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NEW YORK PHILHARMONIC

Jaap van Zweden Music Director

NOVEMBER 2021



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A close-up, artistic photograph of a violin and its bow. The violin's body is a rich, dark reddish-brown wood, showing the grain and the f-hole. The bow is made of light-colored wood with dark hair. The background is dark and out of focus.

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A year ago New York City was fundamentally silent, but now, in the month when Americans celebrate Thanksgiving, the New York Philharmonic has many reasons to be grateful.

There's the joy of giving live concerts again! Our musicians have been looking forward to performing for *you*, our audience, bringing to life masterpieces by the likes of Beethoven and Stravinsky and works that are new to us, such as Chen Yi's *Duo Ye*. We are delighted to welcome

longtime friends, including violinist Joshua Bell, and fresh faces, like cellist Sheku Kanneh-Mason.

Following the pandemic, Jaap van Zweden made a deeply personal decision to focus his time and energy on his family, but graciously agreed to extend his tenure as our Music Director for an additional year, through the 2023–24 season. This will allow our search for his successor to be as comprehensive and encompassing as is required for this storied position.

The progress that has been made in the renovation of David Geffen Hall is inspiring! We hope you have seen the sign running along the exterior, proclaiming of our new era, "SO CLOSE YOU CAN ALMOST HEAR IT." Construction is on schedule and on budget, and we cannot wait to welcome you back to our home — a vibrant, state-of-the-art concert venue with warm, accessible public spaces — in under a year.

The New York Philharmonic is profoundly grateful for our friends, chief among them the donors who continue to see us through the pandemic, enable us to perform, and who make the prospects of the new David Geffen Hall so very bright.

Happy Thanksgiving!

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Deborah Borda'.

Deborah Borda
Linda and Mitch Hart President and CEO

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In Person



JAKE TURNEY



MEET SHEKU

By Lucy Kraus

The cellist's astonishing ascent has reached the New York Philharmonic.

It was an occasion fit for a king. Or in this case, a prince.

It was the May 19, 2018, wedding of Prince Harry and Meghan Markle. And as nearly two billion pairs of eyes locked onto the worldwide broadcast, a 19-year-old British cellist performed Fauré's *Après un rêve*.

Sheku Kanneh-Mason was unknown to many watching that day, but in his native UK he had already gained renown as the winner of the 2016 BBC Young Musician competition — the first Black musician to take the title. A performance at a charity event had brought him to the attention of Prince Harry; Ms. Markle invited him to play at the wedding.

“I was very surprised actually to have been asked,” says Mr. Kanneh-Mason, speaking by phone from London. “I knew the event would be watched around the world, and it was exciting to have the opportunity to perform. It was a great feeling.”

Numerous invitations followed, and now Sheku Kanneh-Mason is making his New York Philharmonic debut, playing Dvořák's Cello Concerto on



JAKE TURNERY

November 11–13. He began to learn the work only a year and a half ago, although, as he puts it: “It’s the main concerto in my repertoire. I think it’s an amazing piece. It’s wonderful to play it for my first time with the Philharmonic.”

Raised in Nottingham, England, Mr. Kanneh-Mason is the third of seven siblings in a family of serious musicians. His mother, Dr. Kadiatu Kanneh, a former university instructor, is from Sierra Leone, and his father, Stuart Mason, an Antigua-born businessman. (Sheku, pronounced SHAY-koo, means chief or leader in the Sierra Leonean language Mende.) Both parents played instruments early on, and their children have followed suit in a household constantly filled with music. In fact, Mr. Kanneh-Mason’s older sister, Isata Kanneh-Mason, a pianist, performed with him at his Carnegie Hall Weill Recital Hall debut on December 11, 2019. *The New York Times*’s review praised both: “Mr. Kanneh-Mason is a gifted, sensitive artist. ... And in the demanding works this duo performed ... Ms. Kanneh-Mason was a superb collaborator.”

Mr. Kanneh-Mason says he doesn’t get nervous, even when millions are watching. “I love the feeling when you have this piece of music that you’ve thought about and care about and you’re sharing it with an audience,” he explains. He has released two chart-topping albums on the Decca Classics label — *Inspiration* in 2018, and *Elgar* in 2020 — and has performed every summer at the BBC Proms since his debut in 2017. He received the 2020 Royal Philharmonic Society’s Young Artists Award, and was appointed a Member of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire (MBE) in the 2020 New Year Honours List. Nottingham City Transport even named its #613 bus — his former school-route bus — after him!

Now 22 years old, he has risen far, and quickly. Still, he says, “Every day I set myself the challenge of improving and developing. With music you never feel you’ve arrived, that you’re satisfied. It’s a constant journey.”

Lucy Kraus, the former Senior Publications Editor at the Philharmonic, has written for *The New York Times* and other publications.



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Hallelujah!

Welcome back the Philharmonic's annual *Messiah* tradition in what might be New York City's most appropriate venue for this beloved oratorio: The Riverside Church in Morningside Heights. Modeled after Chartres's 13th-century Gothic cathedral, Riverside's



glorious, vaulted ceilings will no doubt make Handel's masterpiece sound especially magnificent. Conducted by Grammy-winning Baroque specialist Jeannette Sorrell — who leads her own Apollo's Singers, as well as soloists Amanda Forsythe, John Holiday, Nicholas Phan, and Kevin Deas — these performances, Presented by Gary W. Parr, on December 14–15 and 17–18, will surely be a rare treat for New York audiences.

