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from the editor

For many of us, a celebration of the holidays—whichever and whenever you celebrate—can be a time of so many traditions that as time goes by, our memories can easily blur the years together. That was, at least, until 2020, when life changed and many families connected remotely, put off travel plans, downsized their observations to a smaller holiday “pod” or celebrated solo. For all those who lost a loved one to the pandemic, the disruption of holiday traditions was the least of concerns.

Now the holiday season has arrived again, and although life is far from “normal”—whatever that word signifies—some traditions are returning, but with new meaning, greater gratitude and a sense of necessity. And yet, any reach for a silver lining comes with recognition that ours is a fortunate country with wide access to the tools to save lives.

As you visit Orchestra Hall this month, we invite you to help our community through a donation drive benefiting Simpson Housing Services. The Minneapolis-based nonprofit organization—whose mission is to house, support and advocate for people experiencing homelessness—is requesting donations of new blankets. From December 10 to January 1, a large drop-off box will be available in the lobby for your donations of new twin-size, full-size and queen-size blankets (not throw blankets).

Stay well and enjoy all of the holidays, and we thank you for joining us as you renew traditions or start new ones!



Carl Schroeder, Editor
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about the cover

The Minnesota Orchestra outside Orchestra Hall in October 2021, with Music Director Osmo Vänskä front and center. Vänskä will lead a three-week festival of Jean Sibelius’ music starting on New Year’s Eve. Photo: Travis Anderson Photo.

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Minnesota Orchestra SHOWCASE

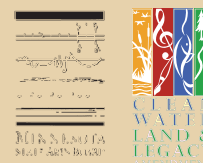
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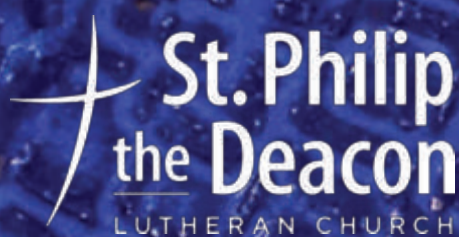
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profile Osmo Vänskä, music director

Finnish conductor Osmo Vänskä, the Minnesota Orchestra's tenth music director, is renowned internationally for his compelling interpretations of the standard, contemporary and Nordic repertoires. Throughout the 2021–22 season, as Vänskä's 19-year leadership tenure comes to a close, the Orchestra will celebrate his lasting impact through performances of Sibelius symphonies and other signature repertoire, reconnections with favorite guest soloists and the continuation of a project to perform and record all ten Mahler symphonies.

Vänskä has led the Orchestra on five major European tours, as well as a 2018 visit to London's BBC Proms, and on historic tours to Cuba in 2015 and South Africa in 2018. He has also led the Orchestra in appearances at New York's Carnegie Hall and Lincoln Center, Chicago's Symphony Center and community venues across Minnesota.

Vänskä's recording projects with the Orchestra have met with great success, including a Sibelius symphonies cycle, one album of which won the 2014 Grammy Award for Best Orchestral Performance. In February 2021 BIS released the Orchestra's newest album, featuring Mahler's Tenth Symphony—part of a Mahler series that includes a Grammy-nominated Fifth Symphony recording. Other recent releases include an album of in-concert recordings of Sibelius' *Kullervo* and *Finlandia* and Kortekangas' *Migrations*; albums of Beethoven and Tchaikovsky piano concertos with Yevgeny Sudbin and Stephen Hough, respectively; *To Be Certain of the Dawn*, composed by Stephen Paulus with libretto by Michael Dennis Browne; and a particularly widely-praised Beethoven symphonies cycle.

As a guest conductor, Vänskä has received extraordinary praise for his work with many of the world's leading orchestras, including the Boston and Chicago symphony orchestras, Philadelphia Orchestra, New York Philharmonic, London Philharmonic, Berlin Philharmonic, Leipzig Gewandhaus Orchestra, Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra, Vienna Symphony, Hong Kong Philharmonic and Yomiuri Nippon Symphony Orchestra. In January 2020 he became music director of



Travis Anderson

the Seoul Philharmonic Orchestra. In 2014 he became the Iceland Symphony Orchestra's principal guest conductor; since then he has been named the ensemble's honorary conductor. He is also conductor laureate of the Lahti Symphony Orchestra, which, during two decades as music director, he transformed into one of Finland's flagship orchestras.

Vänskä began his music career as a clarinetist, holding major posts with the Helsinki Philharmonic and the Turku Philharmonic. Since taking up the instrument again for Sommerfest 2005 he has performed as clarinetist at Orchestra Hall, other Twin Cities venues, the Grand Teton Festival, the Mostly Mozart Festival, La Jolla Summerfest, the Seattle Chamber Music Festival, and several festivals in Finland. He has recorded Bernhard Henrik Crusell's three Clarinet Quartets and Kalevi Aho's Clarinet Quintet for the BIS label and is in the process of recording several duos for clarinet and violin which he has commissioned with his wife, violinist Erin Keefe.

During the 2021–22 season he is scheduled to conduct ensembles including the Antwerp Symphony Orchestra, Helsinki Philharmonic Orchestra, Netherlands Radio Philharmonic, Pittsburgh Symphony, Orchestra Orchestre National de Lyon, Seoul Philharmonic Orchestra and Tokyo Metropolitan Symphony Orchestra. In addition, he will be in residence at the Curtis Institute, where he will work with conducting fellows across a four-month span. For more information, visit minnesotaorchestra.org.

information



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Minnesota Orchestra profile

The Minnesota Orchestra, led by Music Director Osmo Vänskä, ranks among America's top symphonic ensembles, with a distinguished history of acclaimed performances in its home state and around the world. Founded in 1903, it is known for award-winning recordings as well as for notable radio broadcasts and educational engagement programs, and a commitment to new orchestral repertoire.

music director spotlight: Eugene Ormandy

■ When Henri Verbrugghen, the Orchestra's second music director, suffered a physical collapse in October 1931, the Orchestra's manager, Verna Carlyle Scott, quickly enlisted a little-known 31-year-old, Eugene Ormandy, to take his place.

■ Born in Budapest in 1899, Ormandy was a violin prodigy who arrived in New York in 1921. He became concertmaster—and then music director—of a movie house that offered classical music between screenings. His breakthrough came in 1931 when he led six concerts with the Philadelphia Orchestra as a substitute for Arturo Toscanini. Ormandy's manager recommended him for the Minneapolis vacancy, and his debut here was hailed by one critic as “one of the most brilliant concerts of the Orchestra's history.”

■ Although Ormandy is the shortest-serving of the Orchestra's ten music directors, staying for just five seasons, he is one of its most famous, and he made a great impact in raising the ensemble's stature as a highly-regarded American orchestra. Under his leadership the Orchestra made its first recordings on a major record label, RCA Victor, including a 1935 disc of Sibelius' First Symphony which Ormandy later said was “perhaps...the first Sibelius symphony to be recorded outside of Scandinavia.”

■ In 1936 Ormandy departed to begin a 44-year tenure with the Philadelphia Orchestra. He occasionally returned to Minnesota as a guest conductor, making his final appearance in May 1980, when he led Mahler's First Symphony at Orchestra Hall.



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Sarah Hicks extends contract with Minnesota Orchestra



Zoe Prinds-Flash

Principal Conductor of Live at Orchestra Hall Sarah Hicks

Welcome news for Minnesota Orchestra fans arrived earlier this fall when conductor Sarah Hicks, one of the most versatile and creative figures in recent Orchestra history, signed on to continue her role as principal conductor of Live at Orchestra Hall, including the popular Music & Movies series, through the 2023–24 season. She will oversee artistic planning for Live at Orchestra Hall and will also continue in another role, serving as host and writer of the Orchestra’s livestream and broadcast series *This Is Minnesota Orchestra*, which is now in its second season.

“It’s a thrill to continue in a role that encompasses my most meaningful priorities as an artist: telling stories through music, welcoming and connecting with audiences from across all our communities, and collaborating with great musicians and artists,” Hicks said. “My connection with the Minnesota Orchestra and our

audiences has only grown through the pandemic, and I can’t wait to step on the podium again this fall at Orchestra Hall.”

Under Hicks’ leadership, the highly-varied Live at Orchestra Hall series has included collaborations with artists from Minnesota’s popular music scene, with Hicks developing orchestral concerts with Dessa, Cloud Cult and The New Standards. In 2019 she led the Orchestra in an ambitious album with Dessa, recorded live across two sold-out performances at Orchestra Hall and released on the Doomtree Records label. This month she will conduct the debut of *Joyful Echoes*, a theatrical holiday concert in collaboration with director Peter Rothstein, composer Robert Elhai, and writer/storytellers Kevin Kling and PaviElle French.

Since joining the Orchestra in 2006 as assistant conductor, Hicks has led concerts on all of its major series and contributed talents to the ensemble far beyond conducting, hosting and planning concerts—including composing and arranging music, performing keyboard instruments, contributing to the Orchestra’s blog, and engaging in educational collaborations both on tour and in the Twin Cities. She has served in her current role since 2009.

