

2025–2026 | 126TH SEASON
MARIAN ANDERSON HALL

THE PHILADELPHIA ORCHESTRA

Thursday, May 7, at 7:30

Friday, May 8, at 2:00

Saturday, May 9, at 8:00

Naomi Woo Conductor

Joseph Conyers Bass

Mozart Overture to *Così fan tutte*, K. 588

Tan Bass Concerto: *Wolf Totem*

I. Largo malencolia—Allegro

II. Andante molto—

III. Allegro vivace

First Philadelphia Orchestra performances

Intermission

Shaw Entr'acte, for string orchestra

Bartók Romanian Folk Dances

I. Stick Dance

II. Sash Dance

III. In One Spot

IV. Dance from Bucsum

V. Romanian Polka

VI. Fast Dance

VII. Fast Dance

Hindemith Symphonic Metamorphosis of Themes by Carl Maria von Weber

I. Allegro

II. *Turandot*, Scherzo: Moderato—Lebhaft

III. Andantino

IV. Marsch

This program runs approximately 1 hour, 50 minutes.

These concerts are part of the **Ellenberg Philadelphia Orchestra Spotlight Series**.

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.

The 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 Holla



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 the 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.

SOLOIST



Nicole Roche

Philadelphia Orchestra Principal Bass **Joseph H. Conyers** (Carole and Emilio Gravagno Chair) is a multi-faceted artist whose innovative work on the stage, coupled with his life's dedication to music education and access, has been recognized internationally. He was honored as a WHYY "Good Soul" in 2025 and in 2024 was named The Philadelphia Orchestra's Education and Community Ambassador. He joined The Philadelphia Orchestra in 2010 as assistant principal bass, was acting associate principal from 2017 to 2023, and became

principal in 2023. He makes his Philadelphia Orchestra solo debut with these concerts. Previously, he was a member of the Atlanta Symphony and the Santa Fe Opera Orchestra and principal bass of the Grand Rapids Symphony. He's an alumnus of the Tanglewood Music Center, the Aspen Music Festival and School, Spoleto USA, the Boston University Tanglewood Institute, and the Brevard Music Center.

A native of Savannah, Georgia, Mr. Conyers received an Honorary Doctor of Music Arts from the Cleveland Institute of Music in 2025. Additional accolades include the C. Hartman Kuhn Award from Yannick Nézet-Séguin and The Philadelphia Orchestra, the Sphinx Organization's Medal of Excellence, *Musical America's* 30 Top Professionals, and numerous honors from the International Society of Bassists. He was featured in *Ebony* magazine and appeared on the cover of *The Strad* magazine after being named principal bass of The Philadelphia Orchestra, the first Black musician to hold a playing principal position in the ensemble's history. In 2015 he was the inaugural recipient of the Young Alumni Award from his alma mater, the Curtis Institute of Music, where he studied with Harold Robinson and Edgar Meyer.

Mr. Conyers is founder and vision advisor of Project 440, a Philadelphia non-profit organization that has helped thousands of high school students use their interest in music to explore new pathways for themselves and ignite change in their communities. He is also music director of Philadelphia's All City Orchestra and serves on the board of the Boston University Tanglewood Institute. A 2004 Sphinx Laureate, Mr. Conyers has been a bass soloist with numerous orchestras and an artist of the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center. He is the artistic director and founder of Dubhe, a collective of some of the most influential chamber musicians who dedicate themselves to creating performances centered on authentic connections and inclusivity. Mr. Conyers is the co-host of the podcast *Tacet No More* with Yumi Kendall, assistant principal cello of The Philadelphia Orchestra. He is a sought-after pedagogue and music coach with former students in orchestras across the Americas and Europe. He currently serves on the faculty of the Juilliard School and Temple University. Known by his handle @weatherclef, Mr. Conyers maintains a significant social media presence. He performs on the "Zimmerman/Gladstone" 1802 Vincenzo Panormo bass, which he has affectionately named "Norma," and an Aaron Reiley bass, which he has affectionately named "Miss Riley."

