

2025–2026 | 126th Season
Marian Anderson Hall

The Philadelphia Orchestra

Friday, October 3, at 2:00

Saturday, October 4, at 8:00

Sunday, October 5, at 2:00

Marin Alsop Conductor

Yunchan Lim Piano

Adams *The Rock You Stand On*

World premiere—co-commissioned by Yannick Nézet-Séguin and The Philadelphia Orchestra

Bartók Piano Concerto No. 3 / 

I. Allegretto

II. Adagio religioso—Poco più mosso—Tempo I—

III. Allegro vivace—Presto—Tempo I

Intermission

Prokofiev Selections from *Romeo and Juliet*, Op. 64

1. Montagues and Capulets
2. A Scene
3. Morning Dance
4. The Young Juliet
5. Masks
6. Friar Laurence
7. Dance
8. The Death of Tybalt
9. Dance of the Antilles Girls
10. Morning Serenade (Aubade)
11. Romeo at Juliet's Tomb
12. The Death of Juliet

This program runs approximately 2 hours.

/  designates a work that was given its world or United States premiere by The Philadelphia Orchestra, part of the Orchestra's 125th anniversary celebration.

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. 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 14th 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 esteemed 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, 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. The Orchestra's award-winning education and community 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.

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 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.

Under Yannick's leadership, the Orchestra returned to recording with 15 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.

Principal Guest Conductor



Q&A Photo

One of the foremost conductors of our time, **Marin Alsop** is principal guest conductor of The Philadelphia Orchestra, with which she made her debut in 1990. She is the first woman to serve as the head of major orchestras in the United States, South America, Austria, and Great Britain. She is also the first and only conductor to receive a MacArthur Fellowship. This season marks her third as artistic director and chief conductor of the Polish National Radio Symphony and her third as principal guest conductor of London's Philharmonia. She is

also chief conductor of the Ravinia Festival and the first music director of the National Orchestral Institute + Festival at the University of Maryland. She served as chief conductor of the ORF Vienna Radio Symphony from 2019 to 2025; she is now honorary conductor. Season highlights include her five-concert Carnegie Hall Perspectives series, Washington National Opera's new production of Bernstein's *West Side Story*, and a tour to Japan with the Polish National Radio Symphony. She also conducts the Chicago, Dallas, Houston, and ORF Vienna Radio symphonies; the Deutsches Symphonie-Orchester Berlin; and London's Philharmonia. Last season, she became the first United States-born woman to conduct the Berlin Philharmonic.

In 2021 Ms. Alsop assumed the title of music director laureate and OrchKids founder of the Baltimore Symphony. During her 14-year tenure as its music director, she led the orchestra on its first European tour in 13 years, released multiple award-winning recordings, and conducted more than two dozen world premieres, as well as founding OrchKids, its groundbreaking music education program for Baltimore's most disadvantaged youth. In 2019, after seven years as music director, she became conductor of honor of Brazil's São Paulo Symphony. Deeply committed to new music, she was music director of California's Cabrillo Festival of Contemporary Music for 25 years, leading 174 premieres.

Recognized with *BBC Music Magazine's* "Album of the Year" and Emmy nominations in addition to GRAMMY, Classical BRIT, and *Gramophone* awards, Ms. Alsop's discography comprises more than 200 titles on the Decca, Harmonia Mundi, Sony Classical, Naxos, Pentatone, and LSO labels. Among her many awards and academic positions are the 2025 Golden Baton Award, the highest accolade conferred by the League of American Orchestras; the 2019 World Economic Forum's Crystal Award; the 2021–22 Harman/Eisner Artist-in-Residence of the Aspen Institute Arts Program; and the 2020 artist-in-residence at Vienna's University of Music and Performing Arts. She is currently director of graduate conducting at the Johns Hopkins University's Peabody Institute. She holds honorary doctorates from Yale University, Johns Hopkins University, and the Juilliard School. To promote and nurture the careers of her fellow women conductors, Ms. Alsop founded the Taki Alsop Conducting Fellowship in 2002. *The Conductor*, an Emmy-nominated feature documentary about her life, debuted at New York's 2021 Tribeca Film Festival.