“Sarah is such an important part of the Minnesota Orchestra team,” said Music Director Osmo Vänskä. “For over a decade she has taken great care of our Live at Orchestra Hall series, building connections with audiences, creating innovative concert programs and leading the players with very fine musicianship. She has endless creative ideas, and I know she and the Orchestra will continue to do many exciting things together in the years ahead. These concerts are in great hands.”

upcoming livestream and broadcast concerts

This Is Minnesota Orchestra, the Minnesota Orchestra’s Emmy-nominated livestream and TV/radio broadcast series, launched in fall 2020 as a way to continue live concerts when audiences couldn’t safely gather at Orchestra Hall. With the 2021–22 season now underway, safety measures are in place to allow full-capacity crowds—but the Orchestra is maintaining its relationships with audiences far and wide by continuing *This Is Minnesota Orchestra* in partnership with Twin Cities PBS and YourClassical Minnesota Public Radio. This month features two concerts in the series: on December 3, Thomas Søndergård will lead Richard Strauss’ *Ein Heldenleben*, and on New Year’s Eve, Music Director Osmo Vänskä will conduct a program of Jean Sibelius’ music in the first concert of a three-week Sibelius festival.

These two concerts will be shown live on TPT-2 television and streamed on the Orchestra’s website and social media channels. In addition, all Friday night classical concerts will continue to be broadcast on YourClassical Minnesota Public Radio. The concerts are available to audiences at no cost as they debut live and will be free for on-demand video streaming for up to a week afterward; visit minnesotaorchestra.org/digital-concerts for details on accessing older performances, including a Science of Sound Young People’s Concert that debuted last month.

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the Orchestra's new bells

This month, thanks to a friendship that began several years ago in the Orchestra Hall lobby, the Minnesota Orchestra will welcome its two newest additions: a pair of large church bells, tuned to play the pitches C and G, custom-cast for the Orchestra by the world-renowned Royal Eijsbouts foundry in the Netherlands. The rich, echoing sounds of these bells will ring out in the Hall at a crucial moment in Hector Berlioz's *Symphonie fantastique* on December 10 and 11.

a generous gift

The friends behind the bells are Brian Mount, the Orchestra's principal percussionist, and Gary Cohen, a Professor Emeritus of History, retired from the University of Minnesota in 2017, who has been a Minnesota Orchestra subscriber since arriving in the state in 2001. His generous financial gift to the Orchestra has facilitated the purchase of these two bells, with more to come in future seasons.

Mount and Cohen became friends several years ago after meeting in the Orchestra Hall lobby prior to a performance. Over years of musical conversations, one topic surfaced several times: performance practices related to the instrument popularly known as the church bell—the largest type of bell called for in standard orchestral repertoire. “I got to noticing that when a score called for bells, Brian would often use chimes or an electronic synthesizer,” Cohen noted. These conversations with Mount got Cohen's creative wheels turning. “I had seen videos online of other orchestras, and some had sets of actual bells,” Cohen said. “I was making annual gifts to the Orchestra's general fund, and then after I retired I realized I could do more. I thought about how I can do something that I can enjoy actually hearing, so I asked Brian what it would take to acquire some bells.”

“When Gary brought this up, I was completely ecstatic,” said Mount, who has had bells on his wish list nearly since he joined the Minnesota Orchestra in 1997. “Gary and I talked about how much he was able to give, and we took that number and figured out exactly which bells we could get.” Since each church bell can only play one pitch, and Western music uses 12 different pitches, the priority was to purchase first the bells which are used frequently and prominently in major orchestral repertoire. One work, Berlioz's *Symphonie fantastique*, stood out to Mount, Cohen and the Orchestra's artistic leadership. “*Symphonie fantastique* has a critical bell part,” said Mount—specifically for two bells, pitched at C and G, representing funeral rites in the climactic *Dream of a Witches' Sabbath* movement. “It's a huge part of that piece. And it's played with regularity. So some orchestras only get those two bells, because those are just dramatically featured,” Mount noted.

church bells in Orchestra Hall

With the plan in place, the Minnesota Orchestra contracted the Royal Eijsbouts foundry in the Netherlands to custom-produce the bells. After the long wait during the casting, the bells arrived at Orchestra Hall in two large crates in early 2021. Now that the two bells have



Principal Percussion Brian Mount and audience member Gary Cohen

arrived, Mount has his eyes on a low E bell, which is used in Richard Strauss' *Also sprach Zarathustra*. That instrument, too, will come to reality in a future season thanks to Cohen's ongoing support. “I committed to a multi-year gift to acquire, hopefully, a couple of bells each year,” Cohen explained.

The friendship between Mount and Cohen is now manifest in musical form, with the acquisition of bells that will stand the test of time and will be enjoyed by audiences for decades to come. This month, Cohen will enjoy the music from the back of the Hall, in balcony B, while Mount and his percussion section colleagues will be stationed at the back of the stage.

Although the bells won't be used in every concert, their presence will be unmistakable when their featured moments arrive. “One thing about percussionists,” said Mount, “is that we don't play as much as the violins, so when we have a note, we really focus on how that one note is going to sound. A violinist doesn't have time to think in detail about every one of their 18,000 notes, and some nights I have seven notes or 50 notes. So I'm going to really think about those.” Thanks to the generosity of Gary Cohen, those thoughts of real church bells in Orchestra Hall have become a reality.

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new recording initiative spotlights Black composers

In recent seasons, the Minnesota Orchestra has intentionally built its concert programs to feature more works by composers of African, Middle Eastern, Latin, Indigenous and Asian descent, exploring music both contemporary and historic. These efforts took an exciting new turn in early October with a week of recording sessions in collaboration with YourClassical Minnesota Public Radio featuring works by five Black composers, the results of which will become part of a comprehensive online database called the African Diaspora Music Project (ADMP) that will facilitate future programming by other orchestras.



In a series of sessions conducted by Scott Yoo, the Orchestra made the first-ever professional recordings of five works by Eleanor Alberga, Margaret Bonds, Ulysses Kay, James Lee III and Coleridge-Taylor Perkinson. In conjunction with the sessions, two distinguished guest speakers visited Orchestra Hall to address musicians and staff. Conductor James Blachly, co-director of the ADMP, outlined the years-long effort to research the needs of the musical community and bring the project to life. Dr. Kira Thurman, assistant professor of history and Germanic languages and literature at the University of Michigan, delivered a seminar drawing on her research into the experiences of Black musicians in the German classical tradition, as well as the complex issues of racism and exclusion within the broader classical music world.



Clockwise from top: guest conductor Scott Yoo and composers James Lee III and Eleanor Alberga

The week's events were an outgrowth of an organization-wide anti-racist learning project co-led by Minnesota Orchestra musicians Sam Bergman and Susie Park, both of whom are members of the Orchestra's Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committee. Bergman explained how the recordings will pave the way for future performances. "The hope on our end is, first off, for the featured composers who are living to be able to use these recordings however they wish, at no cost, to advance their own work and careers, and for the heirs of those deceased to be able to promote the music of their relations. But we're also very much hoping that other orchestras will use these recordings as references in deciding how these works can fit into their own concert programs. Often, works that are unrecorded aren't programmed just because no one's sure how they'll sound!"

Although the October recording sessions weren't open to the public, the recordings are now freely available on the Minnesota Orchestra's YouTube channel, and will be shared widely on Minnesota Public Radio and American Public Media. Audiences may also hear selected works performed at Orchestra Hall in upcoming seasons as future programming plans come into focus. In addition, similar recording sessions will be held in future seasons. For this first year of the project, the Orchestra's Artistic Advisory Committee made the decision to focus our efforts on Black composers, working in consultation with conductor Scott Yoo and the living composers involved, but as the project evolves and develops, future seasons may incorporate works by composers of other racial backgrounds. Visit [youtube.com/minnesotaorchestra](https://www.youtube.com/minnesotaorchestra) to hear the music, and we invite you to help spread the word!

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a Sibelius spectacular

Although Osmo Vänskä is not the first Minnesota Orchestra music director to shine a spotlight on the music of Jean Sibelius—notably, an Antal Dorati-led concert in 1955 celebrating Sibelius' 90th birthday prompted the Finnish composer to write a personal note of thanks to the Orchestra—Vänskä's career-long dedication to studying, performing and recording his countryman's music sets him apart from all other conductors working today.



Zoe Prinds-Flash

Now, with Vänskä in his final season as music director, his expertise takes center stage with a three-week festival of Sibelius' music that includes all seven symphonies—including the First and Fourth Symphonies that in 2014 brought the Orchestra its first Grammy Award for Best Orchestral Performance. Two stellar guest soloists from Finland join the Orchestra: soprano Helena Juntunen performs three Sibelius works on December 31 and January 1, while Elina Vähälä performs the rarely-heard original version of Sibelius' Violin Concerto—which has never been heard at Orchestra Hall—and returns the next week to play the work's final version. To close the festival, Orchestra violist Sam Bergman hosts an exploration of the Fifth Symphony, another work which underwent multiple iterations.

The December 31 concert will be followed by a countdown to midnight with vintage jazz from Belle Amour. Throughout the festival, beverages will be available outdoors, and other surprises and Finnish flair are sure to be in store. The extraordinary combination of the Minnesota Orchestra, Osmo Vänskä and Jean Sibelius has wowed critics around the world, and it's all been building to this—so get your tickets now at minnesotaorchestra.org!

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critics' column: recent concert reviews

“Beethoven’s Fifth [Symphony] was tremendously exhilarating....Dynamic contrast was wide and varied, urgency abounding. And at the center of it all was [Osmo] Vänskä, as entertaining as ever. Bouncing, thrusting, parrying, his shifts of posture communicating the mood of the music, his trembling hands conveyed his intensity and asked the musicians to match it with their own. Just as Beethoven’s music charted a journey from tragedy to triumph, so did this performance ascend toward exultation.”