Need still more seasonal festivity? The ever-popular, family-friendly Holiday Brass returns December 16 and 18, this time in Alice Tully Hall.

MTT Returns

Any performance by conductor Michael Tilson Thomas is special, but his concerts on November 4, 5, and 7 mark his first New York Philharmonic appearance in 10

years. This collaboration goes back to his role as Music Director of the Orchestra's Young People's Concerts, 1973–77, when he wrote, hosted, and conducted the iconic series. His appearances this month — a quintessential “MTT” blend of works by Crawford Seeger and Berg with Beethoven's *Eroica* — also are his first anywhere after recovering from surgery to remove a brain tumor. Help us welcome him back!



Tilson Thomas conducting the Philharmonic in 2011

CHRIS LEE



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Unity in Duality



Chen Yi is a composer who reflects dualities. Born in China, she now resides in Missouri, where she holds the position of Distinguished Professor at the University of

Missouri–Kansas City Conservatory of Music and Dance. Her music combines influences from Chinese and European-derived traditions.

Discover her sound world on November 24, 26, and 27, when Jaap van Zweden conducts *Duo Ye* for chamber orchestra, her take on an ancient song and dance form in which people join together in a circle surrounding a fire. She explains that her music represents “the imagination of the primitive power, the high energetic spirit, and the charming folk singing as the soul of the music.”

Future Archive

The Leon Levy Foundation has supported the New York Philharmonic Leon Levy Digital Archives since it was launched ten years ago, making it possible to share American musical history going back to 1842 — free, online. Now the Foundation has given an additional \$1.5 million gift (supporting a \$500,000 National Endowment for the Humanities digital infrastructure challenge grant) to bolster a five-year modernization that includes an expansion to new lobby screens, bringing the Orchestra’s multifaceted collections to all who visit the renovated David Geffen Hall, due to reopen in the fall of 2022.

Even now, you can explore this treasure trove from the comfort of your home at archives.nyphil.org.

On the cover: The southeast corner of David Geffen Hall

It Will Be ... Legendary

Recipient of the Presidential Medal of Freedom, a Kennedy Center Honor, a National Medal of Arts, and the Medal of Liberty, not to mention 16 Grammy Awards and a Grammy Lifetime Achievement Award, four Emmy Awards, and a Genesis Prize. It could only be Itzhak Perlman, who will reunite with the Philharmonic in Bruch’s Violin Concerto No. 1 on December 2 for **New York’s Orchestra Is Back**, the Gala concert conducted by Music Director Jaap van Zweden. To purchase Gala tables or tickets contact specialevents@nyphil.org.



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Face Page

Over the summer and into the fall, the New York Philharmonic returned to regularly giving live concerts, first outdoors — at the Bravo! Vail Music Festival and in Central Park — and then in the kick-off to the 2021–22 subscription season.



1. July 21: Philharmonic Board Co-Chairman Oscar L. Tang* and his wife, Agnes Hsu-Tang (far left), and Co-Chairman Peter W. May* and his wife, Leni (far right), at the party they hosted at the Bravo! Vail Music Festival, seen here with Linda and Mitch Hart President & CEO Deborah Borda and Music Director Jaap van Zweden

2. July 21: Board Chairman Emeritus Oscar S. Schafer* with Maestro van Zweden

3. July 21: Philharmonic violinist Fiona Simon with Mr. Tang*

4. August 21: Conductor Marin Alsop and actress and vocalist Jennifer Hudson, one of the soloists joining the Philharmonic in opening *WE ♥ NYC: The Homecoming Concert*, produced by New York City, Clive Davis, and Live Nation, held on Central Park's Great Lawn to celebrate the Big Apple's comeback after the pandemic

5. September 17: Ralph and Cornelia Heins, two of those gathered in Alice Tully Hall for the Philharmonic's first subscription concert after 556 days



6. September 17: Daisy M. Soros with Ms. Borda and Mr. May*

7. September 17: Elizabeth A.* and Frank Newman

8. September 17: Angela Meredith-Jones and Christian A. Lange*

9. September 17: Pulitzer Prize-winning composer Tania León* and Leona Kern

Photos: 1-3, Zach Mahone; 4, Kevin Mazur / Getty Images for Live Nation; 5-9, Chris Lee
* Board Member



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NEW YORK PHILHARMONIC

Jaap van Zweden Music Director

Thursday, November 11, 2021, 7:30 p.m.

16,699th Concert

Donor Rehearsal at 9:45 a.m.†

Friday, November 12, 2021, 8:00 p.m.

16,700th Concert

Saturday, November 13, 2021, 8:00 p.m.

16,701st Concert

Simone Young, Conductor

Sheku Kanneh-Mason, Cello

(New York Philharmonic debut)

Simone Young's appearance is made possible through the **Charles A. Dana Distinguished Conductors Endowment Fund**.

Guest artist appearances are made possible through the **Hedwig van Ameringen Guest Artists Endowment Fund**.

†In the 2021–22 season Donor Rehearsals are available to Philharmonic supporters only; learn more at nyphil.org/memberevents.

