2024–2025 | 125th Season Marian Anderson Hall

The Philadelphia Orchestra

Thursday, January 30, at 6:30

Orchestra After 5

Daniele Rustioni Conductor Naomi Woo Host Sopranos and Altos of the Philadelphia Symphonic Choir Amanda Quist Director

Holst The Planets, Op. 32

- I. Mars, the Bringer of War
- II. Venus, the Bringer of Peace
- III. Mercury, the Winged Messenger
- IV. Jupiter, the Bringer of Jollity
- V. Saturn, the Bringer of Old Age
- VI. Uranus, the Magician
- VII. Neptune, the Mystic

This program runs approximately 60 minutes and will be performed without an intermission.

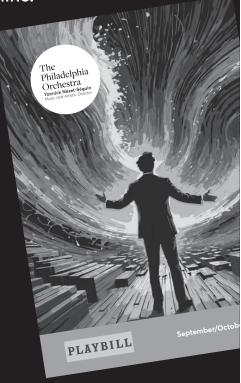
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ThePhiladelphiaOrchestra

Yannick Nézet-Séguin Music and Artistic Director



The Philadelphia Orchestra

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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.

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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 Partnership Program and School Ensemble Program; All-City Orchestra Fellowships; and residency work in Philadelphia and abroad.

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Conductor



Conductor **Daniele Rustioni** is a major presence at leading opera houses and symphony orchestras. In 2022 the International Opera Awards named him "Best Conductor." His opera repertoire numbers over 70 works spanning centuries and ranging from Italian to French, German to Russian, and more. Now in his eighth season as music director of the Opéra National de Lyon, he concludes his tenure in summer 2025. He was principal quest conductor of the Bavarian State Opera until

October 2023, a position created especially for him. He has led performances at nearly all of the most important international opera houses and festivals, including the Aix-en-Provence Festival, the BBC Proms, the Berlin State Opera, Dutch National Opera, Paris Opera, the Royal Opera House, the Salzburg Festival, the Teatro Real in Madrid, Zurich Opera, and the Teatro alla Scala. In Italy, his homeland, he has also conducted at Rome Opera, the Teatro del Maggio Musicale Fiorentino, the Teatro La Fenice, the Teatro San Carlo, and the Rossini Opera Festival. In addition to opera and symphonic concerts, he and the Opéra National de Lyon give regular performances at the Théâtre des Champs-Élysées in Paris as well as at the Aix-en-Provence Festival. He opened the company's 2024–25 season with a new production of Berg's Wozzeck. In July 2024 he received the Chevalier des Arts et des Lettres from the French Republic.

The Metropolitan Opera has been an important part of Mr. Rustioni's artistic life since his debut in 2017 with Verdi's Aida. In November 2024 he was appointed the third principal guest conductor of the legendary opera house beginning with the 2025–26 season, following the footsteps of his predecessors Valery Gergiev and Fabio Luisi. He has led performances of Bizet's Carmen, Verdi's Rigoletto and Falstaff, and Mozart's The Marriage of Figaro. He made his Carnegie Hall debut with the Met Orchestra in February 2023.

Mr. Rustioni made his Philadelphia Orchestra debut in 2022. In addition to these current performances, highlights of his 2024–25 season include debuts with the London, Detroit, and San Diego symphonies; the Philharmonia Orchestra; the Philharmonie de Luxembourg; and the New York Philharmonic. He also returns to the Pittsburgh and Danish National symphonies, the Orchestra dell'Accademia Nazionale di Santa Cecilia, and the Orchestra Sinfonica Nazionale della RAI, among others. His most recent recording was mezzo-soprano Aigul Akhmetshina's debut album on Decca. His discography also includes releases on Deutsche Grammophon, Naxos, Opera Rara, and Sony Classical. Mr. Rustioni began his career in 1993 as a member of Teatro alla Scala's children's chorus. He resides in London with his wife, violinist Francesca Dego, and their daughter.

Host



Canadian conductor and pianist **Naomi Woo** is a widely sought-after symphonic and operatic conductor and educator. Assistant conductor of The Philadelphia Orchestra, where her duties include assisting Music and Artistic Director Yannick Nézet-Séguin as well as other guest conductors and leading the Orchestra in select concerts, she is also music director of NYO Canada and artistic partner of the Orchestre Métropolitain in Montreal. In the 2024–25 season, Ms. Woo makes

debuts with The Philadelphia Orchestra, London's Philharmonia Orchestra, the Edmonton Symphony, the Luxembourg Chamber Orchestra, and the Royal Conservatory Orchestra in Toronto. Return engagements include the Toronto Symphony, the Calgary Philharmonic, the Vancouver Symphony, and the Orchestre Métropolitain. Highlights of her 2023–24 season included her first tour and recordings with NYO Canada; conducting engagements with the Orchestre Métropolitain, the Montreal Symphony, the Toronto Symphony, the Vancouver Symphony, the National Arts Center Orchestra in Ottawa, and the Chautauqua Symphony; and leading opera productions with English Touring Opera and Opera Holland Park in the United Kingdom.