—Rob Hubbard, *Star Tribune*,
September 24, 2021

“[Jessie Montgomery’s *Banner*] threads elements of [*The Star-Spangled Banner*] melody with other anthems from around the world, as well as...‘Lift Every Voice and Sing,’ otherwise known as the Black National Anthem. Montgomery’s 2014 piece isn’t a rebuttal of *The Star-Spangled Banner*, nor is it a riff. Rather she is investigating a richer, more multifaceted notion of what a song for America could sound like. What she has come up with is messy at times, innovative, full of points of tension and also joy.”

—Sheila Regan, *Pioneer Press*,
September 24, 2021

“While Beethoven symphonies have become a specialty of the Minnesota Orchestra during the Osmo Vänskä era, the ensemble is also quite expert at those of Shostakovich. His 10th can be pretty relentless in its darkness, particularly in a first-movement struggle between hopelessness and a survivor’s sense of well-tempered triumph. The composer’s individuality was asserted in the melancholy clarinet of Gabriel Campos Zamora and the sad but resonant French horn calls of Michael Gast.”

—Rob Hubbard, *Star Tribune*,
October 30, 2021



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a call for your questions



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Osmo through the years



Greg Helgeson

Twenty years ago last month, on November 29 and 30, 2001, Osmo Vänskä led his first performances with the Minnesota Orchestra after being named its music director designate. Cellist Truls Mørk was the featured soloist in Sergei Prokofiev's *Sinfonia concertante*; the concert also featured Einojuhani Rautavaara's *A Requiem in Our Time* and Ralph Vaughan Williams' *Symphony No. 2*.

It was only Vänskä's second appearance with the Orchestra, and *Star Tribune* critic Michael Anthony noted: "They are strangers yet, relatively speaking, conductor and orchestra. They have much to learn about one another, and yet there was no denying that this was a wonderful concert. The orchestra played superbly, and Vänskä validated his reputation as a thoughtful, dynamic presence at the podium, a sober musician, certainly, but one with a flair for color and excitement, someone who will be interesting to observe in years to come."

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Minnesota Orchestra

Thomas Søndergård, conductor

Ingrid Fliter, piano

Friday, December 3, 2021, 8 pm | Orchestra Hall
 Saturday, December 4, 2021, 8 pm | Orchestra Hall

*With these concerts we honor the memory of Elizabeth J. Indihar
 in appreciation of her generous estate gift to the Minnesota Orchestra.*

Samuel Coleridge-Taylor	Ballade for Orchestra in A minor, Opus 33	ca. 13'
Wolfgang Amadè Mozart	Concerto No. 23 in A minor for Piano and Orchestra, K. 488 Allegro Adagio Allegro assai <i>Ingrid Fliter, piano</i>	ca. 26'
	I N T E R M I S S I O N	ca. 20'
Richard Strauss	<i>Ein Heldenleben</i> (A Hero's Life), Opus 40	ca. 46'

Minnesota Orchestra concerts are broadcast live on Friday evenings on stations of [YourClassical Minnesota Public Radio](#), including KSJN 99.5 FM in the Twin Cities. The December 3 concert will also be broadcast live on [Twin Cities PBS \(TPT-2\)](#) and available for streaming at minnesotaorchestra.org and on the Orchestra's social media channels.





Thomas Søndergård, conductor

Danish conductor Thomas Søndergård is the current music director of the Royal Scottish National Orchestra (RSNO), a position he took after six seasons as principal guest conductor. Previously, he served as principal conductor of BBC National Orchestra of Wales and as principal conductor and musical advisor of the Norwegian Radio Orchestra. Recent highlights of his tenure with the RSNO have included tours to China and the U.S., premieres of new commissions and Wynton Marsalis' Violin Concerto with Nicola Benedetti. This season, he makes his first visits to the Montreal Symphony and Bergen Philharmonic and returns to many orchestras, among them the Malmö Symphony, NDR Radiophilharmonie Hannover, Royal Danish Academy of Music, Royal Danish Opera (with which he will lead Wagner's *Die Walküre* and New Year concerts), London Philharmonic and Danish National Symphony. He has been invited

to perform with many of the world's finest orchestras including the Berlin Philharmonic, Leipzig Gewandhaus Orchestra, Royal Concertgebouw, Chicago Symphony and London Symphony Orchestra.

More: askonasholt.com.



Ingrid Fliter, piano

Argentine pianist Ingrid Fliter—winner of the 2006 Gilmore Artist Award, one of only a handful of pianists and the only woman to have received this honor—made her American orchestral debut with the Atlanta Symphony just days after the announcement of her Gilmore Award. Since then, she has appeared with most of the major North American orchestras including those of Boston, Cincinnati, Cleveland, Dallas, Detroit, Houston, New Jersey, San Francisco, St. Louis, and Toronto, as well as the National Symphony Orchestra and New World Symphony. She has also performed at the Mostly

Mozart, Tanglewood, Grant Park, Aspen, Ravinia, Blossom, Tippet Rise and Brevard summer festivals. She has recorded both Chopin concertos with the Scottish Chamber Orchestra for Linn Records as well as the complete Chopin Preludes for the same label. Her two all-Chopin recordings for EMI earned her the reputation as one of the preeminent interpreters of that composer. Her most recent recordings for Linn Records feature the Mendelssohn and Schumann concertos with the Scottish Chamber Orchestra and the complete Chopin Nocturnes. More: cmartists.com, ingridfliter.com.



Sarah Hicks, host and writer

For the concert on Friday, December 3, Sarah Hicks serves as host of the Twin Cities PBS broadcast and online livestream, *This Is Minnesota Orchestra*, a role she has played over the last year. A profile appears on page 36.

one-minute notes

Coleridge-Taylor: Ballade for Orchestra

Samuel Coleridge-Taylor's Ballade—premiered two months before the cantata *Hiawatha's Wedding Feast* that made the composer famous—is music of drama and heart, beginning and ending in urgency. A slow central section is filled with passionate, lushly-scored melodies.

Mozart: Piano Concerto No. 23

This concerto is filled with music of lovely and touching gallantry, highlighted by a poignant minor-key middle movement in which the piano sings with operatic grace. The spirited finale keeps the soloist in perpetual motion.

Strauss: *Ein Heldenleben* (A Hero's Life)

Richard Strauss' epic tone poem contains all the vivid theatricality of an opera, telling the story of a hero, his companion, his struggles and his ultimate fulfillment. Of note are the sweeping hero's theme, introduced by horns, and the virtuosic violin lines that represent the hero's lover—an idealized version of Strauss' wife.



Samuel Coleridge-Taylor

Born: August 15, 1875,
London, England

Died: September 1, 1912,
Croydon, England

Ballade for Orchestra in A minor, Opus 33

Premiered: September 12, 1898

British composer Samuel Coleridge-Taylor's outstanding achievements in music—foremost among them authoring *Hiawatha's Wedding Feast*, the most successful new cantata of his era—are all the more remarkable given his passing of pneumonia at the young age of 37. On our side of the Atlantic, Coleridge-Taylor was invited to the White House by Theodore Roosevelt in 1904 during one of his three U.S. tours, and he earned such a devoted following in America that multiple choruses and public schools were named in his honor—as was the American composer Coleridge-Taylor Perkinson, born 20 years after the British composer died.

Sadly, Coleridge-Taylor's fame did not lead to great fortune. His publisher reaped the financial benefits of *Hiawatha's Wedding Feast* when, prior to the oratorio's premiere in 1898, the 23-year-old composer sold the work's full rights for 15 shillings. When the oratorio became a roaring success, Coleridge-Taylor quickly capitalized with two sequels, *The Death of Minnehaha* and *Hiawatha's Departure*, which like *Hiawatha's Wedding Feast* were based on Henry Wadsworth Longfellow's epic poem *The Song of Hiawatha*. These two cantatas enjoyed moderate success, but not on the level of the first in the series. Coleridge-Taylor spent the rest of his life generating compositions at a rapid pace, but only scraping by financially.

right before fame

Hiawatha's Wedding Feast wasn't Coleridge-Taylor's only success in 1898. That February he conducted a conservatory string section in a concert at the Croydon Conservatoire of Music at which Jessie Walmisley, his former classmate at the Royal College of Music, sang his music—part of a blossoming relationship that grew into marriage the next year. In September, two months before the premiere of *Hiawatha's Wedding Feast*, Coleridge-Taylor's *Ballade for Orchestra* was warmly received in its first performance at the Three Choirs Festival in Gloucester, England, with the composer conducting.

Edward Elgar, who was about to compose his famous *Enigma Variations*, helped facilitate Coleridge-Taylor's connection with the Three Choirs Festival by recommending the young composer to the festival's leaders, stating that he was “far and away the cleverest fellow going amongst all the young men.” The commission was soon secured, and Coleridge-Taylor delivered a single-movement work spanning 13 minutes for an orchestra of typical wind, brass and string complements plus timpani, with piccolo brightening the tone of the wind section, and cymbals as the sole percussion instrument. The piece evidently pleased the festival's leadership, as Coleridge-Taylor returned the next year to conduct the premiere of his *Solemn Prelude*, and in 1903 he contributed a third work, *The Atonement*. The Three Choirs Festival still runs today and featured *Solemn Prelude* at its 2021 edition.

confidence, passion and tenderness

The *Ballade in A minor* is the second of three works Coleridge-Taylor titled *Ballade*, all of them in minor keys: a D-minor *Ballade* preceded it in 1895 and a C-minor *Ballade* came in 1909. In instrumental classical music, a ballade has no strict form, but often emphasizes lyricism and a sense of dramatic narrative. This A-minor *Ballade* conveys confidence, passion and tenderness without a specific programmatic story. Although Coleridge-Taylor designates the key of A minor, the score contains six key changes, all in the work's latter half. The opening is an exciting, dramatic show of strength, with trilling winds above unison strings—but before long the music turns slower, passionate and romantic. These two moods alternate throughout the work, with the urgency of the opening theme ultimately triumphing.