Soloist



James Hole

Yunchan Lim makes his Philadelphia Orchestra debut with these performances. Since becoming the youngest person ever to win gold at the Van Cliburn International Piano Competition at the age of 18 in 2022, his ascent to international stardom has been meteoric. He has made orchestral debuts with the New York, Los Angeles, Munich, Tokyo, and Seoul philharmonics; the Chicago, Lucerne, BBC, and Boston symphonies; and the Orchestre Philharmonique de Radio France, among others. Recital appearances have included Carnegie Hall, the Verbier Festival, Wigmore Hall, the Concertgebouw, and Suntory Hall. He regularly works with conductors such as Marin Alsop, Myung-Whun Chung, Gustavo Dudamel, James Gaffigan, Paavo Järvi, Cristian Măcelaru, Klaus Mäkelä, Gianandrea Noseda, Antonio Pappano, Matthias Pintscher, Tugan Sokhiev, Thomas Søndergård, Jaap van Zweden, and Kazuki Yamada.

In addition to these current performances, highlights of Mr. Lim's 2025–26 season include debuts with the Staatskapelle Dresden, the Orchestra dell'Accademia Nazionale di Santa Cecilia, and the Royal Concertgebouw and Gewandhaus orchestras and returns to the New York and Los Angeles philharmonics, the Boston and Chicago symphonies, and the Orchestre de Paris. He will be heard in recital in Los Angeles, Chicago, Boston, and at Carnegie Hall and Wigmore Hall. As an exclusive Decca Classics recording artist, his acclaimed debut studio album, *Chopin Études Opp. 10 & 25*, has gone triple platinum in South Korea and topped the classical charts around the world. The album won a 2024 *Gramophone* Award in the piano category and Mr. Lim was named Young Artist of the Year. He also received a prestigious Diapason d'Or and was nominated for an Opus Klassik. He made history winning three awards at the *BBC Music Magazine* Awards, including Recording of the Year. His other Decca releases include his momentous performance of Rachmaninoff's Piano Concerto No. 3, live from the Cliburn Competition, and Tchaikovsky's *The Seasons*. Previous releases include his award-winning Cliburn performance of Liszt's *Transcendental Études* (Steinway & Sons), Beethoven's Piano Concerto No. 5 (Universal Music Group), and his appearance on KBS's 2020 *Young Musicians of Korea* album. Since January 2024 he has been an Apple Music Classical Global Ambassador.

Born in Siheung, Korea, Mr. Lim began piano lessons at age seven. He entered the Music Academy of the Seoul Arts Center the next year and at age 13 met his teacher and mentor, Minsoo Sohn. A year later, in 2018, he captured international attention when he won both Second Prize and the Chopin Special Award in his first competition: the Cleveland International Piano Competition for Young Artists. That same year, he won both the Third and Audience prizes at the Cooper International Competition, which also provided him the opportunity to perform with the Cleveland Orchestra. He is currently studying at the New England Conservatory of Music with Mr. Sohn.

Framing the Program

Parallel Events

1935

Prokofiev

Romeo and Juliet

Music

Orff

Carmina burana

Literature

Steinbeck

Tortilla Flat

Art

Dalí

Giraffe on Fire

History

Roosevelt signs

Social Security

Act

1945

Bartók

Piano Concerto

No. 3

Music

Strauss

Metamorphosen

Literature

Orwell

Animal Farm

Art

Moore

Family Group

History

WWII:

Surrender of

Germany

What better way to begin The Philadelphia Orchestra's 125th anniversary celebration than by co-commissioning and giving the world premiere of a new work by the eminent American composer John Adams? Adams wrote *The Rock You Stand On* as a gift for Marin Alsop, one of his closest collaborators and the Orchestra's principal guest conductor. Adams remarks that the title "is not meant to suggest anything other than perhaps hinting at the qualities—loyalty, determination, devotion—that make Marin Alsop so very special to me."

Béla Bartók fled his native Hungary during the Second World War and settled in America, where he died of leukemia in September 1945. He had nearly completed his Third Piano Concerto, written as a birthday gift for his pianist wife. Philadelphia Orchestra violist Tibor Serly orchestrated the final 17 measures of the Concerto and the Orchestra gave its world premiere in 1946.