Ms. Woo's previous season engagements include the National Arts Centre Orchestra, the Calgary Philharmonic, the Ann Arbor Symphony, Orchestra NOW (New York), the Kitchener-Waterloo Symphony, and Regina Symphony, and her debut at LSO St. Luke's in London with the ensemble Tangram Sound. She was assistant conductor of the Winnipeg Symphony from 2019 to 2023 and appeared with that orchestra on multiple occasions. On the opera stage, she has conducted the Canadian premiere of Du Yun's Pulitzer Prize—winning Angel's Bone in Vancouver and the world premiere of Ellis Ludwig-Leone's The Night Falls in New York City. In 2022 she assisted in the world premiere of Oliver Leith's Last Days at the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden, and returned to assist Thomas Adès with the same work for its United States premiere with the Los Angeles Philharmonic.

The 2022 winner of the Canada Council's prestigious Virginia Parker Prize, Ms. Woo is a member of Tapestry Opera's Women in Musical Leadership program and was chosen by her mentor, Yannick Nézet-Séguin, as a member of the Orchestre Métropolitain's inaugural orchestral conducting academy. She holds a Ph.D. from the University of Cambridge, where she was a Gates Cambridge Scholar. She also studied mathematics, philosophy, and music at Yale College, the Yale School of Music, and the University of Montreal.

Choir



The Philadelphia Symphonic Choir made its debut in December 2016, performing in three programs with The Philadelphia Orchestra that season. Consisting of talented vocalists auditioned from around the country, the ensemble was created to marry gifted and unique voices of Philadelphia and beyond with the legendary Philadelphia Sound. Performance highlights with the Orchestra include the world premiere of the concert version of Kevin Puts's opera *The Hours* and Beethoven's

Missa solemnis in Philadelphia and at Carnegie Hall. The ensemble has also sung in performances of Haydn's *The Seasons*, Puccini's *Tosca*, Bernstein's Symphony No. 3 ("Kaddish"), Rossini's Stabat Mater, Bruckner's "Christus factus est" and Te Deum, Brahms's A German Requiem, and Mozart's Requiem, as well as holiday performances of Menotti's *Amahl and the Night Visitors* and multiple season performances of Handel's Messiah.

The sopranos and altos of the Philadelphia Symphonic Choir are directed by Amanda Quist, director of choral activities for Western Michigan University. She has collaborated in choral preparations with The Philadelphia Orchestra, the New York Philharmonic, the New World Symphony, the Dresden Staatskapelle, Seraphic Fire, and the Spoleto Festival. Her early music ensemble, Westminster Kantorei, was awarded the American Prize for excellence in choral performance in 2018. Her choirs have received invitations to perform for the American Choral Directors Association's conferences, the Boston Early Music Festival, and Interkultur. Her recording, *Lumina*, is distributed by Naxos. She previously served as director of choral activities for the Frost School of Music at the University of Miami and as associate professor and chair of the conducting department at Westminster Choir College.

The Philadelphia Symphonic Choir joined The Philadelphia Orchestra earlier this season for performances of Mahler's Symphony No. 3 and Handel's *Messiah* with Yannick Nézet-Séguin and Verdi's Requiem with Riccardo Muti. The choir returns later this season for Beethoven's Symphony No. 9 and Wagner's *Tristan and Isolde* with Yannick Nézet-Séguin. Last season marked the premiere of the film *Maestro*, a collaboration with Bradley Cooper and Netflix featuring the Philadelphia Symphonic Choir and the music of Leonard Bernstein. The movie received a Best Picture nomination for the Academy Awards. Music from the film has been released on Deutsche Grammophon. The American Guild of Musical Artists, AFL-CIO, the union of professional singers, dancers, and production personnel in opera, ballet, and concert, represents the choral artists in these performances.