Instrumentation: 2 flutes, piccolo, 2 oboes, 2 clarinets, 2 bassoons, 4 horns, 2 trumpets, 3 trombones, tuba, timpani, cymbals and strings

Program note by *Carl Schroeder*.





Wolfgang Amadè Mozart

Born: January 17, 1756,
Salzburg, Austria

Died: December 5, 1791,
Vienna, Austria

Concerto No. 23 in A major for Piano and Orchestra, K. 488

Composed: ca. early 1786

The opera *The Marriage of Figaro* was Wolfgang Amadè Mozart's big project in the spring of 1786, but the composer repeatedly interrupted himself to dash off several additional works, including his Piano Concerto No. 23. He entered it into his catalogue on March 2 and presumably played it in Vienna soon after.

the music: lovely and touching

allegro. The first movement, music of lovely and touching gallantry, is the essence of Mozartian reticence and *dolcezza*. Its second chord, darkened by an unexpected G-natural in the second violins, already suggests the sadness that will cast fleeting shadows throughout the concerto and altogether dominate its slow movement.

It is both fascinating and delightful the way Mozart scores the two main themes. He begins both with strings alone. He continues the first with an answering phrase just for winds, punctuated twice by forceful string chords, and that leads to the first passage for full orchestra. In the new theme he proceeds more subtly: a bassoon joins the violins nine measures into the melody and, as though encouraged by that, the flute appears in mid-phrase, with horns and clarinets arriving just in time to reinforce the cadence. The beginning of the development is spliced neatly into the end of the exposition; the real activity is in the woodwinds, and the piano accompanies with bright figurations. The recapitulation brings new distribution of material between solo and orchestra. After the cadenza comes a buoyant coda whose close is tongue-in-cheek matter-of-fact.

adagio. Slow movements in minor keys are surprisingly uncommon in Mozart, master of melancholy in music, and this one is in fact the last he writes. An Adagio marking is rare, too, and this movement is an altogether special transformation of the lilting siciliano style. The exquisite dissonances heard in the orchestra's first phrase are brought about by the bassoon's imitation of clarinet and violins. A second theme is more chromatic and thus still more moody than the first.

Throughout, Mozart the pianist imagines himself as the ideal opera singer. Near the end, he writes a miraculous and especially operatic passage, the strings playing simple broken chords, part pizzicato, part arco, over which the piano declaims a noble and passionate melody notable for its range: two and a half octaves, at one point traversed in a single leap. Pianists differ about what to do here, some simply playing the notes in the score, others filling the gaps (in time and space) with embellishments of their own. Our knowledge of 18th-century practice suggests that Mozart might well have taken the latter way.

allegro assai. After the restraint of the first movement and the melancholia of the second, Mozart gives us a finale of enchanting high spirits. It keeps the pianist very busy in music that comes close to perpetual motion and in which there is plenty to engage our ear, now so alert to the delicacy and overflowing invention with which Mozart uses those few and quiet instruments.

Instrumentation: solo piano with orchestra comprising flute, 2 clarinets, 2 bassoons, 2 horns and strings

Program note excerpted from the late Michael Steinberg's The Concerto: A Listener's Guide (Oxford University Press, 1995), used with permission.



Richard Strauss

Born: June 11, 1864,
Munich, Germany

Died: September 8, 1949,
Garmisch-Partenkirchen,
Germany

Ein Heldenleben (A Hero's Life), Opus 40

Premiered: March 3, 1899

In the summer of 1898, 34-year-old Richard Strauss set to work on what would be his longest tone poem to date, *Ein Heldenleben*, or *A Hero's Life*—the musical depiction of the life and struggles of an unnamed hero.

In a letter to a friend that summer, Strauss offered a rather disingenuous explanation of why he had chosen this topic: "Beethoven's *Eroica* is so little beloved of our conductors, and is on this account now only rarely performed that to fulfill a pressing need I am composing a largeish tone poem titled *Heldenleben*, admittedly without a funeral march, but yet in E-flat, with lots of horns, which are always a yardstick of heroism."

But the work that was completed that December and premiered the following March was far indeed from the spirit of the *Eroica*, and Strauss was probably right to note that the only thing the two pieces have in common is the key, E-flat major. While Beethoven's *Eroica* offers a rather abstract representation of heroism, in *Ein Heldenleben* Strauss paints in microscopic detail portraits of his hero, the hero's snarling adversaries, a coquettish lover, a terrific battle in which his enemies are chased off the field, and the hero's reward: a contemplative if not entirely serene retirement.

Scored for massive orchestra and shaped by Strauss' ingenious transformation of themes across its more than 40-minute span, *Ein Heldenleben* remains, 122 years after its premiere, one of the great showpieces of orchestral classical music.

the hero's journey: foes, a lover and a battle

Ein Heldenleben has one of the greatest openings in all of music. From the depths of the orchestra, Strauss introduces his hero with a long, sweeping theme whose powerful stride leaps up across three octaves, changing from the dark colors of lower strings and horns to the silvery sound of massed violins as it climbs. Here is a man of force and idealism, constantly striving toward something higher, and the arc of his music is always upward. It is riding a shaft of incandescent energy when it suddenly vanishes in mid-air.

Out of that silence comes something completely different. Here are the hero's enemies, and their music, twisted and gnarled, is depicted by ugly, carping solo woodwinds. Each seems to have a particularly nasty character: individual entrances are marked "very sharp and spiky" and "jarring." (At early performances of *Ein Heldenleben*, outraged music critics felt that Strauss was depicting them in his portrait of the hero's enemies—and they may well have been right.) The hero's theme grows somber as he muses on these adversaries, but before he can face them he is interrupted by the other important figure in this music-drama, his lover.

The companion of this powerful hero is a formidable woman in her own right. Strauss confessed that she was modeled on his own wife: "She is very complex, very feminine, a little perverse, a little coquettish, never like herself, at every minute different from how she had been the moment before." Here she is portrayed by the solo violin, and as he paints her mercurial portrait, Strauss gives the concertmaster some of the most difficult music ever written for that instrument. Individual passages are given markings such as "happy," "flippant," "tender," "insolent," "lovable" and "scolding" before the union is consummated in soaring G-flat major love music that intertwines the themes of the hero and his love.

Their happiness is brief. Distant trumpets pierce the warm calm of the love scene, calling the hero to battle, where finally he must face his adversaries. Over rattling drums, his enemies attack, their

jagged trumpet call a wonderful transformation of the first theme from the adversaries' section. The battle rages at great length above the clash of spears and glint of swords, and through the smoke of the battlefield Strauss deftly weaves together the hero's theme, the adversaries' theme and the love music. Finally the hero triumphs and chases his enemies away (their retreat is a flurry of descending 16th-notes from the woodwinds), and he makes a magnificent entrance on the hero's theme, now back in the original E-flat major.

controversy, serenity and repose

There follows the most controversial section of *Ein Heldenleben*. A recounting of the hero's "works of peace," it takes the form of quotations from Strauss' own music, quotations from *Don Juan*, *Don Quixote*, *Macbeth*, *Guntram*, *Till Eulenspiegel*, the song "Traum durch die Dämmerung" and other works. Critics have been quick, perhaps too quick, to interpret *Ein Heldenleben* as a vehicle for the composer's ego. Often overlooked in the rush to scold Strauss is his skill: he weaves these themes together so deftly, in such graceful counterpoint, as to (almost) disarm criticism for calling attention to his own accomplishments.

If the battle music runs on a little too long, and if the hero's works of peace seem self-indulgent, Strauss rewards our patience in the final section, a portrait of the hero in old age. He clearly suffers from bad dreams (memories of his enemies pop up from time to time to disturb his reveries), but the final moments of *Ein Heldenleben* bring serenity, beauty and repose. The enemies have been banished, and now the themes of the hero and his love return, transformed far from their initial hard-edged appearance.

Borne along by some wonderful writing for solo violin and solo horn, the hero at last finds peace. At the close, a noble chord for winds (in pure E-flat major) swells to a mighty climax, then falls away to silence as the hero completes his journey.

Instrumentation: 3 flutes, piccolo, 4 oboes (1 doubling English horn), 2 clarinets, bass clarinet, E-flat clarinet, 3 bassoons, contrabassoon, 8 horns, 5 trumpets, 3 trombones, tuba, tenor tuba, timpani, small military drum, tenor drum, bass drum, cymbals, tamtam, triangle, 2 harps and strings

Program note by **Eric Bromberger**.