Sergei Prokofiev's brilliant ballet *Romeo and Juliet* premiered in 1938, two years after the composer returned to the Soviet Union following nearly two decades living in America and Western Europe. He made three different concert suites for independent orchestral performance, from which we hear a prime selection today.

The Philadelphia Orchestra is the only orchestra in the world with three weekly broadcasts on SiriusXM's *Symphony Hall*, Channel 76, on Mondays at 7 PM, Thursdays at 12 AM, and Saturdays at 4 PM.

The Music

The Rock You Stand On

John Adams

Born in Worcester, Massachusetts, February 15, 1947

Now living in Berkeley, California

Deborah O'Grady



Listening to John Adams often feels like stepping into a drama already in motion. His scores unfold with a sense of live action—bursts of rhythm, collisions of sonority, sudden shifts of focus—propelling the ear through landscapes that flare into brilliance before swerving in unexpected directions. At once inventive and unmistakable, his voice has been continually evolving throughout his career, shaping drama and energy into new forms—in the concert hall and opera house alike.

The Rock You Stand On was written as a gift for Marin Alsop, one of Adams's closest collaborators and a musician with whom he shares an unusual rapport. "She is one of the very few conductors whom I can trust to do the right thing with what I've written," he remarks. "She knows what I want. She understands it—she 'gets it.'" He adds that, beyond her musical insight, "as a person, she embodies inner strength and calm and generosity, qualities that have helped her endure the long and sometimes difficult course of her career, an odyssey that has taken her to where she is now—the indisputable model for a new generation of women conductors."

Alsop has long been an advocate for Adams, introducing his music at festivals, on recordings, and with major orchestras worldwide. Her advocacy has ranged from early performances at the Cabrillo Festival and with the Baltimore Symphony to major milestones such as the Metropolitan Opera's 2024 company premiere of *El Niño*—which also marked Alsop's own debut at the Met.

That history sets the stage for The Philadelphia Orchestra's world premiere in this program. In his new concert opener, Adams responds to Alsop's musical personality with a score of jolts and surges that flare into powerful orchestral eruptions. The composer notes: "The title, *The Rock You Stand On*, is non-specific and is not meant to suggest anything other than perhaps hinting at the qualities—loyalty, determination, devotion—that make Marin Alsop so very special to me."

An Evolving Language One of the most striking aspects of Adams's output is the way it both connects across decades and suddenly swerves into new territory. Each new piece seems to reinvent the form for its specific context or challenge: cross-references abound, but Adams resists the formulaic. His concertos, for example, have never followed a single model, but instead rethink the genre each time around.

The same is true of the compact orchestral opener. Adams has often returned to the genre as a kind of laboratory, reinventing it with each commission and infusing it with ideas recently—or even simultaneously—explored in larger-scale operas or orchestral works. *Short Ride in a Fast Machine* (1986)—a work Alsop has conducted to wide visibility at the BBC Proms—hurtles forward on the relentless tick of a woodblock, exhilarating in its Minimalist motoric drive. *Lollapalooza* (1995) takes a different tack, with punkishly syncopated accents that give the piece a swaggering, irreverent character. The much more recent *I Still Dance* (2019), written for Michael Tilson Thomas, layers buoyant syncopations into a jazzy celebration, with a prominent solo piano part adding a bright, percussive edge to the orchestral texture.

The Rock You Stand On joins this lineage while striking out in its own direction—volatile, angular, and closer in spirit to the layered rhythmic crosscurrents of Adams's most recent opera, *Antony and Cleopatra* (2022), an expansive setting of Shakespeare's tragedy, than to the sleek propulsion of *Short Ride*.

A Closer Look For all its large, quasi-Straussian orchestral forces, *The Rock You Stand On* often sounds surprisingly taut and transparent. Adams works with spare textures: rhythmic cells tossed between instrumental groups, sharp registral separation, and sudden unisons that give the music a clean, chiseled profile. What propels the piece is a dense layering of rhythms, with multiple pulses unfolding and colliding at once.

