PHILADELPHIA /ORCHESTRA

Yannick Nézet-Séguin
Music & Artistic Director

Charlotte Blake Alston

Imasogie Storyteller, Narrator, and Host

2026–27 Season



Charlotte Blake Alston is an internationally acclaimed storyteller, narrator, and librettist. In July 2021 she was named The Philadelphia Orchestra's Imasogie Storyteller, Narrator, and Host. She has appeared as host and narrator on the Orchestra's School and Family concerts since 1991 and was the host of Sound All Around, the Orchestra's preschool concert series, from 1994 to 2024. She has also appeared on each of the Orchestra's Martin Luther King, Jr., Tribute Concerts since 2003.

Committed to keeping alive African and African American oral traditions, Ms. Alston has performed on national and regional stages including the Smithsonian Institution, the National Museum of Women in the Arts, and the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts. She has been a featured artist at the National Storytelling Festival; the National Festival of Black Storytelling; and festivals in Ireland, Switzerland, South Africa, and Brazil. She has performed at Presidential inaugural festivities in Washington, D.C., and the Pennsylvania Gubernatorial Children's Inaugural Celebrations in Harrisburg. She was also one of two storytellers selected to present at the opening of the National Museum of African American History and Culture in Washington, D.C. She has been guest narrator for several orchestras including the Cleveland Orchestra, the Boston Symphony, and the Los Angeles Philharmonic. During a 20-year association with Carnegie Hall, she was the featured preconcert artist, host, and narrator on the Family, School, and Global Encounters concert series and represented the Hall in Miyazaki, Japan. She has also performed as a touring artist for Lincoln Center Institute.

Ms. Alston has produced several commissioned texts for orchestras and choirs including original narration for Saint-Saëns's *The Carnival of the Animals* and Rimsky-Korsakov's *Sheherazade.* Her honors include two honorary Ph.Ds, a Pew Fellowship in the Arts, and the Circle of Excellence Award from the National Storytelling Association. She is the recipient of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania's Artist of the Year Award and the Zora Neale Hurston Award, the highest award bestowed by the National Association of Black Storytellers. In 2023 she received the Distinguished Artist Award at the New Jersey Governor's Awards for Excellence in the Arts in Education. In May 2024 she was inducted into her alma mater South Philadelphia High School's Cultural Hall of Fame, joining the ranks of such artists as Marian Anderson.

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