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Minnesota Orchestra

Fabien Gabel, conductor

Tai Murray, violin

Friday, December 10, 2021, 8 pm | Orchestra Hall
Saturday, December 11, 2021, 8 pm | Orchestra Hall

Engelbert Humperdinck	Overture to <i>Königskinder</i> (The King's Children)	ca. 8'
Felix Mendelssohn	Concerto in E minor for Violin and Orchestra, Opus 64 Allegro molto appassionato Andante Allegretto non troppo – Allegro molto vivace <i>Tai Murray, violin</i>	ca. 27'
	I N T E R M I S S I O N	ca. 20'
Hector Berlioz	<i>Symphonie fantastique</i> Reveries–Passions (Largo – Allegro agitato e appassionato assai) A Ball (Valse: Allegro non troppo) In the Country (Adagio) March to the Scaffold (Allegretto non troppo) Dream of the Witches' Sabbath (Larghetto – Allegro)	ca. 49'

pre-concert

Concert Preview with Phillip Gainsley
Friday, December 10, 7 pm, Auditorium
Saturday, December 11, 7 pm, Auditorium

Minnesota Orchestra concerts are broadcast live on Friday evenings on stations of [YourClassical Minnesota Public Radio](#), including KSJN 99.5 FM in the Twin Cities.





Fabien Gabel, conductor

Fabien Gabel's conducting has taken him across the globe to lead top orchestras including the Cleveland Orchestra, National Symphony Orchestra, San Francisco Symphony, Danish National Symphony Orchestra, Deutsches Symphonie Orchester, Frankfurt Radio Symphony, Helsinki Philharmonic Orchestra, London Philharmonic Orchestra, London Symphony Orchestra, Mahler Chamber Orchestra, NDR Elbphilharmonie Orchestra, Netherlands Radio Philharmonic, Orchestre de la Suisse Romande, Orchestre National de France, Oslo Philharmonic, Seoul Philharmonic and Warsaw Philharmonic. Gabel began studying trumpet at the age of 6, honing his skills at the Conservatoire National Supérieur de Musique de Paris and later at the Musik Hochschule of Karlsruhe. In 2002 he

studied conducting at the Aspen Summer Music Festival with David Zinman, who invited him to appear as a guest conductor at the festival in 2009. In 2020 Gabel was awarded the rank of Chevalier (Knight) by the Conseil de l'Ordre des Arts et des Lettres, a recognition given by France's Ministry of Culture. More: opus3artists.com, fabiengabel.com.



Tai Murray, violin

Winner of an Avery Fisher Career Grant in 2004, Tai Murray was subsequently named a BBC New Generation Artist. She has performed as guest soloist on the stages of such halls as the Barbican, Chicago's Orchestra Hall, Copenhagen's Tivoli Gardens and Shanghai's Concert Hall, and with ensembles such as the Atlanta Symphony, BBC Scottish

Symphony and Orquesta Sinfónica Simón Bolívar. Highlights of her recent performances include engagements at the BBC Proms with BBC National Orchestra of Wales, a tour with the Orchester de Bretagne, and concerts with the Orchester de Picardie, the Chineke! Orchestra and the Jacksonville Symphony Orchestra. Her critically-acclaimed debut recording for Harmonia Mundi of Ysaÿe's six sonatas for solo violin was released in 2012. Her second recording of works by American composers of the 20th century was released in 2013 by the Berlin-based label eaSonus, and her third disc with the Bernstein Serenade was released in 2014 on the French label Mirare. A 2012 recipient of the Sphinx Organization's Sphinx Medal of Excellence, she is an assistant professor of violin at the Yale School of Music. More: taimurray.com.

one-minute notes

Humperdinck: Overture to *Königskinder*

Like Engelbert Humperdinck's *Hansel and Gretel*, *Königskinder* is a fairy-tale opera involving a witch—but in this case with a central romance between a king's son and a goose girl. Although they meet a tragic end, this is not foreshadowed in the energetic overture, set in triple meter with regal undertones.

Mendelssohn: Violin Concerto

Felix Mendelssohn's exquisite Violin Concerto maintains the transparent textures of a Mozart-Haydn orchestra, but it rings out with a splendor the earlier composers never dreamed possible. The solo violinist's soaring lines, both graceful and impassioned, conclude in an exultant three-octave leap.

Berlioz: *Symphonie fantastique*

In what musicologist Michael Steinberg called "the most remarkable First Symphony ever written," Hector Berlioz breaks the rules and oversteps the boundaries, creating an exhilarating, one-of-a-kind journey: the story of an artist and his obsession with a woman.





Engelbert Humperdinck

Born: September 1, 1854,
Siegburg, Germany

Died: September 27, 1921,
Neustrelitz, Germany

Overture to *Königskinder* (The King's Children)

Premiered: December 28, 1910

If Engelbert Humperdinck, who passed away 100 years ago this fall, were to visit the 21st century, he would surely be delighted that his fairy-tale opera *Hansel and Gretel* enjoys frequent stagings and is loved by audiences around the world, saddened that his other works are almost never performed, and perplexed that his name has been appropriated by the British pop singer born Arnold George Dorsey (a mid-1960s marketing ploy by Dorsey's manager, who felt the singer needed a memorable stage name).

following a stunning debut

Humperdinck, who began his career as an acolyte of Richard Wagner, emerged on the international scene in 1893 with almost unimaginable success: his first opera, *Hansel and Gretel*, was declared a masterpiece by Richard Strauss, and early performances were led by the likes of Gustav Mahler and Cosima Wagner. The opera quickly made its way around the world, and the libretto by the composer's sister Adelheid Wette has been translated into more than a dozen languages. Its popularity grew in the 20th century through historic broadcasts, recordings, and the issuing of arrangements and excerpts that extended the music's reach beyond the opera house.

Humperdinck faced a daunting question—what next?—and forged ahead in 1897 with another fairy-tale stage work, *Königskinder* (German for *The King's Children*). Originally a melodrama using an experimental technique halfway between singing and speaking, it was re-worked in 1910 as a traditional opera. Although its premiere at New York's Metropolitan Opera was a success, *Königskinder* fell out of popularity during World War I and has only rarely returned to the stage. The Minnesota Orchestra—then known as the Minneapolis Symphony Orchestra—played three selections from *Königskinder* at a youth concert in 1914, which until this week was the only time the ensemble has played music by Humperdinck not from *Hansel and Gretel*.

Unlike *Hansel and Gretel*, based on the well-known Grimm brothers tale, *Königskinder* has an unfamiliar and complex plot, and ends tragically for its central characters, a “goose girl” and a

king's son. This somber close, however, is not foreshadowed in the energetic overture featured at these concerts, which is set in triple meter with regal undertones befitting the opera's title.

Instrumentation: 2 flutes, piccolo, 2 oboes, 2 clarinets, bass clarinet, 2 bassoons, contrabassoon, 4 horns, 3 trumpets, 3 trombones, tuba, timpani, cymbals, triangle and strings

Program note by *Carl Schroeder*.



Felix Mendelssohn

Born: February 3, 1809,
Hamburg, Germany

Died: November 4, 1847,
Leipzig, Germany

Concerto in E minor for Violin and Orchestra, Opus 64

Premiered: March 13, 1845

“I would like to write you a violin concerto for next winter. One in E minor keeps running through my head, and the opening gives me no peace.” So wrote Felix Mendelssohn to his lifelong friend, violinist Ferdinand David, in 1838, and that opening has given millions of music lovers no peace ever since, for it is one of the most perfect violin melodies ever written.

Mendelssohn's Violin Concerto seems so polished, so effortless in its easy flow, that this music feels as if it must have appeared in one sustained stroke of his pen. Yet it took seven years to write. Normally a fast worker, Mendelssohn proceeded very carefully on this concerto, revising, polishing and consulting with David, his concertmaster at the Leipzig Gewandhaus Orchestra, at every step of its composition. He completed the score while on vacation in Soden, near Frankfurt, during the summer of 1844, and David gave the premiere in Leipzig on March 13, 1845. Mendelssohn was ill at the time and could not conduct, so his assistant, the Danish composer Niels Gade, led the first performance.

originality and endless beauty

We do not normally think of Mendelssohn as an innovator, but his Violin Concerto is as remarkable for its originality as for its endless beauty. It is deftly scored: he writes for what is essentially the Mozart-Haydn orchestra, and he keeps textures transparent and the soloist audible throughout. But he can also make that orchestra ring out with a splendor that Mozart and Haydn never dreamed of.



allegro molto appassionato. The innovations begin in the first instant. Mendelssohn does away with the standard orchestral exposition and has the violin enter in the second bar with its famous theme, marked *Allegro molto appassionato* and played entirely on the violin's E-string; this soaring idea immediately establishes the movement's singing yet impassioned character. Other themes follow in turn: a transitional figure for the orchestra and the true second subject, a chorale-like tune first given out by the woodwinds.

The quiet timpani strokes in the first few seconds, which subtly energize the orchestra's swirling textures, show the hand of a master. Another innovation: Mendelssohn sets the cadenza where we do not expect it, at the end of the development rather than just before the coda. That cadenza—a terrific compilation of trills, harmonics and arpeggios—appears to have been largely the creation of David, who fashioned it from Mendelssohn's themes. The return of the orchestra is a masterstroke: it is the *orchestra* that brings back the movement's main theme as the *violinist* accompanies the orchestra with dancing arpeggios.

andante. Mendelssohn hated applause between movements, and he tried to guard against it here by tying the first two movements together with a single bassoon note. The two themes of the *Andante* might by themselves define the term “romanticism.” There is a sweetness about this music that could, in other hands, turn cloying, but Mendelssohn skirts that danger gracefully. The soloist has the arching and falling opening melody, while the orchestra gives out the darker, more insistent second subject. The writing for violin in this movement, full of double-stopping and fingered octaves, is a great deal more difficult than it sounds.

allegretto non troppo–allegro molto vivace. Mendelssohn joins the second and third movements with an anticipatory bridge passage that subtly takes its shape from the concerto's opening theme. Resounding fanfares from the orchestra lead directly to the soloist's entrance on an effervescent, dancing melody so full of easy grace that we seem suddenly in the fairyland atmosphere of Mendelssohn's own incidental music to *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. Several other themes appear along the way, some combined in ingenious ways. But it is the sprightly opening melody that dominates as the music seems to fly through the sparkling coda to the violin's exultant three-octave leap at the very end.