Equally distinctive is the way Adams constantly interrupts momentum. Abrupt pauses and silences slice into the flow, creating a sense of stop-and-start animation. Just as the ear begins to settle into a groove, the music halts, pivots, and springs off in another direction. The syncopated shocks that punctuate these shifts recall Stravinsky's rhythmic punches—not a steady motor but a series of unpredictable ruptures. The effect is paradoxical: fragmented enough to feel unsettling, yet brimming with energy that makes the piece exhilarating to hear. In this volatility one can sense the persistence and resilience Adams associates with Alsop, qualities he invoked in describing the piece's title.

Adams notes that “there is a certain ‘big band’ quality to the ensemble writing, with the full orchestra at times executing irregular, bouncing figurations that are driven by an underlying jazz-inflected pulse.” Brass chords crash in with irregular riffs, while percussion, celesta, and harp flash bright details across the texture, turning the full orchestra into a kind of outsized rhythm section. The sonic restlessness produces a sense of shifting ground beneath the listener's feet—one tectonic shift at a time.

At times, the writing seems to reach back into musical memory. Descending fragments in the minor recall the stormy DNA of the opening theme of Beethoven's Ninth Symphony. Near the close, the entire orchestra surges in contrary motion, swelling simultaneously upward and downward in a thrilling sonic spread reminiscent of the famous THX “Deep Note,” the cinematic sound logo that expands from a single pitch into a vast surround-sound chord. The final stroke is as enigmatic as it is decisive: a tam-tam crash immediately muted, its resonance abruptly cut off, leaving the audience suspended in silence.

Thomas May is a writer, critic, educator, and translator whose work appears in the New York Times, Gramophone, Strings magazine, and other publications. The Lucerne Festival's English-language editor, he is also the U.S. correspondent for the Strad and program annotator for the Los Angeles Master Chorale and the Ojai Festival.

The Rock You Stand On was composed in 2024.

These are the world-premiere performances of the piece.

The score calls for three flutes (III doubling piccolo), two oboes, English horn, clarinet in E-flat, two clarinets in B-flat (II doubling clarinet in A), bass clarinet, two bassoons, contrabassoon, four horns, three trumpets, three trombones, tuba, timpani, percussion (bass drum, chimes, tam-tam, vibraphone, xylophone), harp, piano, celesta, and strings.

Performance time is approximately 10 minutes.

The Music

Piano Concerto No. 3

Béla Bartók

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

Died in New York City, September 26, 1945



Béla Bartók wrote his first two piano concertos for himself and played the solo parts of both works at their premieres. The Third Concerto, which he composed in the United States, was intended for his second wife, the pianist Ditta Pasztory Bartók. Suffering from the illness that would soon claim his life, Bartók was thinking of giving Ditta a vehicle that could provide her with some income after his death.

A Light and Graceful Work We can find no trace of such gloomy thoughts in the Concerto itself. The work's tone

is lyrical and graceful throughout, the structure is of Mozartian clarity, and the whole composition is characterized by a lightness of touch that is rare in Bartók. Some critics have interpreted this stylistic change as a concession made to a conservative American public, but in fact, Bartók's evolution toward a warmer and more melodic style had begun almost a decade earlier with such pre-emigration works as the Second Violin Concerto and the *Divertimento* for Strings. At 64, dying of leukemia, Bartók was obviously not the same composer who had written *Allegro barbaro* or *The Miraculous Mandarin* in his younger years.

Yet the stylistic continuity between the earlier and the later Bartók is unbroken. Melodic and rhythmic elements derived from folk music are present in the Third Piano Concerto as much as they are in his earlier works, and the famous “nocturnal noises” in the Concerto's second movement belong to a group of “night musics” that Bartók had been writing since 1926, when he composed “Night Music” as the fourth movement of his piano suite *Out of Doors*.

A Closer Look The Third Concerto opens with a peaceful theme (**Allegretto**) played by the pianist with both hands in unison against a rocking accompaniment in the strings. Bartók adheres to traditional sonata form with a scherzando (playful) second theme, an expansive—though relatively short—development section, and a regular recapitulation.