Philadelphia Symphonic Choir Amanda Quist Director

Sopranos

Elise Brancheau Katharine Burns Lily Carmichael

Lily Carmichael Ting-Ting Chang Abigail Chapman Lauren Cohen Jackie Dunleavy Natalie Esler Alexandra Gilliam

Jina Jang

Colleen Kinderman Rachael Lipson Mary McCormick Jessica Moreno Jorie Moss Christine Nass Luciana Piovan Olivia Prendergast

Rexxi

Sophia Santiago

Altos

Tanisha Anderson Katie Brown

Lori Cummines-Huck

Cat Dean
Rachel DiBlasio
Calli Graver
Alyson Harvey
Amber Johnson
Jessica Kerler
Madeleine Mackin
Kimberly Martinez
Meghan McGinty
Sarah Michal
Heather Mitchell

Elisabeth Kotzakidou Pace

Rebecca Roy Sarah Sensenig Cecelia Snow Kaitlyn Tierney

Natasha Nelson

Framing the Program

Parallel Events

1916 HolstThe Planets

Music Prokofiev Symphony No. 1

Literature

Joyce Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man

ArtMatisse
The Three Sisters

History Easter Rebellion in Dublin The reputation of the English composer Gustav Holst rests primarily on his brilliant orchestral suite *The Planets*, which he began writing on the eve of the First World War. Cast in seven movements (Earth is not included and Pluto was not yet discovered), Holst's stated goal was to represent "the character" and "the astrological significance of the planets." The movements name gods and an associated quality, mood, or activity, starting with "Mars, the Bringer of War" and ending with "Neptune, the Mystic."

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Photos: Allie Ippolito, Jessica Griffin, Jeff Fusco, Pete Checchia

The Music

The Planets

Gustav Holst Born in Cheltenham, England, September 21, 1874 Died in London, May 25, 1934



During the first half of the 20th century, Great Britain was blessed with at least five marvelous composers, of whom Edward Elgar and Ralph Vaughan Williams have become a regular part of our concert life—albeit through a mere handful of works—and Frederick Delius and Arnold Bax are perhaps not far behind in making inroads here. But no British master is known through fewer works than Gustav Holst, who despite a large and excellent output remains for most listeners the

composer of a single composition: his popular and influential *The Planets*, which continues to make its mark today in everything from television to *Star Wars*.

Born in Cheltenham, England, of Swedish, German, and English parentage, Gustavus "von Holst" received his schooling at the Royal College of Music, where he studied harmony and counterpoint with Charles Villiers Stanford. A severe case of neuritis forced him to give up his ambition of becoming a pianist, and he subsequently took an interest in composition. Later he studied trombone and played in the Carl Rosa Opera Company, which proved to be extremely valuable experience for his experiments in orchestral composition. Some have cited his travels in the Far East as being partly responsible for Holst's streak of mysticism, which colors a number of his works. He was an impressive scholar of languages and learned enough Sanskrit to set parts of the *Rig Veda* to music.

In any case, it appears that it was partly the astrological significance of heavenly bodies that first sparked the composer's idea to forge a set of orchestral tone poems to reflect the character of each planet. He began the cycle that became *The Planets* in 1914, just before the first shots of World War I were sounding in Sarajevo.

A Non-Programmatic Work The hardships of the war years slowed the work on this unprecedented composition—which took two years to finish—and appear to have influenced the outcome as well. *The Planets* was completed in 1916 and was first presented in a private performance in London on September 29, 1918, under Adrian Boult's baton. The public premiere was not until after the war, on November 15, 1920, with Albert Coates conducting.

There are seven movements, each with a distinctive musical character that seems to relate both to the god for which the planet is named and to the quality, mood, or activity that this god has come to represent. (Earth is not represented in *The Planets*, and although Pluto's existence had been "theorized" as early as 1919, it wasn't actually discovered until 1930.) To the very end Holst insisted that his goal in this concert favorite was to represent "the character ... the astrological significance of the planets," and that the pieces had no further extramusical meaning. "There is no program music in them," he said, "neither have they any connection with the deities of classical mythology bearing the same names. If any guide to the music is required, the subtitle to each piece will be found sufficient, especially if it be used in a broad sense."

Partly, Holst's insistence that these works were only "suggested" by astrological concepts was the composer's way of keeping *The Planets* from becoming ludicrously sentimental or programmatic. Indeed, one can easily listen to this work as a marvelous symphony, without giving a thought to gods or heavenly bodies, and still derive meaning and pleasure from the music's sheer sonic vitality.

A Closer Look But it's more fun, perhaps, to listen for programmatic ties. "Mars, the Bringer of War," for example, might well be about the god Mars—but since this god represents war anyway, there is really no way to separate the war-god Mars from the overtly "martial" character that the planet has come to embody. In fact, Holst himself said, on another occasion, that he was seeking here to express "the stupidity of war." The piece is not a "march" per se, but it does contain something of the relentless gunfire and violence of the battlefield. Its resemblance to John Williams's Star Wars music is hardly coincidental, for music such as this plainly formed one of that composer's most potent influences.