Instrumentation: solo violin with orchestra comprising 2 flutes, 2 oboes, 2 clarinets, 2 bassoons, 2 horns, 2 trumpets, timpani and strings

Program note by **Eric Bromberger**.



Hector Berlioz

Born: December 11, 1803,
La Côte-Saint-André, France

Died: March 8, 1869,
Rue de Calais, Paris, France

Symphonie fantastique, Opus 14

Premiered: December 5, 1830

hector Berlioz composed *Symphonie fantastique* in 1830, when much that was new and forward-looking was in the air, particularly in the social, political and scientific spheres. The Parisians had torn up their cobblestones and gotten rid of a king who believed in Divine Right; the British parliament would soon enact the first in a series of reform bills designed to enfranchise the middle class; the United States experienced the Nat Turner revolts and the first effective moves towards the abolition of slavery.

the “new music” of Berlioz

It would be surprising if music had not exploded as well. From today's vantage point we can see fairly easily that the beginnings of a new kind of classical music were to be found in the works of Beethoven. And the better we know the *Symphonie fantastique*, the more clearly we can sense in it the presence of Beethoven and of that classical tradition Beethoven brought to so remarkable a pass.

At the same time, however deeply he was in debt to Beethoven, Berlioz strove to write “new music.” He succeeded. The *fantastique* sounds and behaves like nothing ever heard before. It takes off on paths Beethoven could never have imagined; that it was written just three years after the death of Beethoven is a fact to stagger the historical imagination.

a composer's obsession

In 1827, at the Paris Odéon, Berlioz saw a staging of *Hamlet* by a company from London. Among the performers was Harriet Smithson, a 27-year-old actress with whom Berlioz fell instantly and wildly in love. He wrote to her repeatedly; he heard gossip about an affair between her and her manager. This hurt him, but it also provided enough distance to enable him to plan and to begin work on the symphony—whose subject was an artist “with a vivid imagination” who falls in love with his “ideal” woman, experiences hope and doubt, then an opium-induced dream in which he sees himself being executed for killing his beloved; after his death she appears to be “only a prostitute” taking part in an orgy at “a foul assembly of sorcerers and devils.”



The premiere took place on December 5, 1830. Two years later Berlioz presented a sharpened and improved version of his symphony, now with a sequel whose script was full of unmistakable allusions to his passion for Smithson. She was in Paris again, and she was persuaded to attend Berlioz' concert on December 9, 1832. They finally met, and on October 3, 1833, they were married. The whole business was a disaster. By the time they separated in 1844, Smithson was no longer performing, as an accident had put an end to her career. She died in 1854, an alcoholic and paralyzed; though they were no longer together, Berlioz supported her financially until her death.

a fantastic symphony

Berlioz wrote several programs for his autobiographical and in every way fantastic symphony. Excerpts from the note he published with the score in 1845 are indicated with quotation marks.

reveries - passions. A young musician, “the artist,” sees and falls hopelessly in love with a woman who embodies the charms of “the ideal being of whom he has dreamed.” In his mind she is linked to a musical thought, and both “the melodic image and its human model pursue him incessantly like a double *idée fixe*....The passage from this state of melancholic reverie, interrupted by a few fits of unmotivated joy, to one of delirious passion, with its movements of fury and jealousy, its return of tenderness, its tears, its religious consolation—all this is the subject of the first movement.”

The subtly shaped *idée fixe* is the melody that violins and flute play to an accompaniment of nervous interjections by the strings when the *Allegro* begins.

a ball. Whether the artist is engaged in festivities or contemplating nature, the “beloved image appears before him and troubles his soul.” The first three dozen measures paint for us the ballroom with its glitter and flicker, its swirling couples, the yards and yards of whispering silk. All this becomes gradually visible, like a new scene in the theater. This softly scintillating waltz is exquisitely scored.

in the country. The artist is calmed by the sound of shepherds piping, by “the quiet rustling of the trees gently disturbed by the wind,” but wondering if his beloved might be deceiving him, he feels a “mixture of hope and fear...ideas of happiness disturbed by black presentiments.” This scene speaks very much from a new sensibility, yet it is also here that we most feel the presence of Beethoven, particularly the Beethoven of the Fifth and *Pastoral* Symphonies. Berlioz' piping shepherds are mutations of Beethoven's nightingale, quail and cuckoo, but there is nothing in music before this, or since, like the pathos of the recapitulated conversation with one voice missing. As a picture of despairing

loneliness it is without equal.

march to the scaffold. “Having become certain that his love goes unrecognized, the artist poisons himself with opium.” But rather than dying, he “dreams that he has killed the woman he loves, that he is condemned, led to the scaffold, and that he is witnessing his own execution.” In this stunning march, an instant knockout, Berlioz' orchestral imagination—the hand-stopped horn sounds, the use of the bassoon quartet, the timpani writing—is astonishing in every way.

dream of the witches' sabbath. The artist sees himself “in the midst of a frightful assembly of ghosts, sorcerers, monsters of every kind, all come together for his funeral.” The melody representing his beloved is now “no more than the tune of an ignoble dance, trivial and grotesque...she takes part in the devilish orgy...funeral knell, burlesque parody of the *Dies irae*...”

As we enter the final scene, with its trim thematic transformations, its bizarre sonorities—deep bells, squawking E-flat clarinet, the beating of violin and viola strings with the wooden stick of the bow, glissandos for wind instruments, violent alternations of *ff* with *pp*—its grotesque imagery, its wild and coruscating brilliance, we have left the Old World for good.

sound the bells

This week's performances of *Symphonie fantastique* feature a Minnesota Orchestra debut: the unveiling of a pair of large church bells, custom-cast for the Minnesota Orchestra by the Royal Eijsbouts foundry in the Netherlands and added to the Orchestra's permanent instrument collection thanks to a donation by Orchestra patron Gary B. Cohen. Learn more about the bells on page 12.

Instrumentation: 2 flutes (1 doubling piccolo), 2 oboes (1 doubling English horn), 2 clarinets (1 doubling E-flat clarinet), 4 bassoons, 4 horns, 2 trumpets, 2 cornets, 3 trombones, 2 tubas, timpani, field drum, bass drum, cymbals, 2 large bells, 2 harps and strings

Program note excerpted from the late Michael Steinberg's The Symphony: A Listener's Guide (Oxford University Press, 1995), used with permission.



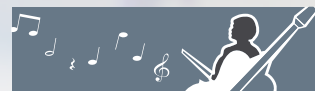
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R. Douglas Wright, trombone | John Tranter, bass trombone | Steven Campbell, tuba

Sunday, December 12, 2021, 2 pm | Orchestra Hall

The program for tonight's concert will be announced from the stage. There will be one intermission.



Trumpeter **Charles Lazarus**, a member of the Minnesota Orchestra since 2000, has charted a unique course during his tenure with the Orchestra. As a soloist, composer and bandleader, he has created and starred in four original orchestral shows featuring his jazz ensemble: "A Night in the Tropics," "American Riffs," "Fly Me to the Moon" and "Our Love is Here to Stay," a collaboration with The Steeles and Prince's former keyboardist Tommy Barbarella. In 2015, he premiered Steve Heitzeg's concerto *American Nomad*, commissioned by Paul Grangaard. His composition *A Perfect Square*, paired with Michael Hall's book of the same name, was made into a children's animated short film. He has been a member of several of the best-known brass ensembles in the world including Canadian Brass, Dallas Brass and Meridian Arts Ensemble, and has performed with Empire Brass, London Brass and the New York Philharmonic

Principal Brass. His four solo recordings, *Solo Settings*, *Zabava*, *Merry & Bright* and *Lovejoy* showcase his wide-ranging talent and feature collaborations with diverse composers, arrangers and performers, including members of the Minnesota Orchestra. He is on the faculty of the School of Music at the University of Minnesota.

Bruce A. Henry has been influenced by legends such as John Coltrane, Leon Thomas, Nina Simone and Marvin Gaye. He has recorded for Disney, HBO and national ad campaigns.

Tonia Hughes Kendrick's vocal style combines elements of gospel, blues, jazz, R&B and worship music. She is a singer, songwriter, recording and theater artist, and was the recipient of a 2017-18 McKnight Fellowship.

Tommy Barbarella worked extensively with Prince, among many other artists. He arranged *Purple Rain* for the Minnesota Orchestra's 2016 performance at the Minnesota Vikings home opener and recently composed *Symphony of the North*, a work that was recorded by the Orchestra for use at all Vikings home games at U.S. Bank Stadium.

Jeff Bailey is active as a performer, composer, producer and educator with world-renowned jazz artists. He has performed with Joey McIntyre of New Kids on the Block, Doc Severinsen, Jonatha Brooke, Heather Headley, Doc Martin, Chastity Brown and Charley Drayton.

David Schmalenberger recently performed with Cantus, The Steeles, Garrison Keillor and cabaret legend Marilyn Maye. He also recently recorded with the Laura Caviani Trio and the Bill Simenson Jazz Orchestra. He teaches at Augsburg University and Anoka Ramsey Community College.