This program will last approximately two and one-quarter hours, including one intermission.

Alice Tully Hall at Lincoln Center

Simone Young, Conductor
Sheku Kanneh-Mason, Cello (New York Philharmonic debut)

J.S. BACH (1685–1750) /
orch. A. Webern

**Fuga (Ricercata), from Musikalisches
Opfer (Musical Offering), BWV 1079**
(1747; orch. 1934–35)

DVOŘÁK (1841–1904)

Cello Concerto in B minor, Op. 104
(1894–95)
Allegro
Adagio, ma non troppo
Finale: Allegro moderato
SHEKU KANNEH-MASON

Intermission

BRAHMS (1833–97)

Symphony No. 1 in C minor, Op. 68
(1862–77)
Un poco sostenuto — Allegro
Andante sostenuto
Un poco allegretto e grazioso
Adagio — Più andante — Allegro non
troppo ma con brio

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Notes on the Program

Fuga (Ricercata), from Musikalisches Opfer (Musical Offering), BWV 1079

Johann Sebastian Bach

The genesis of Johann Sebastian Bach's *Musikalisches Opfer (Musical Offering)* can be traced to a visit he paid in May 1747 to his second son, Carl Philipp Emanuel, who since 1740 had been employed in Potsdam as an overworked and underpaid harpsichordist and chamber musician to the flute-playing monarch Frederick II ("the Great"), King of Prussia. Frederick had been badgering C.P.E. about getting his father, the renowned organist and composer, to make the journey from Leipzig. When Bach senior finally arrived, Frederick escorted him through the palace, stopping to have him improvise on each of the keyboard instruments they encountered, working with a theme the king had given him at his request. After returning home, Bach revisited the theme, expanded on his invention, and dedicated the result to the monarch (see sidebar, page 22).

In the *Musical Offering*, Bach pursued an obsession of his final decade: large-scale, cyclical works in which he exhaustively explored the contrapuntal possibilities of a single theme in different musical contexts. He had already carried out such an exercise brilliantly in his *Goldberg Variations* (1741–42), and at the time of the *Musical Offering* he was also writing his *Canonic Variations on "Von Himmel hoch,"* for organ (June 1747), and was in the midst of what would be the valedictory fruition of this passion, *The Art of Fugue* (1745–50).

The *Musical Offering* was published in September 1747, four months after the composer's visit to Potsdam. It appeared in an edition of 100 copies, each of which comprised five smaller booklets containing several movements apiece. This curious format

seems not to have been arbitrary: a compelling musicological argument suggests that the five divisions correspond to the structure of a classical Quintilian oration — not at all far-fetched, given the sway of Latin rhetorical theory in Bach's Germany. The work's 17 movements — a series of musico-intellectual canons, fugues, and ricercars — are thus assigned different functions in terms of musical discourse, from the introductory *exordium* through to a summation in the four movements of the *Sonata sopr' il Sogetto Reale* (often referred to simply as the Trio Sonata) and, to conclude, a brief final perpetual canon.

Apart from the Trio Sonata, Bach specified no instrumentation for his *Musical Offering*, so some editorial judgment must be exercised if the piece is to be performed. In

In Short

Born: March 21, 1685, in Eisenach, Thuringia, Germany

Died: July 28, 1750, in Leipzig, Saxony

Work composed: 1747; dedicated to Frederick II, King of Prussia; orchestrated by Anton Webern (1883–1945) from November 1934 to January 21, 1935; dedicated to Edward Clark

World premiere: unknown; orchestration premiered on April 25, 1935, in London, with Webern conducting a BBC Orchestra broadcast

New York Philharmonic premiere: November 29, 1953, Dimitri Mitropoulos, conductor

Most recent New York Philharmonic performance: December 8, 2018, Jaap van Zweden, conductor

Estimated duration: ca. 8 minutes

1934–35 Anton Webern, one of Schoenberg’s chief acolytes and an aficionado of musical intellectuality, created this setting of the six-part *Fuga (Ricerca)* — “Ricerca,” as it is generally known, being an antique term for a fugal composition — in a style that he hoped would underscore aspects of the music in an analytical way. He wrote to the conductor Hermann Scherchen:

My orchestration attempts ... to reveal the inter-relation of motifs. This was not always easy. Of course, it also seeks to show how I see the character of the work. ... Isn’t the point to awaken what is still sleeping

in the secrecy of Bach’s abstract rendering, which makes it all but nonexistent for almost everyone, or at least completely incomprehensible?

Instrumentation: flute, oboe, English horn, clarinet, bass clarinet, bassoon, horn, trumpet, trombone, timpani, harp, and strings.

— James M. Keller, former New York Philharmonic Program Annotator, *The Leni and Peter May Chair*; San Francisco Symphony program annotator; and author of *Chamber Music: A Listener’s Guide* (Oxford University Press)

Genesis

Drawing from a newspaper report in the *Berliner Nachrichten* on May 11, 1747, and from anecdotal accounts, Johann Sebastian Bach’s first biographer, Johann Nicolaus Forkel, related the composer’s encounter with Frederick II, when the King of Prussia asked him to improvise on various keyboards during a palace tour:

He asked the King to give him a subject for a fugue in order to execute it immediately without any preparation. The King admired the learned manner in which his subject [i.e. the musical theme] was thus executed extempore and, probably to see how far such art could be carried, expressed a wish to hear also a fugue with six obbligato parts. But as not every subject is fit for such full harmony, Bach chose one himself and immediately executed it to the astonishment of all present in the same magnificent and learned manner as he had done that of the King. ... After his return to Leipzig, he composed the subject which he had received from the King in three and six parts, added several intricate pieces in strict canon on the subject, had it engraved, under the title of *Musikalisches Opfer*, and dedicated it to the inventor.