FRAMING THE PROGRAM

PARALLEL EVENTS

1789

Mozart

Overture to *Così fan tutte*

Music

Haydn

Symphony No. 92
("Oxford")

Literature

Blake

Songs of Innocence

Art

Goya

Blind Man's Bluff

History

Washington
inaugurated

1917

Bartók

Romanian Folk
Dances

Music

Stravinsky

*Song of the
Nightingale*

Literature

Joyce

The Dubliners

Art

Kokoschka

*The Bride of the
Wind*

History

Mata Hari
executed as a spy

1943

Hindemith

Symphonic
Metamorphosis
of Themes by
Carl Maria von
Weber

Music

Copland

Lincoln Portrait

Literature

Willkie

One World

Art

Benton

July Hay

History

Soviet victory at
Stalingrad

Today's concert of works chosen by the musicians of The Philadelphia Orchestra opens with the Overture to *Così fan tutte* (Thus Do They All), the last of Mozart's collaborations with the librettist Lorenzo Da Ponte, following on their successes with *The Marriage of Figaro* and *Don Giovanni*. The somewhat risqué plot around infidelity caused the opera some problems entering the standard repertoire, but its great music, beginning with the brilliant Overture, has captivated audiences ever since its premiere in January 1790, just a day before Mozart turned 34.

Tan Dun was born in Hunan Province in south-central China and later moved to New York to get his doctorate at Columbia University. In many symphonies, concertos, film scores, and operas he has explored intersections between East and West. Today we hear his three-movement concerto for bass, titled *Wolf Totem* after a recent epic Chinese novel of the same name.

The great Hungarian composer Béla Bartók was a pioneer in studying the peasant music of Central and Eastern Europe. He collected thousands of melodies, some of which found their way into his own compositions. His Romanian Folk Dances—a brief suite of seven peasant melodies—has proved one of his most popular and enduring works.

During the Second World War, the German composer Paul Hindemith left his homeland and moved to the United States. One of his early American works is the Symphonic Metamorphosis of Themes by Carl Maria von Weber, which imaginatively transforms some of Weber's piano pieces and incidental music composed for the play *Turandot*.

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

Overture to *Così fan tutte*

Wolfgang Amadè Mozart

Born in Salzburg, January 27, 1756

Died in Vienna, December 5, 1791



By the time he turned 20, Mozart had already composed nearly a dozen theater pieces; dramatic music would remain a central preoccupation of his life and career until the end, when at age 35 he composed *The Magic Flute* and *La clemenza di Tito* shortly before his death. His first major success came with *Idomeneo*, which premiered in Munich in 1781. *The Abduction from the Seraglio*, unveiled the following year in Vienna, went on to be his most performed opera. These works gave further evidence that he could compose masterpieces in German and Italian, in

different styles, and could negotiate both the comic and the serious.

Breaking Out on His Own Mozart moved to Vienna in 1781, escaping his stultifying hometown of Salzburg, and concentrated during his initial years there on instrumental music, particularly piano concertos. He longed to write more operas but had difficulty finding worthy subjects. He informed his father that he had “looked through at least a hundred librettos and more, but I have not found a single one with which I am satisfied; that is to say, so many alterations would have to be made here and there, that even if a poet would undertake to make them, it would be easier for me to write a completely new text—which indeed it is always best to do.”

Mozart went on to complain about difficulties getting a promised libretto from Lorenzo Da Ponte (1749–1838), who had recently been named the official poet at the Imperial Court Theater: “If he [Da Ponte] is in league with Salieri, I will never get anything out of him.” This is the sort of comment that led to slanderous legends of Salieri murdering Mozart, a topic the celebrated Russian writer Alexander Pushkin used in his drama *Mozart and Salieri*, which Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov later turned into an opera, and that inspired Peter Shaffer’s Broadway play *Amadeus* and then Milos Forman’s Academy Award–winning film.

Da Ponte was a fascinating character in his own right, as his enthralling memoirs colorfully confirm. The composer and poet formed one of the great partnerships in opera history, although one that proved short-lived. Da Ponte would survive Mozart by nearly five decades; he ended up in New York City, where he became the first professor of Italian at Columbia University.

A Great Partnership Their first big project began in the fall of 1785 with an Italian adaptation of the popular (and politically explosive) French play *La Folle Journée, ou Le Mariage de Figaro* (The Madcap Day, or The Marriage of Figaro), by Pierre-Augustin

Caron de Beaumarchais. Da Ponte toned down some of the play's most overt political provocations and the opera successfully premiered in May 1786. The team next turned to an old Spanish legend about Don Juan that had inspired many previous plays, ballets, and operas. *Il dissoluto punito, ossia Il Don Giovanni* (The Dissolute Punished, or Don Giovanni) was written for Prague, where Mozart was much better appreciated than he was in Vienna and where the opera triumphantly premiered in October 1787.