Daryl Boudreaux is a percussionist, singer, songwriter and member of the Grammy-winning Sounds of Blackness. He has performed with The Steeles, Bruce Henry, Jody Watley, T. Mychael Rambo, Ronnie Laws, Mint Condition, Ann Nesby, Parliament-Funkadelic, the Minnesota Orchestra and the Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra.

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Joyful Echoes

with the Minnesota Orchestra

Sarah Hicks, conductor

Holiday Concerts

Thursday, December 16, 2021, 11 am	Orchestra Hall
Friday, December 17, 2021, 8 pm	Orchestra Hall
Saturday, December 18, 2021, 8 pm	Orchestra Hall
Sunday, December 19, 2021, 2 pm	Orchestra Hall

*Joyful Echoes is dedicated to the memory of our friend, colleague and extraordinary musician **Peter Ostroushko**.*

Act I: Through a Child's Eyes

ca. 45'

I N T E R M I S S I O N

ca. 20'

Act II: I Put Away Childish Things

ca. 45'

ensemble

Christina Baldwin*

Robert O. Berdahl*

PaviElle French

Kevin Kling*

Thomasina Petrus*

T. Mychael Rambo*

Peter Rothstein, stage director and concept**

PaviElle French, writer and composer ("The Gift")

Kevin Kling, writer

Robert Elhai, composer and arranger

Peter Ostroushko, composer ("Heart of the Heartland")

Eric McEnaney, musical preparation

Alice Fredrickson, costume designer

Amber Brown, assistant costume designer

Kelli Foster Warder, assistant director/choreographer

Jim Lichtscheidl, movement director

Priscilla Bruce, hair and makeup designer

Z Makila, production stage manager

Additional arrangements by Daniel Lawonn and Andy Thompson.

* Member of Actors Equity Association, the union of professional actors and stage managers in the United States

**Member of the Stage Directors and Choreographers Society, a national theatrical labor union





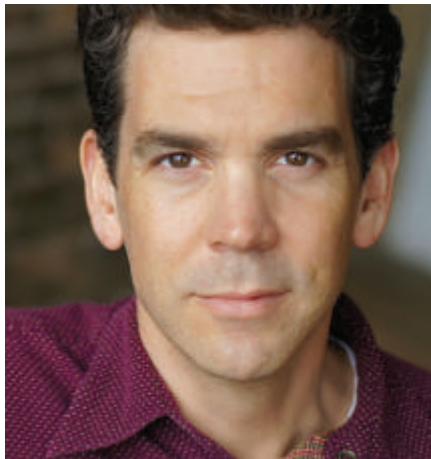
Sarah Hicks, conductor

Sarah Hicks, the Minnesota Orchestra's principal conductor of Live at Orchestra Hall, has led a broad range of programs since joining the Orchestra as assistant conductor in 2006. Her notable projects here have included co-creating the Inside the Classics and Sam & Sarah series with Orchestra violist Sam Bergman; conducting a live-in-concert recording with singer-rapper Dessa that was released on Doontree Records; and leading many original Orchestra programs and Movies & Music concerts. Throughout the redesigned 2020-21 season, she also served as on-camera host of the Twin Cities PBS broadcast and online livestream, *This Is Minnesota Orchestra*, a role she continues throughout the 2021-22 season. She has conducted orchestras around the world, working often with singer-songwriter-pianist Ben Folds, and touring with Sting in 2011. A specialist in film music and the film-in-concert genre, she premiered Pixar in Concert and Disney-Pixar's *Coco* in Concert; her live concert recording of *A Celebration of the Music of Coco at the Hollywood Bowl* can be seen on Disney+ and her work on *The Little Mermaid Live* was broadcast on ABC in 2019. More: minnesotaorchestra.org.



Christina Baldwin, ensemble

Christina Baldwin is a singer, actor, writer and director who has engaged audiences in film, on stage and in the concert setting and serves as artistic director of the Jungle Theater. She is an advocate of new work and serves as artistic associate, music director and performer with The Moving Company. A collaborator with Theatre de la Jeune Lune for nearly 10 years, she co-adapted and performed the title role in their critically-acclaimed touring production of *Carmen* and was a part of their 2005 Tony Award-winning season. She has been a frequent soloist and recording artist with the Minnesota Orchestra and a writer-actor on the nationally broadcast public radio show *Wits*. More: christina-baldwin.com.



Robert O. Berdahl, ensemble

Robert O. Berdahl has been featured in productions at the Guthrie Theater from 1999 to the present, including *The Royal*

Family, *The Music Man*, *A Christmas Carol*, *My Fair Lady*, *The Sunshine Boys*, *H.M.S. Pinafore*, *The 39 Steps*, *Macbeth*, *1776*, *She Loves Me*, *Pygmalion*, *Twelfth Night*, *The School for Scandal* and *Warm Beer Cold Women*. He also recently played Billy Flynn in *Chicago* at Theatre Latté Da, Harry Bright in *Mamma Mia!* at the Ordway, and Beast in *Beauty and the Beast* at Chanhassen Dinner Theatre. Additionally, he has appeared in lead roles at other theaters locally and across the country. More: robertberdahl.com.



Pavielle French, ensemble, writer and composer

Pavielle French began performing at age five. Her distinctive musical voice is described as a dynamic, soulful tonality with a fearless jazz based improvisational scat technique, a powerful range from tenor to soprano with rhythmic hip-hop-style delivery. She has won awards such as the Sage and an Emmy for choreography/dance and a documentary on her life and career. As an artist focused on Black/POCI/LGBTQIA communities, she speaks truth to power in her original work. She mentors young artists in the Twin Cities as she had mentors growing up, and feels it is her duty as an artist with a platform to be a voice. In 2015 she was named Best R&B Vocalist by Minneapolis *City Pages*. More: minnesotaorchestra.org.



Kevin Kling, ensemble and writer

Kevin Kling's stories and plays have been performed around the world. In addition to this week's program, *Joyful Echoes*, he has been part of the last four years of holiday programs with the Minnesota Orchestra. His collaborations with composer Victor Zupanc include *For the Birds* performed by Zeitgeist and both *The Burning Wisdom of Finn McCool* and *The Twelve Dancing Princesses* performed by the Metropolitan Symphony Orchestra and the St. Olaf Orchestra. His other collaborators include Steve Kramer, Chastity Brown, Mason Jennings, Dan Chouinard, Prudence Johnson, Bradley Greenwald, Dane Stauffer, Claudia Schmidt, Simone Perrin, Marc Anderson, Jaqueline Ultan, Michelle Kinney and James Hersch. Kling was named the Minneapolis Story Laureate by then-Mayor R.T. Rybak in 2014. More: kevincling.com.



Thomasina Petrus, ensemble

Thomasina Petrus is a 30-year equity actor and premier jazz vocalist in the Twin Cities. She is a founding member of New Dawn Theatre, a company member of Penumbra Theatre and Brownbody.org, and has collaborated with the Twin Cities' most beloved artists, mentors and friends including James "Cornbread" Harris, Sr., Javetta Steele, T. Mychael Rambo, Stokley, Walter Chancellor, Austene Van and Prince. She is a Playwright Center McKnight Theatre Arts Fellow, African American Registry Artist, Ivey Award winner, Minnesota Theatre Awards winner, and *Star Tribune* honoree. As creator of Thomasina's *Cashew Brittle*, she has been featured at the Minnesota State Fair, local retailers and online. More: thomasinascashewbrittle.com.



T. Mychael Rambo, ensemble

Regional Emmy Award-winning actor, vocalist, arts educator and community organizer T. Mychael Rambo has made an indelible mark here in the Twin

Cities performing principal roles at such theaters as Penumbra Theatre, the Guthrie Theater, Ordway Theatre, Illusion Theatre, Mixed Blood Theatre, New Dawn Theatre, Park Square Theatre, Ten Thousand Things Theater, Theater Latté Da, Children's Theatre Company and Minnesota Opera. He has also performed in stage productions at Carnegie Hall and abroad in Africa, Europe and South America. He has appeared in local and national television commercials, feature films, HBO mini-series and other television programming. He is an accomplished residency artist and an affiliate professor in the College of Liberal Arts, Theatre Arts and Dance at the University of Minnesota.



Robert Elhai, composer

Dr. Robert Elhai most recently composed the filmed mini-opera *In The Midst Of Things* (In Media Res) for An Opera Theatre in Minneapolis. His other recent composing work includes incidental music for the Jungle Theater's *Little Women* and the scores for the History Theater's production of *Dirty Business*, Fortune's Fool Theatre's *The Lady With A Lapdog*, Nautilus Music-Theater's *Twisted Apples: Stories from Winesburg, Ohio*, and Theater Latté Da's *C.* (based on *Cyrano de Bergerac*). He is the recipient of an Ivor Novello Award as well as Tony and Drama Desk nominations for his orchestrations in the Broadway production of *The Lion King*, for which he also supplied dance and incidental music arrangements. More: robertelhai.com.



Peter Ostroushko, composer

Mandolinist, composer, arranger and teacher Peter Ostroushko—who sadly passed away this past February—grew up listening to tunes played at family get-togethers in the Ukrainian community of northeast Minneapolis; this music provided the basis for many of his compositions. His works have been performed by the Minnesota Orchestra, the Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra and the Kremlin Chamber Orchestra, among many other ensembles, and his music has been featured on public television specials such as Ken Burns' film *The National Parks* and *Minnesota: A History of the Land*, for which Ostroushko won an Emmy. His recordings include *The Mandolin Chronicles*, a three-CD box set released on Red House Records. More: peterostroushko.com.