The Flute Concert of Sanssouci, by Adolph Menzel, depicting Frederick II playing the flute, accompanied by C.P.E. Bach on the harpsichord

Cello Concerto in B minor, Op. 104

Antonín Dvořák

Antonín Dvořák developed rather slowly as a composer and, although he gained a solid musical education, his first professional steps were far from extraordinary — as a violist in a dance orchestra in Prague. The group prospered, and in 1862 its members organized as the founding core of the Provisional Theatre orchestra. Dvořák would play principal viola in the ensemble for nine years, sitting directly beneath the batons of such conductors as Bedřich Smetana and Richard Wagner.

During those early years Dvořák also honed his skills as a composer, and by 1871 he felt compelled to leave the orchestra and devote himself to composing. Three times during the 1870s he was awarded the Austrian State Stipendium, a grant to assist young, poor, gifted musicians, which exactly defined his status at the time. If he had not received critical support when he did, he might well have given up trying to be a composer. Fortunately, the influential music critic Eduard Hanslick encouraged him to send some scores to Johannes Brahms. That eminent composer was so delighted with what he received that he recommended Dvořák to his own publisher, who immediately issued two collections of the younger composer's pieces and contracted a first option on all his new works. Nonetheless, even his mature masterpieces were slow to make their way into the international repertoire, embraced in England and America sooner than in the rest of Europe. Except for his Symphony No. 9, *From the New World*, the *Carnival Overture*, and the Slavonic Dances, Dvořák remained little played outside his native land until practically the middle of the 20th century.

In 1891 Dvořák received a communication from Jeannette Thurber, a Paris-trained

American musician who had become a New York philanthropist bent on raising US musical pedagogy to European standards. To this end she had founded the National Conservatory of Music in New York, incorporated by special act of Congress in 1891, and she set about persuading him to serve as its director. She succeeded, and the following year Dvořák and his family moved to New York. He remained until 1895, building the school's curriculum and faculty, appearing as a guest conductor, and composing such masterworks as his String Quartet in F major (Op. 96, *American*), the String Quintet in E-flat major, Symphony No. 9, *From the New World*, and (in his final year here) the Cello Concerto.

This grand and noble work was first heard when Dvořák played through it privately in August 1895 with his close friend Hanuš Wihan, an eminent cellist and the work's

In Short

Born: September 8, 1841, in Nelahozeves, Bohemia (now the Czech Republic)

Died: May 1, 1904, in Prague

Work composed: November 8, 1894, to February 9, 1895, in New York City; revision of the finale completed in Bohemia on June 11, 1895; dedicated to Hanuš Wihan

World premiere: March 19, 1896, at the Queen's Hall, London, with the composer conducting the Philharmonic Society, Leo Stern, soloist

New York Philharmonic premiere: the first complete performance, on March 5, 1897, conducted by Anton Seidl, Leo Stern, cello

Most recent New York Philharmonic performance: January 5, 2019, Paavo Järvi, conductor, Gautier Capuçon, cello

Estimated duration: ca. 40 minutes

dedicatee. Wihan suggested a few technical alterations, which the composer incorporated, but Dvořák rejected as superfluous. Wihan's idea of inserting a large-scale solo cadenza in the finale — to the cellist's distress, since he had spent considerable care crafting one that incorporated material from the earlier movements. Dvořák took the precaution of spelling out his position in a letter to his publisher early that October:

I shall only give you my work if you promise not to allow anybody to make any changes — my friend Wihan not excepted — without my knowledge and

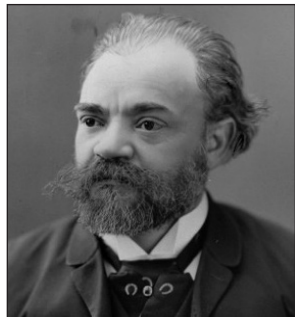
consent, and this includes the cadenza which Wihan has added to the last movement. ... I told Wihan straight away when he showed it to me that it was impossible to stick bits on like that. The finale closes gradually *diminuendo*, like a sigh — with reminiscences of the first and second movements — the solo dies down to *pianissimo* — then swells again and the last bars are taken up by the orchestra and the whole concludes in stormy mood. That was my idea and I cannot depart from it.

Feathers were apparently ruffled enough that Dvořák enlisted a different

Listen for ... the Tribute to a Long-Lost Love



Josefina Čermáková



Antonín Dvořák

Dvořák enjoyed a long and happy marriage to Anna Čermáková, whom he wed in 1873. But she had not been his first love; several years before, he had experienced a serious infatuation for one of her older sisters, Josefina, his piano student at the time. Absolutely nothing romantic came of that early attraction (which, in fact, seems to have been strictly one-way), and Josefina and Antonín spent 30 years living as affectionate and entirely platonic in-laws.