Today we hear the Overture to their third collaboration, *Così fan tutte, ossia La scuola degli amanti* (Thus Do They All, or The School for Lovers), which turned out to be Mozart's last opera buffa. It was an immediate popular success upon its Vienna premiere on January 26, 1790, the day before Mozart turned 34. This final joint venture had a more difficult time, however, entering the general repertoire, not for lack of glorious music but rather due to its somewhat risqué plot.

Don Alfonso, a cynical old philosopher, initiates a wager with two young officers that their fiancées would not remain faithful to them in their absence. When Ferrando and Guglielmo pretend to go off to war, the sisters Fiordiligi and Dorabella are devastated. The officers return disguised as “Albanians” and successfully woo the other's betrothed. In the end all is exposed, although it is not entirely clear whether the couples return to the original pairing or move on to the new one. (It was pretty clearly the former in Mozart's day, although there is no exact mention in the libretto or score, and some modern productions have proposed other alternatives.)

A Closer Look The brief Overture to *Così*, like that for *Don Giovanni* but unlike the one for *Figaro*, has a musical connection to the opera that follows, in addition to marvelously setting the mood. It begins with an andante section that juxtaposes full orchestral chords with a lyrical oboe melody and a brief allusion to a phrase Don Alfonso sings near the end of the opera, namely its title: “così fan tutte.”

A presto section with enormous energy follows in which an undulating woodwind phrase quotes music from Act I of *Figaro*, sung by the slippery music teacher Don Basilio, where the words, appropriately, are “*Così fan tutte le belle, non c'è alcuna novità*” (That's what they all do, the ladies, there's nothing new in that). Near the end of the Overture the opening allusion to Don Alfonso's musical phrase returns in double-note values.

—Christopher H. Gibbs

Christopher H. Gibbs is James H. Ottaway Jr. Professor of Music at Bard College and has been the program annotator for The Philadelphia Orchestra since 2000. He is the author of several books on Schubert and Liszt, and the co-author, with Richard Taruskin, of The Oxford History of Western Music, College Edition.

Mozart composed the Overture to Così fan tutte in 1789.

Zubin Mehta was on the podium for the first Philadelphia Orchestra performance of the Overture, in July 1981 at the Mann Center. The work's first, and only other, subscription performances were in April 2014, with Yannick Nézet-Séguin.

The Overture is scored for pairs of flutes, oboes, clarinets, bassoons, horns, and trumpets; timpani; and strings.

Performance time is approximately five minutes.

THE MUSIC

Bass Concerto: *Wolf Totem*

Tan Dun

Born in Simao, Hunan Province, August 18, 1957

Now living in New York



In many of his compositions, including the Bass Concerto: *Wolf Totem* that we hear on this concert, Tan Dun explores intersections between East and West, which seems only natural given his background and education. He was born in China's Hunan Province and studied at the Beijing Conservatory before moving to New York City and earning a doctorate at Columbia University in 1993. Armed with expertise in both Chinese music and the Western classical tradition, he began to pursue projects around the world; this

has never stopped and only become more expansive and imaginative.

In some of his pieces Tan Dun not only ingeniously combines disparate musical traditions but also explores new sonic realms through technology. *2000 Today: A World Symphony for the Millennium* was internationally broadcast on New Year's Day in 2000, and his *Internet Symphony* (2009)—commissioned by Google and YouTube—has been heard by many millions online. His evocative film score for Ang Lee's *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon* (2000) won an Academy Award as well as a GRAMMY. Tan Dun has also written operas, including *Nine Songs* (1989), *Marco Polo* (1995), *Tea: A Mirror of Soul* (2002), *Buddha Passion* (2018), and *The First Emperor*, which premiered at the Metropolitan Opera in 2006.

From Novel to Concerto Tan Dun's accomplishments have been honored with a wide array of prestigious recognitions, including the Grawemeyer Award in 1998. In 2003 he was named *Musical America's* Composer of the Year and a decade later added the title of global Goodwill Ambassador for UNESCO in an inauguration at the organization's Paris headquarters on World Water Day. This position also connects with the piece we hear today in that it highlights the composer's deep concern for nature and the environment.