The second-movement **Adagio religioso** is Bartók's personal response to the slow movement of Beethoven's String Quartet No. 15 in A minor, Op. 132, titled by Beethoven “Holy Song of Thanksgiving of a Convalescent to the Deity in the Lydian Mode.” A quiet chorale melody, played by the piano, is surrounded by solemn interludes on the strings. Then suddenly the tempo becomes faster and eerie noises begin to appear. The music seems to imitate insects buzzing and birds chirping; the noises rise from a mysterious pianissimo to a full forte with the strong voices of the trumpet and xylophone joining

with the more and more elaborate arpeggios of the piano. This intermezzo ends as suddenly as it began; the chorale returns in the woodwinds, interwoven with a new piano part that sounds almost like a two-part invention by J.S. Bach, with a few brief cadenzas interspersed.

The cheerful main theme of the finale (**Allegro vivace**) is derived from a type of Hungarian folksong that Bartók had discussed at length in his ethnomusicological writings. The movement is cast in rondo form, with fugal episodes that again pay homage to Bach. At the time of Bartók's death, the final 17 bars of this movement were left unorchestrated; this accounts for little more than 10 seconds of music. Bartók felt so close to completing the piece that he drew the final double bar followed by the word *vége* (the end)—a word that, sadly, took on a symbolic meaning shortly after it was written down. His friend and compatriot, Tibor Serly, a violist in The Philadelphia Orchestra from 1928 to 1936, completed the orchestration.

Following her husband's death, Ditta was in no condition to play the premiere of the Concerto; this honor went to another Bartók student from Hungary, György Sándor. Ditta, who returned to Hungary in 1946, did not perform the work until many years later.

—Peter Laki

Peter Laki served as program annotator for the Cleveland Orchestra from 1990 to 2007. He is currently visiting associate professor at Bard College.

Bartók's Piano Concerto No. 3 was composed in 1945. György Sándor presented the world premiere of the Third Concerto, on February 8, 1946, with Eugene Ormandy and The Philadelphia Orchestra. Most recently on subscription, the work was performed by pianist Hélène Grimaud and Yannick Nézet-Séguin in September 2019.

The Philadelphians recorded the work in 1946 with Sándor and Ormandy for CBS.

In addition to solo piano, Bartók scored the piece for two flutes (II doubling piccolo), two oboes (II doubling English horn), two clarinets (II doubling bass clarinet), two bassoons, four horns, two trumpets, three trombones, tuba, timpani, percussion (bass drum, cymbals, snare drum, tam-tam, triangle, xylophone), and strings.

The Concerto runs approximately 25 minutes in performance.

The Music

Selections from *Romeo and Juliet*

Sergei Prokofiev

Born in Sontsovka, Ukraine, April 23, 1891

Died in Moscow, March 5, 1953



Many Russian composers of the mid-20th century were compelled to write under the oppressive restrictions of Stalinism. But Sergei Prokofiev lived in the Soviet Union by choice, not by fate. After establishing a youthful reputation as the next Russian *enfant terrible*, then tempering that reputation with more orthodox works like the “Classical” Symphony and the First Violin Concerto, he decided to leave his native Russia in 1918. Even though his Modernism would have been welcomed at first by the post-Revolutionary Communist

government, Prokofiev hoped to pursue a career in the West, moving first to the United States before settling in France. But like his compatriot Rachmaninoff, he felt alienated while abroad, separated from his friends and his culture. He gradually re-established ties with Moscow, and with assurances that he would be given special advantages and privileged treatment, moved back to the Soviet Union in early 1936.

Prokofiev was, however, no communist. Soviet apparatchiks were consistently suspicious of his experiences in the West. He was denounced in the 1948 “purge” at the Union of Soviet Composers, which also humiliated Shostakovich and Khachaturian. And Stalin personally intervened to complicate Prokofiev’s late career. His spirit broken, his health (which was never robust) worsened. It seemed somehow emblematic of his career that Prokofiev died on the same day as Stalin: March 5, 1953. It took almost a week for the news of this great composer’s death to be reported in the Russian newspapers, and even then it was hidden in the middle pages. He was always more highly regarded in the West than in his own country.

Just as Prokofiev’s career path followed an uneasy balance of Western and Russian experiences, his music also wavered between acerbic Modernism and the influence of traditional musical styles, both national and foreign. His compositional style blends the familiar with the abstract; he was able to avoid the cloying simplicity of much Soviet-produced music while largely eschewing the experiments of the Western avant-garde.