While the Dvořáks were living in New York, Josefina's health began to decline precipitously, and she died on May 27, 1895, only a month after they returned to Prague from their American sojourn. It appears that Dvořák worked a tribute to the dying Josefina into his Cello Concerto by incorporating into the slow movement a quotation from his song "Lasst mich allein" ("Leave Me Alone," Op. 82, No. 1), which Dvořák's biographer Otakar Šourek maintained was a particular favorite of Josefina's. It was on learning of Josefina's death that Dvořák crafted the coda at the concerto's end — which he described as closing with a sigh — before concluding in a stormy mood.

cellist, Leo Stern, for the premiere (in London), as well as for the first Prague performance. But a truce was struck, and within a few years Wihan began performing this piece, too, including, on one occasion in Budapest, with Dvořák conducting — and with no cadenza.

Instrumentation: two flutes (one doubling piccolo), two oboes, two clarinets, two bassoons, three horns, two trumpets, three trombones, tuba, timpani, triangle, and strings, in addition to the solo cello.

— J.M.K.

The New York Philharmonic Connection: Early Interpreters

The New York Philharmonic's connection to Dvořák's Cello Concerto began at the moment of inception, since the Orchestra's Principal Cello, Victor Herbert, served as an inspiration for the work. Herbert had played first cello when the New York Philharmonic gave the World Premiere of the Symphony No. 9, *From the New World*, and in 1894 Dvořák heard Herbert — who was also a composer — perform his own Cello Concerto No. 2 with Anton Seidl and the Philharmonic. Dvořák had not really considered the cello to be deserving of a concerto, even though he had been asked to write one. But then, according to former Philharmonic Program Annotator Michael Steinberg,

Dvořák was impressed when Herbert, who managed high-flying passages elegantly and wrote plenty of them for himself, showed Dvořák that he had been needlessly concerned.

The first American performance of Dvořák's Cello Concerto occurred at a 1896 Sunday "Popular Concert" of the New York Symphony (a Philharmonic forebear), led by Walter Damrosch, that featured excerpts or movements of several works, many performed by young, emerging soloists. Only the second and third movements of the Cello Concerto were played that day by 22-year-old, American-born Franz Listemann. Leo Stern, who had performed the World Premiere in London with the composer conducting, played the complete work with the Philharmonic in March 1897. It was this performance that would generally be thought of as the first in the United States, overshadowing young Listemann's.

Almost ten years passed before the concerto was performed again in New York, this time by Beatrice Harrison, a 23-year-old English cellist who had made her Philharmonic debut only two years earlier. Harrison became somewhat famous for BBC broadcasts in which her cello performances from her garden were accompanied by the singing of nightingales.



Beatrice Harrison, one of the first to perform Dvořák's Cello Concerto

— The Archives

Symphony No. 1 in C minor, Op. 68

Johannes Brahms

In 1872 Johannes Brahms famously declared to the conductor Hermann Levi, “I shall never write a symphony! You can’t have any idea what it’s like to hear such a giant marching behind you.” The giant was Beethoven, of course, and although his music provided essential inspiration for Brahms, it also set such a high standard that the younger composer found it easy to discount his own creations as negligible in comparison.

Nonetheless, the young Brahms proved relentless in confronting his compositional demons. Rather than lead to a creative block, his self-criticism pushed him to forge ahead even when his eventual path seemed obscure. He drafted the first movement of this symphony in 1862 and shared it with his friend Clara Schumann. She copied out the opening and sent it along to their friend Joseph Joachim (the violinist), with this comment:

That is rather strong, for sure, but I have grown used to it. The movement is full of wonderful beauties, and the themes are treated with a mastery that is becoming more and more characteristic of him. It is all interwoven in such an interesting way, and yet it moves forward with such momentum that it might have been poured forth in its entirety in the first flush of inspiration.

She then jotted a musical example — essentially the spot where the main section of the first movement begins (*Allegro*) following the slower introduction. Calling the opening “rather strong” is surely an understatement. That first movement’s introduction is one of the most astonishing preludes in the entire symphonic literature, with throbbing timpani underpinning the orchestra’s taut phrases — a texture that seizes the listener’s attention and remains engraved in the memory.

Word got around that Brahms was working on a symphony, and he found himself having to deflect inquiries about his progress, most pointedly from his eager publisher, Fritz Simrock. Eleven years later, Simrock wrote a beseeching letter to the composer: “Aren’t you doing anything any more? Am I not to have a symphony from you in ’73 either?” No, he was not — nor in ’74 or ’75 either. Not until 1876 would Brahms finally sign off on his First Symphony, at least provisionally, since he would revise it further prior to its publication the following year. He was 43 years old and had been struggling with the piece on and off for 14 years.