For *Wolf Totem*, Tan Dun was inspired by reading Jiang Rong's semi-autobiographical novel by that name, which explores the disappearing culture of the Mongols in tandem with the extinction of the fierce Mongol wolves they held sacred. The novel, a best seller from 2004 that was translated into many languages, resonates with Tan Dun's larger artistic vision explored in many of his works, encompassing not only the natural world but also spirituality, more specifically, ancient Chinese traditions and rituals.

Closer Look Tan Dun casts *Wolf Totem* in the standard three movements (fast, slow, fast) that have served composers well for centuries. The emotional arc of the work unfolds

from mystery to motion to lament to a galloping finale. The first movement (**Largo melancolia—Allegro**), which lasts as long as the other two combined, has an extensive meditative introduction that evocatively features Tibetan singing bowls and harmonics on the divided basses. Throughout the Concerto, the bass is used for both its lyrical and percussive qualities. The soloist is asked to play an extraordinary range of notes, from the instrument's lowest to unusually high registers, presenting modal melodies that have an Eastern flavor. Many passages are unaccompanied, perhaps representing the lone wolf, and have the feeling of miniature cadenzas. The music suddenly shifts to an intense gallop that may remind some listeners of Rossini's *William Tell* Overture.

The middle movement (**Andante molto**) offers the emotional core of the Concerto and is basically monothematic, leading without pause into the propulsive final movement (**Allegro vivace**). Although Tan Dun has not provided descriptive titles to the movements, he recently gave a clue to the thrilling finale through a new incarnation he crafted of this movement tilted *Ten Thousand Galloping Horses*. In this version, the original solo bass part is transferred to other instruments. Tan Dun conducted the premiere with The Orchestra Now at Bard College's Fisher Center, where he has served as dean of the Conservatory of Music since 2019.

—Christopher H. Gibbs

Tan Dun composed his Bass Concerto in 2014.

These are the first Philadelphia Orchestra performances of the piece.

The Concerto is scored for solo bass, piccolo, two flutes, two oboes, English horn, two clarinets, bass clarinet, two bassoons, contrabassoon, four horns, three trumpets, three trombones, tuba, timpani, percussion (bass drum, Chinese cymbals, Chinese fish blocks, marimba, slapsticks, snare drum, Tibetan singing bowls), harp, and strings.

Performance time is approximately 20 minutes.

THE MUSIC

Entr'acte

Caroline Shaw

Born in Greenville, North Carolina, August 1, 1982

Now living in New York City and Western Massachusetts



Caroline Shaw won the 2013 Pulitzer Prize in Music for her *Partita for 8 Voices*. At the age of 30, she was the youngest composer ever awarded the prestigious accolade and the fifth woman. *Partita* grew out of Shaw's performing activities as a member of the vocal ensemble *Roomful of Teeth*, for which she wrote the four-movement piece and which unveiled it in stages between 2009 and 2011.

That situation—a work in progress by someone writing for their own ensemble—is one shared by an ever-increasing number of young composers also active as performers. Of course, such engagement was the norm for centuries, be it in the careers of Bach, Mozart, Beethoven, or most Romantic composers. The 20th century saw an increasing separation between isolated composers and specialist performers, albeit with notable exceptions from Mahler and Rachmaninoff through Bernstein and Boulez. The scene shifted some in the late 20th century due largely to figures such as Steve Reich, Philip Glass, Meredith Monk, and others. This is ever more the case today, as many composers are performers whose compositions evolve from their own ensembles, more akin to the world of popular music.

A Performing Composer Although Shaw's award-winning *Partita* came from her activities as a singer with *Roomful of Teeth*, her principal training was as a violinist, starting at age two with her mother, who was a Suzuki-method teacher. Born in North Carolina, Shaw went to Rice University and then won a Thomas J. Watson Fellowship to study formal gardens in Europe and compose string quartets inspired by them. She received a master's degree in violin at Yale and in 2010 entered the doctoral program in composition at Princeton University. Three years later came the Pulitzer and since then an unusual range of activities, collaborations, and commissions, including writing film scores, working with leading rappers, and appearing as a fictional version of herself in Amazon's *Mozart in the Jungle*.