Holst's daughter, Imogen, would later greet speculation about the work's programmatic nature—especially the notion that it was some sort of statement on World War I—with a caveat, pointing out that "Mars" was completed in 1914, before the war had begun. "It would be easy to take it for granted that 'Mars' had been commissioned as background music for a documentary film of a tank battle. But Holst had never heard a machine gun when he wrote it, and the tank had not yet been invented."

In grave contrast, **"Venus, the Bringer of Peace"** is a lyric love song, not unlike the goddess for whom this most tranquil of planets was named. **"Mercury, the Winged Messenger"** is a fleet scherzo that conveys the volatile nature of both god and planet.

"Jupiter, the Bringer of Jollity" is less about the imposing nature of this god—and this most mysterious of planets—than about what Holst called the spirit of "one of those jolly fat people who enjoy life." Clearly this Jupiter is more Falstaff than Zeus. A contrasting middle section employs a broad-limbed and rather innocently constructed tune that was later adapted to a sentimental patriotic

hymn, "I Vow to Thee, My Country."

"Saturn, the Bringer of Old Age" is a ghostly funeral-march that reminds us of the forceful vision of old age and destiny. **"Uranus, the Magician,"** forceful but mystical (and more than a bit like Paul Dukas's *The Sorcerer's Apprentice*), stands as one of the most skillful uses of the modern orchestra of the era.

"Neptune, the Mystic" brings the work to a puzzling yet deliciously lyrical close; again, the textures of more recent film scores seem to have been derived from this piece. Some have claimed also to hear the influence of Debussian evocations of "Neptune's realm"—such as the "Sirens" movement from Nocturnes (which also features a wordless women's choir), and of course *La Mer*, a work whose influence could hardly be avoided in the first half of this century.

—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.

The Planets was composed from 1914 to 1916.

Leopold Stokowski presented the first Philadelphia Orchestra performances of The Planets in November 1934, just six months after Holst's death. The Women's Glee Club of the University of Pennsylvania collaborated in the "Neptune" movement. The Planets was most recently heard on subscription in November 2022, with Marin Alsop leading sopranos and altos from the Philadelphia Symphonic Choir.

The Orchestra recorded the work with Eugene Ormandy and women of the Mendelssohn Club in 1975 for RCA.

The Planets is scored for an orchestra of four flutes (III doubling piccolo I, IV doubling alto flute and piccolo II), three oboes (III doubling bass oboe), English horn, three clarinets, bass clarinet, three bassoons, contrabassoon, six horns, four trumpets, three trombones, tenor and bass tuba, timpani, percussion (bass drum, chimes, cymbals, glockenspiel, gong, orchestra bells, snare drum, tambourine, triangle, xylophone), two harps, celesta, organ, strings, and women's chorus.

The work runs approximately 50 minutes in performance.



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Musical Terms

Cadence: The conclusion to a phrase, movement, or piece based on a recognizable melodic formula, harmonic progression, or dissonance resolution

Chord: The simultaneous sounding of three or more tones

Dissonance: A combination of two or more tones requiring resolution

Dynamics: The varying and contrasting degrees of loudness

Harmonic: Pertaining to chords and to the theory and practice of harmony Harmony: The combination of simultaneously sounded musical notes to produce chords and chord progressions

Intonation: The treatment of musical pitch in performance

Legato: Smooth, even, without any break between notes

Meter: The symmetrical grouping of musical rhythms

Minuet: A dance in triple time commonly used up to the beginning of the 19th century as the lightest movement of a symphony

Nocturne: A piece of a dreamily romantic or sentimental character, without a fixed form

Op.: Abbreviation for opus, a term used to indicate the chronological position of a composition within a composer's output. Opus numbers are not always reliable because they are often applied in the order of publication rather than composition.

Polyphony: A term used to designate music in more than one part and the style in which all or several of the musical parts move to some extent independently

Scherzo: Literally "a joke." Usually the third movement of symphonies and quartets that was introduced by Beethoven to replace the minuet. The scherzo is followed by a gentler section called a trio, after which the scherzo is repeated. Its characteristics are a rapid tempo, vigorous rhythm, and humorous contrasts. Also an instrumental piece of a light, piquant, humorous character.

Sonority: Resonance, tone quality **Timbre:** Tone color or tone quality **Tonality:** The orientation of melodies and harmonies toward a specific pitch or pitches

Tone poem: A type of 19th-century symphonic piece in one movement, which is based upon an extramusical idea, either poetic or descriptive

Tutti: All: full orchestra

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