaishi’s *Orbis*, a choral work composed as a companion piece to Beethoven’s Ninth.

For tickets, visit www.philorch.org or call 215.893.1999.

**The Philadelphia Orchestra would like to extend sincere gratitude to the
2026 Opening Night Celebration Benefactors.**

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As of September 8, 2026

TD Bank is a Proud Sponsor of The Philadelphia Orchestra's 2026–27 Season.

Yannick Nézet-Séguin holds the Walter and Leonore Annenberg Chair.

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[About Yannick Nézet-Séguin](#)

[About the 2026–27 Season](#)

[Our Commitment to Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, and Access Strategies \(IDEAS\)](#)

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