One constant thread in Prokofiev’s oeuvre was his interest in music for the stage, and his best-known works tend to be inherently dramatic. From the operas *The Love for Three Oranges* and *War and Peace* to the melodrama of *Peter and the Wolf* and his most famous ballet, *Romeo and Juliet*, he excelled in creating musical narratives.

An Often-Told Story The commission for *Romeo and Juliet* began with an inquiry from the Kirov Ballet in 1934, while Prokofiev was still living abroad. This tale of “star-crossed

lovers,” doomed to a tragic end, was already well known not just to theater audiences, of course, but also through its symphonic and operatic treatments over the previous centuries. A German *Singspiel* by Georg Benda in the 18th century paved the way for an 1830 opera by Vincenzo Bellini (*I Capuleti e i Montecchi*) and Charles Gounod’s beloved *Roméo et Juliette* from 1867. Hector Berlioz’s operatically conceived “dramatic symphony” *Roméo et Juliette* was premiered in 1839, and numerous other composers in the 19th and early 20th centuries had translated the story’s impassioned drama and deep tragedy onto the opera and concert stages. But for Prokofiev, and the Kirov audiences, the most significant forerunner was undoubtedly Tchaikovsky’s *Romeo and Juliet* fantasy-overture for orchestra, which was premiered in its third and final version in 1886—well within the memories of older audience members and music administrators in 1934.

The Kirov’s director, Sergei Radlov, had worked with Prokofiev on *The Love for Three Oranges* some years earlier, and asked the composer in 1934 if he might be interested in writing a *Romeo and Juliet* ballet for the following season. It was an important development in Prokofiev’s career, as commissions from Moscow rather than the West would help facilitate the composer’s planned return to Russia. Radlov and Adrian Piotrovsky, the Kirov’s dramaturg, worked on a scenario for the ballet that adhered to the government-imposed precepts of the “*drambalet*,” which replaced the traditional virtuosic displays of classical ballet with pantomime and Russian folk-inspired dance movements intended to highlight a dramatic narrative. Ballet had been co-opted to support the Soviet ideals of unity and hard work. From the Kirov’s point of view, though, *Romeo and Juliet* seemed the perfect vehicle: Tchaikovsky-esque in subject matter, but open to a more “Soviet” treatment.

From Theater to Theater Prokofiev worked on this *Romeo and Juliet* project during 1935, fully aware that the Kirov’s audience was probably expecting something a little more traditional than what he had recently been producing. But before the score was complete, the Kirov backed out of the deal, and the composer was compelled to find a new company. He approached the Moscow Bolshoi Theatre, which initially signed a contract (including a clause that Piotrovsky would stay on the project) but then also broke it, declaring the music “undanceable.”

The Bolshoi had also tried to give the work a happy ending, creating (according to the composer) “quite a fuss” among Russian Shakespeare scholars. Believing that it’s easier for dancers to portray living characters than dead ones, the Bolshoi’s choreographers had decided that at the conclusion Romeo should arrive one minute earlier to find Juliet still alive. Prokofiev composed music for this “happy ending,” but had second thoughts when a friend remarked that even this music was not especially joyful. Prokofiev later recalled, “After several conferences with the choreographers, it was found that the tragic ending could be expressed in the dance and in due time the music for that ending was written.” But the ballet was still not performed.

In 1937 the Leningrad School of Choreography also signed a production contract only to later renege. In the meantime, Piotrovsky had been denounced in *Pravda* as a “degenerate modernist” and the as-yet unproduced ballet had been tainted by that association. Despite these setbacks, Prokofiev revised the music into two orchestral suites and 10 piano pieces,

which were well-received in 1936 and 1937. (Prokofiev also published a third orchestral suite in 1946.) He recorded some of the ballet's music in 1938 with the Moscow Philharmonic Orchestra.

Finally, a Ballet Premiere The world premiere of *Romeo and Juliet* as a fully staged ballet was given at the provincial theater in Brno, Czechoslovakia, in December 1938. (Prokofiev was denied permission to leave the Soviet Union and did not attend.) But it was the Soviet premiere by the Kirov in January 1940, with a significantly revised score, that established the work as a classic. The production was awarded a Stalin Prize, and the 1955 film version of the ballet was nominated for the Palm d'Or at the Cannes Film Festival. Now a staple in the ballet repertoire, Prokofiev's *Romeo and Juliet* has been choreographed by dozens of dance luminaires over the years, including Frederick Ashton, John Cranko, Kenneth MacMillan, and Rudolf Nureyev.