Peter Rothstein, stage director

Peter Rothstein works extensively as a director of theater, musical theater, opera and new work development. He is the founding artistic director of Theater

Latté Da, and since the company's inception in 1992, he has directed 73 main-stage productions, including 11 world premieres and 12 area premieres. He has been named one of Minnesota's Artists of the Year by the *Star Tribune*, Theater Artist of the Year by *Lavender Magazine*, Best Director of the Year by *City Pages* and Artist of the Year by *City Pages*. He has received nine Ivey Awards for Overall Excellence, and has been awarded grants and fellowships from the National Endowment for the Arts, Theater Communications Group, the Minnesota State Arts Board and the McKnight Foundation. More: peter-rothstein.com.

Kelli Foster Warder, assistant director/choreographer

Kelli Foster Warder, who is the associate artistic director and director of impact at Theater Latté Da, worked with the Minnesota Orchestra on its Home for the Holidays theatrical concerts in 2018 and 2019. Her choreography credits include productions of *Annie* with the Children's Theatre Company; *Bernada Alba*, *Chicago*, *Once* and *Ragtime* with Theater Latté Da; *Ordway Cabaret* at the Ordway; *Annie* and *Ragtime* with the 5th Avenue Theater; *Ragtime* with Asolo Repertory Theatre; and *Immortal Longings* with ZACH Theatre. More: kelifosterwarder.com.

Alice Fredrickson, costume designer

Alice Fredrickson is a costume designer for opera, theater and film. Based in Minneapolis and originally from Oklahoma City, she has recently worked on the world premiere feature film *The Copper Queen* with Arizona Opera, and her opera credits including *Il Postino* with Virginia Opera/Opera Southwest, *Così fan tutte* with Mill City Opera and *Diana's Garden* with Minnesota Opera. Her theater credits include *Sweeney Todd* with Asolo Repertory Theater;

Bad News I Was There... at the Guthrie Theater; *Bernarda Alba*, *Chicago*, *Hedwig and the Angry Itch*, *Assassins*, *Six Degrees of Separation*, *Gypsy*, *Sweeney Todd* and *Oliver!* with Theater Latté Da, and *Hamlet* with Park Square Theater, among many others. More: alicelouisedesign.com.

Eric McEnaney, music preparation

Eric McEnaney enjoys a multifaceted career as one of America's foremost opera pianists and vocal coaches, having assisted on the musical preparation of more than 100 productions for companies throughout the country. He is currently a master coach for Minnesota Opera and has worked as a guest coach for Opera Theatre of Saint Louis, Central City Opera, Virginia Opera, Opera Southwest, Skylark Opera and Lyric Opera of the North, among other companies. Additionally, he served as principal production pianist and coach at Florentine Opera Company for four seasons, where he oversaw the musical preparation of a dozen shows and two world-premiere recordings, *Sister Carrie* and the Grammy-nominated *Prince of Players*. More: ericmcenaney.com.

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Laureate spotlight: Elizabeth "Betty" Indihar



Elizabeth "Betty" Indihar devoted her life to music. From her earliest days, Betty loved music and piano, and she carried that talent and passion throughout her entire life. She performed and published, served on music-related boards, was a tireless music educator, and was organist at St. Olaf Catholic Church for more than 20 years. Betty continued to write, play and record music until her final days.

A lifelong fan of the Minnesota Orchestra, Betty made the decision to make the Minnesota Orchestra part of her legacy by including the Orchestra in her estate plan. We are deeply grateful.

A poem Betty wrote about her life included this phrase: "My life was filled with music, a gift meant to be shared..." Not only did Betty share her gift of music with the world during her lifetime, but she also ensured that the music of the Minnesota Orchestra be shared with future audiences through her generous estate gift.

With the concerts on December 3 and 4 featuring Ingrid Fliter playing Mozart's Piano Concerto No. 23, we honor Betty's memory and her love of piano and the Minnesota Orchestra.

For more information about how you can make a difference for the Minnesota Orchestra with a planned gift, please contact Emily Boigenzahn, Director of Planned Giving at 612-371-7138 or eboigenzahn@mnorch.org

The Laureate Society

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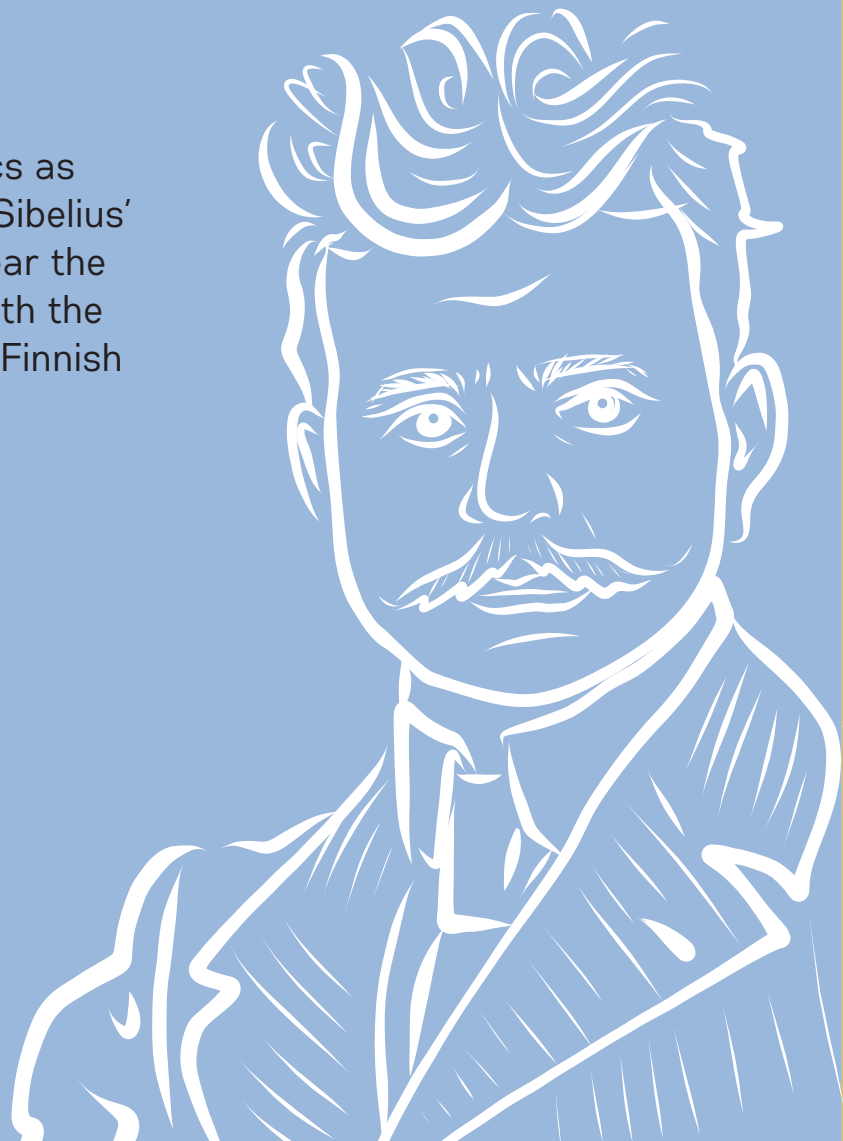
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PHOTOS: Vänskä: Zoe Prinder/Flesh; Vänskä: Elina Simonen; Bergman: Josh Kohanek.
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NEW YEAR'S

WITH THE
MINNESOTA
ORCHESTRA

12/31-1/1

**A NEW YEAR'S
CELEBRATION**

**DEC 31 8:30PM
JAN 1 2PM**

Osmo Vänskä, conductor
Helena Juntunen, soprano

Are you ready to begin the journey with us? Ring in 2022 as the Minnesota Orchestra kicks off this much-anticipated festival with two thrilling symphonies and Helena Juntunen's glistening soprano tone.

SIBELIUS Symphony No. 7
Autumn Evening
Hertig Magnus
Luonnotar
Symphony No. 2

After the December 31 concert, count down to midnight while enjoying vintage jazz from Belle Amour.



1/7-8

SYMPHONIES NO. 1 AND 6

**JAN 7 8PM
JAN 8 8PM**

Osmo Vänskä, conductor
Elina Vähälä, violin

Hear one of the works that earned our Orchestra a Grammy Award, and experience an exceptional and rarely-heard version of Sibelius' Violin Concerto.

SIBELIUS Symphony No. 6
Violin Concerto
(original version)
Symphony No. 1

1/13-14

SYMPHONIES NO. 3 AND 4

**JAN 13 11AM
JAN 14 8PM**

Osmo Vänskä, conductor
Elina Vähälä, violin

Pair this program with the previous week and you'll relive our complete Grammy-winning recording with Sibelius' Fourth Symphony. Plus, Elina Vähälä is back to showcase the dramatically revised version of Sibelius' Violin Concerto.

SIBELIUS Symphony No. 4
Symphony No. 3
Violin Concerto
(final version)

1/15-16

**EXPLORING SYMPHONY
NO. 5 WITH SAM BERGMAN**

**JAN 15 8PM
JAN 16 2PM**

Osmo Vänskä, conductor
Sam Bergman, host

Violist Sam Bergman believes Sibelius' Fifth Symphony is one of the greatest works ever written—but this symphony has quite a creation story. Learn why and hear the complete symphony in this special festival finale.

SIBELIUS Symphony No. 5



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