It is not surprising that Shaw has long been attracted to the genre of the string quartet as she has performed many herself. Among her quartet compositions are *Punctum* (2009), *Entr'acte* (2011), and *Blueprint* (2016). These pieces take inspiration from Bach, Haydn, and Beethoven, which has led Shaw to compare them to a sort of “chamber music fan fiction” and wryly note that for young quartets not used to playing contemporary works, her pieces are “like a gateway drug for new music.” *Entr'acte*, which we hear on this concert, grew

out of Shaw's experience as a listener after hearing the Brentano Quartet perform Haydn's String Quartet in F major, Op. 77, No. 2. The Brentano premiered *Entr'acte* at Princeton in April 2011 and three years later Shaw crafted the string orchestra version performed today.

A Closer Look Haydn, who has been hailed as the “father” of the string quartet, wrote nearly 70. This alleged paternity, as with that of the symphony, should not be taken literally, but rather as an acknowledgement of his being the composer who brought the genre to prominence and superb refinement. Haydn's Op. 77, No. 2, is his last completed string quartet and dates from 1799. Shaw was inspired for *Entr'acte* by its third movement. Most Classical-era quartets are in four movements and the third is usually a so-called minuet and trio, predictable and quite repetitive in form. Such ABA dance movements account for literally hundreds among the chamber and symphonic music of Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven, and others. Shaw's piece is also structured like a minuet and trio, as she says “riffing on that Classical form but taking it a little further. I love the way some music (like the minuets of Op. 77) suddenly takes you to the other side of Alice's looking glass, in a kind of absurd, subtle, technicolor transition.”

The opening of *Entr'acte* sounds “normal,” perhaps we could be in Vienna circa 1800, but with a wrong note or two. The memorable first theme uses the Beethoven Fifth Symphony rhythm of three short notes and a long. After about a minute, things take a weirder turn as the players start using so-called extended techniques, meaning they are not playing their instruments in the usual way. (Extended vocal effects played a large role in Shaw's *Partita*.) As in a Classical minuet, there is a fair amount of repetition of short sections, either literally (marked with a repeat sign in the score) or transformed in some way. After a few minutes the initial triple meter that is expected in a minuet suddenly changes every measure, creating an unpredictability—it is hard to tap your feet in these instances—such as one associates with a piece like Stravinsky's *Rite of Spring* but in this instance less jarring and more joyous.

Throughout the work the performing instructions that Shaw includes are unusual, informal, and almost conversational, as if coaching the performers. Near the end of the piece the opening theme returns, as one would expect in a traditional minuet and trio, but here it is not a literal return of the “A” section. The instruments gradually drop out (first viola, then violins), leaving just the solo cello to pluck out the final chords as a lute might in a piece from the Renaissance. Shaw's instruction here says it should be “like recalling fragments of an old tune or story, feel free to roll chords extra luxuriously when necessary for technical, or aesthetic, reasons.”

—Christopher H. Gibbs

Entr'acte was composed in 2011 and was arranged for string orchestra in 2014.

Joshua Weilerstein conducted the first, and only other, Philadelphia Orchestra performances of the piece, in February 2019.

The score calls for strings only.

Entr'acte runs approximately 11 minutes in performance.

THE MUSIC

Romanian Folk Dances

Béla Bartók

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

Died in New York City, September 26, 1945



Before World War I irrevocably changed the face of Central and Eastern Europe, Béla Bartók spent years researching, recording, and systematizing the folk music of Hungary, Romania, Slovakia, Bulgaria, and beyond (later venturing to North Africa) in an unending quest to gather and compare the folk music from different regions. He traveled extensively, living Margaret Mead-like in villages among his subjects for extended periods. Bartók's methods would become a model for later ethnomusicologists, and his thousands of field

recordings and meticulously inscribed volumes of folk tunes are still the foundation of the study of this music today. In addition to their research value, Bartók's folk explorations had a direct bearing on his own music. The melodies he collected form the backbone of most of his compositions, as he believed "there have always been folk music influences on the higher types of art music."