Outside of the concert hall and ballet theater, Prokofiev's music for *Romeo and Juliet* continues to find a wide audience through cinema and television, with the "Dance of the Knights" (titled "Montagues and Capulets" in the orchestral suites) emerging as a popular excerpt in contexts ranging from *The Simpsons* and *Caligula* to a long-running television commercial for perfume. Though this single excerpt provides a rather limited sampling of the full drama of Prokofiev's entire score, it serves as a familiar point of entry into this vivid and remarkable composition.

—Luke Howard

Luke Howard is associate director of the School of Music at Brigham Young University, and for many years wrote program notes for The Philadelphia Orchestra, the Aspen Music Festival, and Utah Opera. His research focuses on classical music in popular culture and the reception histories of well-known concert works.

Romeo and Juliet was composed from 1935 to 1936.

Pierre Monteux was on the podium for the first Philadelphia Orchestra performances of music from Prokofiev's Romeo and Juliet, in January 1945 (in a performance of the First Suite). Most recently on subscription Yannick Nézet-Séguin conducted excerpts in April 2019 with Brian Sanders' JUNK.

The Orchestra recorded several movements from the ballet in 1981 for EMI, under Riccardo Muti's direction.

The score for the excerpts heard today includes piccolo, two flutes, two oboes, English horn, two clarinets, bass clarinet, tenor saxophone, two bassoons, contrabassoon, four horns, two trumpets, cornet, three trombones, tuba, timpani, percussion (bass drum, cymbals, maracas, orchestra bells, snare drum, tambourine, triangle, xylophone), harp, piano, celesta, and strings.

The excerpts on today's concert run approximately 40 minutes in performance.

Musical Terms

GENERAL TERMS

Arpeggio: A broken chord (with notes played in succession instead of together)

Cadenza: A passage or section in a style of brilliant improvisation, usually inserted near the end of a movement or composition

Chorale: A hymn tune of the German Protestant Church, or one similar in style. Chorale settings are vocal, instrumental, or both.

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 added in order to confirm the impression of finality

Diatonic: Melody or harmony drawn primarily from the tones of the major or minor scale

Divertimento: A piece of entertaining music in several movements

Fantasy: A composition free in form and more or less fantastic in character

Fugue: A piece of music in which a short melody is stated by one voice and then imitated by the other voices in succession, reappearing throughout the entire piece in all the voices at different places

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

Intermezzo: A short connecting instrumental movement in an opera or other musical work

Invention: A short vocal or instrumental piece with no special definite characteristics apart from novelty of material or form

Lydian: The common name for the fifth of the eight church modes

Minimalism: A style of composition characterized by an intentionally simplified rhythmic, melodic, and harmonic vocabulary

Mode: Any of certain fixed arrangements of the diatonic tones of an octave, as the major and minor scales of Western music

Modernism: A consequence of the fundamental conviction among successive generations of composers since 1900 that the means of musical expression in the 20th century must be adequate to the unique and radical character of the age

Octave: The interval between any two notes that are seven diatonic (nonchromatic) scale degrees apart

Op.: Abbreviation for opus, a term used to indicate the chronological position of a composition within a composer's output

Rondo: A form frequently used in symphonies and concertos for the final movement. It consists of a main section that alternates with a variety of contrasting sections (A-B-A-C-A etc.).

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

Singspiel: A type of German opera established during the 18th century; usually light and characterized by spoken interludes

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.