“My symphony is long and not particularly lovable,” wrote Brahms to his fellow composer Carl Reinecke when this piece was unveiled. He was right about it being long, at least when compared to other symphonies of his era. He was probably also right about it not being particularly lovable. Even the warmth of the second movement and

In Short

Born: May 7, 1833, in Hamburg, Germany

Died: April 3, 1897, in Vienna, Austria

Work composed: on and off for about 14 years beginning in 1862; provisionally completed in September 1876 but revised substantially prior to its publication in 1877

World premiere: November 4, 1876, in Karlsruhe, Baden, Germany, with Otto Dessoff conducting the Grossherzogliche Hofkapelle

New York Philharmonic premiere: December 22, 1877, Theodore Thomas, conductor

Most recent New York Philharmonic performance: March 26, 2019, Jaap van Zweden, conductor

Estimated duration: ca. 45 minutes

the geniality of the third are interrupted by passages of anxiety, and the outer movements are designed to impress rather than to charm. Brahms's First is a big, burly symphony, certainly when compared to his next two. It is probably no more "lovable" than Michelangelo's *The Last Judgment*, Shakespeare's *King Lear*, or Goethe's *Faust*.

The symphony's "purpose" is essentially

articulated in its outer movements; against these, the second and third movements stand as a two-part intermezzo, throwing the weighty proceedings that surround them into higher relief. The four movements proceed according to a key arrangement of ascending thirds (remembering that A-flat is the enharmonic equivalent of G-sharp): the first movement in C minor, the second

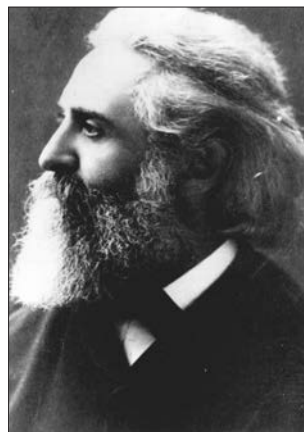
Race to a Premiere

Following its world premiere, Brahms's First Symphony took more than a year to arrive in America — but when it arrived, it did so with a fury. The US premiere fell to conductor Leopold Damrosch and his namesake orchestra at Steinway Hall on December 15, 1877. Within a week it was also performed by the Brooklyn Philharmonic and the New York Philharmonic, with Theodore Thomas conducting on both occasions. Walter Damrosch, Leopold's son and his successor as director of the New York Symphony Society (a post Walter relinquished when it merged with the New York Philharmonic Society in 1928), reported in his memoirs (*My Musical Life*, 1923):

The first production of the First Symphony by Brahms became a subject of intense rivalry between the two conductors. My father went to see old Gustav Schirmer at his store on Broadway and asked him whether the orchestral score of the work had yet arrived. Schirmer told him that it had, but that he was in honor bound to give it to Theodore Thomas, as he had promised it to him. My father ... spoke of this very regretfully to a pupil of his in composition, Mrs. James Nielson, member of an aristocratic old family in New Brunswick, New Jersey, and a woman of great beauty and distinction. ... Mrs. Nielson said nothing at the time, but went quietly down to Schirmer's and inquired of the clerk whether the orchestral score of the Brahms symphony had arrived, and when he answered in the affirmative, she asked whether it was for sale. "Certainly," answered the clerk.

She thereupon purchased a copy of the score and sent it up to my father with her compliments. ...

This left but little time to obtain the necessary orchestral parts, and Schirmer naturally would not sell him any. He therefore cut the score into three parts and divided them among three copyists who worked day and night and managed to have the parts ready in time for rehearsal. Great was the triumph in the Damrosch camp at this victory.



Symphonic rivals: conductors Leopold Damrosch (top) and Theodore Thomas

in E major, the third in A-flat major, and the finale in C minor again. Brahms was decidedly not following any model he could have found in Beethoven's symphonies, which for the most part still operated according to the harmonic relationships of the Classical era — relationships that tended to set movements at the degree of a fourth or fifth away from the work's overriding tonic key. In contrast, Brahms explores an architecture based on thirds-relationships that increas-

ingly interested composers as the 19th century progressed, an evolution in harmonic practice that would shortly lead to radical, new stances about the nature of tonality itself.

Instrumentation: two flutes, two oboes, two clarinets, two bassoons and contrabassoon, four horns, two trumpets, three trombones, timpani, and strings.

— J.M.K.

Listen for ... a Bow to Beethoven

Even at the first hearing of Brahms's First Symphony, informed listeners could not have overlooked how deeply beholden Brahms really was to Beethoven. Any symphony that begins in C minor and, following considerable struggle, concludes in C major invites comparison with Beethoven's Fifth. Brahms almost never used slow introductions, preferring instead to jump right into the fray, yet here he begins both his first and last movements with exordia that cement his place in the Beethoven tradition. And when people leapt to point out how the main tune of Brahms's finale resembled the corresponding theme in Beethoven's Ninth, Brahms responded, "Any ass can see that."

Beethoven's Symphony No. 9

Allegro assai

Cellos and Basses

p *cresc.* *p* *cresc.* *p*

Brahms's Symphony No. 1

Allegro non troppo, ma con brio

1st Violins

poco f *tr* *p*

Precisely what Brahms meant when he made such a reference in this context is up for debate. Surely he did not evoke Beethoven merely to be provocative. The late scholar Reinhold Brinkmann argued that, in alluding to Beethoven's famous choral finale, but now in a strictly instrumental symphony, Brahms took back the implications of his model, restoring the tradition of the Beethovenian symphony to a purely instrumental world of expression.