From Village to Concert Hall Bartók wrote an essay in 1931 in which he laid out three basic approaches to using folk materials. In the first, one could "take over a peasant melody unchanged or only slightly varied, write an accompaniment to it and possibly some opening and concluding phrases." He compared this least obtrusive adaptation to providing "an ornamental setting for a precious stone." In the second approach "the composer does not make use of a real peasant melody but invents his own imitation of such melodies." Bartók became unusually adept at inventing his own folk tunes. The third way is more abstract: The composer has so "completely absorbed the idiom of peasant music which has become his musical mother tongue" that it comes naturally, not as quotation or imitation, but simply as creation. This approach he mastered to an unprecedented degree.

Bartók used all three approaches in his compositions. Early in his career, he tended toward the first one and made a great number of arrangements of genuine folk melodies. The Romanian Folk Dances, which became one of his most popular pieces, fall into this category as they are arrangements of actual tunes drawn from field recordings he made in 1910 and 1912. A decade later, he wrote in a program note: "Romanian dance tunes are used here in their original form without alteration." While the tunes are the real thing, to this he added imaginative accompaniments and vivid orchestral colors. Bartók initially composed the piece in 1915 as a suite for piano and orchestrated it two years later. Others subsequently made many other arrangements, most famously one for violin and piano by

Zoltán Székely. Bartók recorded the original piano version twice, privately around 1915 and in 1928 as a piano roll, as well as the violin version with Joseph Szigeti.

A Closer Look The melodies Bartók collected for this piece were originally played on the shepherd's flute or violin from four regions in Transylvania, which was in Hungary at the time. At first he called the work "Romanian Folk Dances from Hungary," but after the Treaty of Versailles in 1920, the area was part of Romania, so he omitted the qualification. The score gives titles in three languages: the Romanian original as well as Hungarian and German translations—he did not authorize English titles.

Romanian Folk Dances consists of seven brief movements performed without pause that last barely six minutes in total. The **Stick Dance** (Allegro moderato) presents the ornamented folk melody in the first violins and clarinets over simple string accompaniment. The melody for the following **Sash Dance** (Allegro) was originally for shepherd's flute, played here by solo clarinet with pizzicato strings underneath. This dance was for partners holding each other tightly bound by a sash or wristband. **In One Spot** (Andante) lets the piccolo shine in a melody with a narrow range as the dancers do not move from a single location. **Dance from Bucsum** (Moderato) is in a more lyrical triple meter featuring solo violin. The very short final three dances race to the end, growing in dynamics, tempo, and instrumentation (bassoons added first and finally horns) to reach a thrilling conclusion: **Romanian Polka** (Allegro), then **Fast Dance** (Allegro) and **Fast Dance** (Allegro vivace).

—Paul J. Horsley/Christopher H. Gibbs

<i>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.</i>

Bartók composed his Romanian Folk Dances in 1915 and orchestrated them in 1917.

The first Philadelphia Orchestra performances were in January 1944, with Eugene Ormandy conducting the work in his own transcription. The most recent subscription performances were in January/February 1945, again with Ormandy, although the piece has been played since, mostly on education concerts.

The score calls for two flutes (11 doubling piccolo), two clarinets, two bassoons, two horns, and strings.

The works runs approximately six minutes in performance.

THE MUSIC

Symphonic Metamorphosis of Themes by Carl Maria von Weber

Paul Hindemith

Born in Hanau, Germany, November 16, 1895

Died in Frankfurt, December 28, 1963



Exiled from his native Germany, Hindemith arrived in the United States in early 1940 to begin a new life and a new career. Known the world over for startling theater works such as *Mathis der Maler* (Mathis the Painter) and *Mörder, Hoffnung der Frauen* (Murder, the Hope of Women), and for orchestral and chamber works that established new approaches to tonality, he had been perhaps *the* central musical figure in Germany during the pre-war period. As an influential professor at the Berlin Hochschule, he had devised

revolutionary methods for the teaching of counterpoint and composition. During the 1920s and early '30s he had also carved out a niche as a composer and performer from whom the public could always expect to be surprised. A musical polymath, he mastered many instruments, including piano, violin, viola, and clarinet.

A New Life in Exile It was no surprise, though, that the National Socialists found his unconventional music decadent, his methods suspect, and (perhaps the real point) his refusal to disassociate himself from Jewish musicians intolerable. Although he had strong allies in musical circles, his prominent position in German life became impossible to sustain. In 1940, like so many others, Hindemith made his way to New York. During his first months in the United States he taught composition at several universities in upstate New York (Buffalo, Cornell, Wells College in Aurora). In 1941 he received a permanent appointment as professor of counterpoint and composition at Yale.