Syncopation: A shift of rhythmic emphasis off the beat

Tonic: The keynote of a scale

THE SPEED OF MUSIC (Tempo)

Allegretto: A tempo between walking speed and fast

Allegro: Bright, fast

Barbaro: Fierce

Mosso: Moved

Presto: Very fast

Religioso: Sacred, devout

Vivace: Lively

TEMPO MODIFIERS

Più: More

Poco: Little, a bit

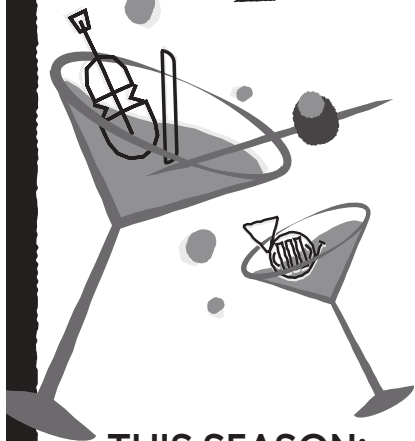
DYNAMIC MARKS

Forte (f): Loud

Pianissimo (pp): Very soft

**PHILADELPHIA
ORCHESTRA/125**

ORCHESTRA AFTER 5



Enjoy happy hour specials
and pre-concert fun,
one-hour performances,
and chats with the stars.

THIS SEASON:

Alpine Adventure

Thursday, October 9

Italian Getaway

Thursday, January 15

Postcards from Spain

Thursday, May 14



Photo: Margo Reed



Best Classical
Outing



philorch.org/after5

Audience Services

We want you to enjoy each and every concert experience you share with us. We would love to hear about your experience at the Orchestra and it would be our pleasure to answer any questions you may have.

Please don't hesitate to contact us via phone at 215.893.1999, in person in the lobby, or online at ensembleartsphilly.org/contact-us.

Purchase tickets online at www.philorch.org.

Subscriber Services:

215.893.1955, Mon.–Fri., 9 AM–5 PM

Please visit ensembleartsphilly.org/tickets-and-events/ticket-information for information on Audience Services and Box Office hours and locations.

On concert dates (two hours before concert time and through intermission), the Box Office will be located at:

The Kimmel Center

Broad and Spruce Streets

Philadelphia, PA 19102

Web Site: For information about The Philadelphia Orchestra and its upcoming concerts or events, please visit philorch.org.

Individual Tickets: Don't assume that your favorite concert is sold out. Subscriber turn-ins and other special promotions can make last-minute tickets available. Visit us online at philorch.org.

Subscriptions: The Philadelphia Orchestra offers a variety of subscription options each season. These multi-concert packages feature the best available seats, ticket exchange privileges, discounts on individual tickets, and many other benefits. Learn more at philorch.org.

Ticket Turn-In: Subscribers who cannot use their tickets are invited to donate them and receive a tax-deductible acknowledgement by calling 215.893.1999. Twenty-four-hour notice is appreciated, allowing other patrons the opportunity to purchase these tickets and guarantee tax-deductible credit.

PreConcert Conversations: PreConcert Conversations are held prior to most Philadelphia Orchestra subscription concerts, beginning one hour before the performance. Conversations are free to ticket holders,

feature discussions of the season's music and music-makers, and are supported in part by the Hirschberg-Goodfriend Fund in memory of Adolf Hirschberg, established by Juliet J. Goodfriend.

Lost and Found: Please call 215.670.2321.

Late Seating: Late seating breaks usually occur after the first piece on the program or at intermission in order to minimize disturbances to other audience members. If you arrive after the concert begins, you will be seated only when appropriate breaks in the program allow.

Accessible Seating: Accessible seating is available for every performance. Please visit philorch.org/patron-services/plan-your-visit for more information.

Assistive Listening: With the deposit of a current ID, hearing enhancement devices are available at no cost from the House Management Office in Commonwealth Plaza. Hearing devices are available on a first-come, first-served basis.

Large-Print Programs: Large-print programs for every subscription concert are available in the House Management Office in Commonwealth Plaza. Please ask an usher for assistance.

Fire Notice: The exit indicated by a red light nearest your seat is the shortest route to the street. In the event of fire or other emergency, please do not run. Walk to that exit.

No Smoking: All public space in Ensemble Arts Philly venues is smoke-free.

Cameras and Recorders: The taking of photographs or the recording of Philadelphia Orchestra concerts is strictly prohibited, but photographs are allowed before and after concerts and during bows. By attending this Philadelphia Orchestra concert you consent to be photographed, filmed, and/or otherwise recorded for any purpose in connection with The Philadelphia Orchestra.

Electronic Devices: All watch alarms should be turned off while in the concert hall and all cellular phones should be switched to silent mode.