

2025–2026 | 126th Season
Marian Anderson Hall

The Philadelphia Orchestra

Wednesday, January 28, at 7:30

Lunar New Year Concert

Naomi Woo Conductor

Yu Hongmei Erhu

Zhang Hongyan Pipa

Li *Spring Festival Overture*

Chan *Welcoming Spring*

First Philadelphia Orchestra performance

Tan from *Crouching Tiger Concerto*, for erhu and chamber orchestra:

I. Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon

III. Silk Road: Encounters

IV. Eternal Vow

V. To the South

VI. Farewell

First Philadelphia Orchestra performance

Boulanger *Of a Spring Morning*

Zhou *King Chu Doffs His Armor*, for pipa and orchestra

First Philadelphia Orchestra performance

Copland “Hoe-Down,” from Four Dance Episodes from *Rodeo*

Holst “Jupiter, the Bringer of Jollity,” from *The Planets*, Op. 32

This program runs approximately 1 hour, 30 minutes, and will be performed without an intermission.

This concert is sponsored by the **China National Tourist Office New York**.

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.

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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.

Conductor

Christa Holka



Canadian conductor **Naomi Woo** is gaining worldwide attention for her spirited dynamism and infectious musicality. A widely sought-after symphonic and operatic conductor, she is currently in her second season as assistant conductor of The Philadelphia Orchestra. This season, she debuts with the New York and BBC philharmonics, the Royal Northern Sinfonia, and the Royal Ballet and Opera, Covent Garden. She also returns to Montreal's Orchestre Métropolitain, where she was artistic partner from 2023 to 2025, as well as to the Vancouver

Symphony, the Calgary Philharmonic, and the City of London Sinfonia. A renowned advocate for contemporary music, she conducts the world premiere of Oliver Leith's *Garland* at Bold Tendencies in London and leads a workshop for Huang Ruo's upcoming opera *The Wedding Banquet* at the Metropolitan Opera in New York. In previous seasons, Ms. Woo appeared with the Toronto, Baltimore, and Montreal symphonies; the National Arts Centre Orchestra; London's Philharmonia; the Orchestra della Svizzera Italiana; the Chamber Orchestra of Luxembourg; and at LSO St. Luke's in London with Tangram Sound, an ensemble devoted to celebrating the vitality of Chinese cultures and producing new music by transnational Chinese creators.

On the opera stage, Ms. Woo has conducted the Canadian premiere of Du Yun's Pulitzer Prize-winning *Angel's Bone* in Vancouver, Puccini's *Edgar* at Opera Holland Park, Rossini's *La Cenerentola* with English Touring Opera, and the world premiere of Ellis Ludwig-Leone's *The Night Falls* in New York City. Recognized for her collaborative approach and natural command for storytelling and language, Ms. Woo has conducted more than a dozen operas with students and young professionals in United States and the United Kingdom, and collaboratively created new, genre-bending operatic works with Sasha Amaya and Catherine Kontz (*A Certain Sense of Order*), Sophie Seita (*Beethoven Was a Lesbian*), and Alex Ho/Julia Cheng. Ms. Woo was music director of the National Youth Orchestra of Canada for its 2024 and 2025 seasons and is the former music director of El Sistema Winnipeg. As a pianist, she has led performances from the keyboard with The Philadelphia Orchestra, the Winnipeg Symphony, and others.

Ms. Woo holds a Ph.D. from the University of Cambridge, where she was a Gates Cambridge Scholar. She has also studied mathematics, philosophy, and music at Yale College, the Yale School of Music, and the University of Montreal. The 2022 winner of the Canada Council's prestigious Virginia Parker Prize, she is a member of Tapestry Opera's Women in Musical Leadership program and was chosen by her mentor, Philadelphia Orchestra Music and Artistic Director Yannick Nézet-Séguin, as a member of the Orchestre Métropolitain's inaugural orchestral conducting academy. She acknowledges generous support over the years from the Manitoba Arts Council, Canada Council for the Arts, Help Musicians UK, and the BC Arts Council.

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Yannick Nézet-Séguin
Music & Artistic Director

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Photo: PeteCzechchia

Soloists



Yu Hongmei is an acclaimed erhu virtuoso, distinguished educator, and influential leader in Chinese traditional music. As an educator, she serves as president, professor, and doctoral supervisor at the Central Conservatory of Music, shaping generations of musicians while extending her pedagogical influence internationally as an honorary professor at the Bard College Conservatory of Music. In organizational leadership, she guides the profession through leadership roles including chair of the Chinese National Orchestral Society’s Huqin

Committee and vice president of the Chinese National Bowed String Music Society, while serving as a juror for the China Music Golden Bell Award and other major competitions. Her distinguished career has earned China’s highest honors—Cultural Master recognition, “Ten Thousand Talent Program” selection, and a special State Council allowance—alongside international acclaim including the ProMusic International Award for Best World Ethnic Music and China’s Fourth Golden Record Award. Tonight marks her Philadelphia Orchestra debut.



Chinese pipa virtuoso and educator **Zhang Hongyan** is a Level II professor, a Ph.D. supervisor, and a member of the academic committee at the Central Conservatory of Music in Beijing. She also serves as the dean of the Department of Traditional Chinese Music Instruments and director of the National Intangible Cultural Heritage Protection and Research Center at the Central Conservatory. She is the vice chairperson of the Pipa Society of China Musicians Association and a former visiting scholar at Columbia

University. Ms. Zhang is also a disseminator of music culture who has promoted music in Asia, Europe, North America, South America, Africa, and Oceania. She is a keen and devoted public music educator. In order for more people to have access to music, she launched her “Playing Whilst Talking” lecture concert series in 2008 and also offered free lectures on music culture for 10 years. Her efforts have greatly promoted the cause of social music education and contributed to the development of Chinese folk music. She made her Philadelphia Orchestra debut in 2025.



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**PHILADELPHIA
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Yannick Nézet-Séguin
Music & Artistic Director

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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.

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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.

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