Hindemith was not one to live dreamily in the past. He forged a new life, building a studio of talented students and growing into a figure every bit as influential in the New World as he had been in the Old. His compositions from 1940 on were marked by the same rigor of design and mastery of polyphony that had characterized his earlier music. His application of quasi-socialist ideals to musical pedagogy—spawned of his upbringing in a working-class neighborhood of Frankfurt—fit nicely into post-war American life. And in fact, the essential presuppositions of his teachings, namely that music should be *useful* (and by inference that art for art's sake was dalliance), still seem like distinctly “American” ideas.

The Work's Origins The work on today's concert was composed during Hindemith's first American years. In 1939, while still living in Europe, he had contracted with Leonide

Massine, the eccentric genius of the Ballets Russes, to compose a ballet based on paintings of Pieter Brueghel. Later, he and Massine discussed the idea of a scenario employing paraphrases of the music of Carl Maria von Weber. But when the composer happened to see—in a ballet performance in Buffalo—Massine’s production of the bacchanale from Wagner’s *Tannhäuser*, he was so turned off by the choreographer’s “hallucinatory” style that he immediately set about trying to get out his agreement. Though in addition to the Brueghel music, he had also begun sketching out music for a ballet based on several pieces by Weber, when he learned that Massine planned to employ Salvador Dali (who had designed the Wagner scene) for the decor, he withdrew from his contract.

Nevertheless, he was able to use material from the Weber sketches for the later Symphonic Metamorphosis of Themes by Carl Maria von Weber, completed in the summer of 1943 and first performed the following year by Artur Rodzinski and the New York Philharmonic. The work takes a substantially different approach to the variation form. It is an expression of the composer’s acute and lifelong awareness of the music of the past, from Medieval and Renaissance counterpoint to 18th-century Classicism. It is an affectionate homage to the past, as well as a wry reflection on Weber and his time. Yet at the same time it is conceptually subtle and formally ingenious.

A Closer Look The work is cast in four movements, with each individual movement built on principles of variation rather than of sonata form. For thematic material the composer has drawn upon three different sources from Weber’s works: two sets of pieces for piano duet (Opp. 10 and 60) and incidental music for a stage production of *Turandot* (Schiller’s translation of the Carlo Gozzi play). The first movement (**Allegro**) shapes one of the Op. 60 pieces into a vigorous passage requiring great instrumental virtuosity. The **Turandot, Scherzo** makes plain its “oriental” intent through the use of a tune from the Overture of Weber’s *Turandot* music—a melody, interestingly, that Weber himself had derived from a collection of “genuine” Chinese tunes from Jean-Jacques Rousseau’s *Dictionnaire de musique*. Hindemith’s transformation of Rousseau’s and Weber’s naïve tune is one of the great tours de force of 20th-century orchestral music. A slow movement (**Andantino**) follows, based on one of Weber’s Op. 10 piano duets and containing echoes of the Baroque siciliano rhythm. It is capped by a florid solo for flute. The final **Marsch** returns to Op. 60 for its inspiration; the square march rhythm gradually gives way to a dashing triplet figure that closes the work in a sea of sonority.

—Paul J. Horsley

Hindemith composed the Symphonic Metamorphosis of Themes by Carl Maria von Weber in 1943.

The Philadelphia Orchestra’s first performance of the work took place in November 1955, under Eugene Ormandy’s baton. Most recently, Charles Dutoit and the Orchestra performed the work in February 2012.

The Orchestra recorded the Symphonic Metamorphosis three times: in 1961 with Ormandy for CBS; in 1977 with Ormandy for EMI; and in 1994 with Wolfgang Sawallisch for EMI.

The score calls for piccolo, two flutes, two oboes, English horn, two clarinets, bass clarinet, two bassoons, contrabassoon, four horns, two trumpets, three trombones, tuba, timpani, percussion (bass drum, chimes, cymbals, glockenspiel, large tom-tom, small gong, snare drum, tambourine, tenor drum, triangle, woodblock), and strings.

Running time is approximately 21 minutes.

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