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The Artists



After completing her musical studies in her native Sydney, Australia, **Simone Young** began her career on the podium in Germany. She has since conducted at most of the important opera houses and symphony orchestras around the world. She started her current position as chief conductor of the Sydney Symphony in the autumn of 2020.

Her 2021–22 season guest appearances include productions at the Zurich Opera House, Vienna Staatsoper, Berlin Staatsoper, and Opera de Paris, as well as concerts with the Oslo Philharmonic, Orchestre national de France, Royal Stockholm Philharmonic, Orchestre de Paris, Los Angeles Philharmonic, San Francisco Symphony, National Symphony Orchestra, New Japan Philharmonic, Orchestre de Chambre de Lausanne, National Polish Radio Symphony, and the New York Philharmonic.

Ms. Young's previous titled positions include principal guest conductor of the Orchestre Chambre de Lausanne (2017–20), principal conductor of the Bergen Philharmonic (1998–2002), artistic director of Opera Australia (2001–03), principal guest conductor of Lisbon's Gulbenkian Orchestra, and artistic director of Hamburg Staatsoper and chief music director of the Hamburg Philharmonic (2005–15). As guest conductor, she has led the Vienna Symphony Orchestra, Orchestre de Paris, BBC Symphony Orchestra, Dresden Philharmonic, and both the Deutsches Symphonie-Orchester and the Berlin Konzerthausorchester, in addition to several North American orchestras and various orchestras in Australia.

In addition to complete recordings of Hindemith's *Mathis der Maler* and Wagner's *Ring* with Hamburg Staatsoper, the Oehms-Classics label has released her recordings with the Hamburg Philharmonic of the complete Bruckner symphonies (in their original versions), Brahms's complete symphonies, Mahler's Sixth and Seventh Symphonies, and Franz Schmidt's *The Book with the Seven Seals*. Her performance of the rediscovery of Halevy's *La Juive* at Vienna Staatsoper is available on CD, and her Bavarian Staatsoper performances of Pfitzner's *Palestrina* and Janáček's *Aus einem Totenhaus*, and her Hamburg performances of Poulenc's *Dialogues des Carmélites* and of Aribert Reimann's *Lear* are all on DVD.

Along with honorary doctorates from the Universities of Sydney and Melbourne, Simone Young counts the Brahms Prize of Schleswig-Holstein and the Goethe Medal among her numerous accolades. She is a Chevalier des Arts et des Lettres in France, a Member of the Order of Australia, and a Professor at the Academy of Music and Theatre in Hamburg.



In great demand worldwide, **Sheku Kanneh-Mason** became a household name in 2018 after his performance at the wedding of the Duke and Duchess of Sussex at Windsor

Castle was watched by nearly two billion people globally. He had already garnered renown as the winner of the 2016 BBC Young Musician competition, the first Black musician to take the title. He has released two chart-topping albums on the Decca Classics

label: *Inspiration* in 2018 and *Elgar* in 2020.

Mr. Kanneh-Mason has made his debut with ensembles including the Seattle Symphony, Orchestre philharmonique de Radio France, NDR Elbphilharmonie Orchestra, and the Atlanta Symphony, Japan Philharmonic, BBC Symphony, London Philharmonic, and Baltimore Symphony orchestras. Highlights this season include performances with the Orchestre de Paris, The Cleveland Orchestra, New York Philharmonic, and the London Philharmonic Orchestra.

He has performed in recital around the world in venues from London's Wigmore Hall to New York's Carnegie Hall. Current and future engagements include London's Barbican, Berliner Philharmonie, Amster-

dam's Concertgebouw, Tokyo's Suntory Hall, and tours of North America, Italy, South Korea, and China. During the COVID-19 lockdown in the spring of 2020, Mr. Kanneh-Mason and his siblings performed in twice-weekly livestreams from their family home in Nottingham to audiences of hundreds of thousands worldwide.

Sheku Kanneh-Mason began learning the cello at the age of six and now continues his studies with Hannah Roberts at the Royal Academy of Music in London as a Bicentenary Fellow. He was appointed a Member of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire (MBE) in the 2020 New Year Honours List. He plays a Matteo Goffriller cello from 1700, which is on indefinite loan to him.

Jaap van Zweden and the New York Philharmonic



Jaap van Zweden became Music Director of the New York Philharmonic in 2018. Also Music Director of the Hong Kong Philharmonic, he has appeared as guest with leading orchestras such as the Orchestre de Paris, Amsterdam's Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra, Leipzig Gewandhaus Orchestra, Vienna Philharmonic, Berlin Philharmonic, London Symphony Orchestra, Chicago Symphony Orchestra, The Cleveland Orchestra, and Los Angeles Philharmonic.

Jaap van Zweden's recordings with the New York Philharmonic include David Lang's *prisoner of the state* and Julia Wolfe's Grammy-nominated *Fire in my mouth* (Decca Gold). He conducted the first-ever performances in Hong Kong of Wagner's *Ring* Cycle, the Naxos recording of which led the Hong Kong Philharmonic to be named the 2019 *Gramophone* Orchestra of the year. His performance of Wagner's *Parsifal* received the Edison Award for Best Opera Recording in 2012.

Born in Amsterdam, Jaap van Zweden became the youngest-ever concertmaster of the Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra at age 19. He began his conducting career almost 20 years later, was named *Musical America's* 2012 Conductor of the Year, and was awarded the prestigious Concertgebouw Prize in 2020. In 1997 he and his wife, Aaltje, established the Papageno Foundation to support families of children with autism.

The **New York Philharmonic** connects with up to 50 million music lovers each season through live concerts in New York and around the world, as well as broadcasts, recordings, and education programs. In the 2021–22 season, the Philharmonic presents concerts at two Lincoln Center venues — Alice Tully Hall and the Rose Theater at Jazz at Lincoln Center's Frederick P. Rose Hall — during the renovation of David Geffen Hall, scheduled to reopen in fall 2022. The Orchestra gives World, US, and New York premieres of ten works, including seven led by Music Director Jaap van Zweden; examines *The Schumann Connection*, conducted by Gustavo Dudamel; joins The Mary and James G. Wallach Artist-in-Residence Anthony Roth Costanzo in *Authentic Selves: The Beauty Within*, exploring questions of identity; and collaborates with New York City community partners.

The Philharmonic has commissioned and / or premiered important works, from Dvořák's *New World* Symphony to Tania León's Pulitzer Prize-winning *Stride*. The Orchestra has released more than 2,000 recordings since 1917, streams performances on NYPhil+, and shares its extensive history free online through the New York Philharmonic Leon Levy Digital Archives.

Founded in 1842, the New York Philharmonic is the oldest symphony orchestra in the United States, and one of the oldest in the world. Jaap van Zweden became Music Director in 2018–19, succeeding titans including Bernstein, Toscanini, and Mahler.

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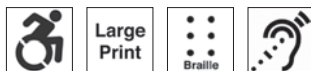
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November 2021–February 2022

Alice Tully Hall at Lincoln Center

Thu. November 11 | 7:30 p.m.
Fri. November 12 | 8:00 p.m.
Sat. November 13 | 8:00 p.m.

Simone Young conductor
Sheku Kanneh-Mason cello

J.S. BACH / Arr. Webern *Fuga (Ricerata), from Musical Offering, BWV 1079*

DVOŘÁK Cello Concerto
BRAHMS Symphony No. 1

Alice Tully Hall at Lincoln Center

Wed. November 17 | 7:30 p.m.
Thu. November 18 | 7:30 p.m.
Fri. November 19 | 8:00 p.m.

Semyon Bychkov conductor
Karen Gomyo violin

SHOSTAKOVICH Violin Concerto No. 1
TCHAIKOVSKY Symphony No. 1, *Winter Dreams*

Alice Tully Hall at Lincoln Center

Wed. November 24 | 7:30 p.m.
Fri. November 26 | 8:00 p.m.
Sat. November 27 | 8:00 p.m.

Jaap van Zweden conductor
Joshua Bell violin

BEETHOVEN Violin Concerto
CHEN Yi Duo Ye
STRAVINSKY *Pulcinella Suite*

NEW YORK'S ORCHESTRA IS BACK

A Gala Evening with Itzhak Perlman
Alice Tully Hall at Lincoln Center
Thu. December 2 | 7:30 p.m.

Jaap van Zweden conductor
Itzhak Perlman violin

MOZART *The Marriage of Figaro Overture*
PROKOFIEV Symphony No. 1, *Classical*
BRUCH Violin Concerto No. 1

Alice Tully Hall at Lincoln Center

Fri. December 3 | 8:00 p.m.
Sat. December 4 | 8:00 p.m.

Jaap van Zweden conductor
Emanuel Ax piano

Joan TOWER 1920 / 2019
(Project 19 Commission)
MOZART Piano Concerto No. 17
DVOŘÁK Symphony No. 7

HANDEL'S MESSIAH

Presented by **Gary W. Parr**
The Riverside Church
Tue. December 14 | 7:00 p.m.
Wed. December 15 | 7:00 p.m.
Fri. December 17 | 7:00 p.m.
Sat. December 18 | 7:00 p.m.

Jeannette Sorrell conductor
Amanda Forsythe soprano
John Holiday countertenor
Nicholas Phan tenor
Kevin Deas bass
Apollo's Singers
Jeannette Sorrell artistic director

HANDEL *Messiah*

HOLIDAY BRASS

Alice Tully Hall at Lincoln Center
Thu. December 16 | 7:00 p.m.
Sat. December 18 | 2:00 p.m.

New York Philharmonic
Brass and Percussion

Carnegie Hall

Thu. January 6 | 8:00 p.m.

Susanne Mälkki conductor
Branford Marsalis saxophone

Adolphus HAILSTORK
An American Port of Call
John ADAMS Saxophone Concerto
SIBELIUS Symphony No. 5

Info: carnegiehall.org

YOUNG PEOPLE'S CONCERT

Alice Tully Hall at Lincoln Center
Sat. January 15 | 2:00 p.m.

Thomas Wilkins conductor / co-host

Jonathan McCrory co-host
National Black Theatre
artistic advisor

The Orchestra Will Not Be Televised

Ahead of Martin Luther King, Jr., Day, listen to how composers amplify calls for revolutionary acts of freedom, equality, and justice through music.

AUTHENTIC SELVES: THE BEAUTY WITHIN

Rose Theater at Jazz at Lincoln Center
Thu. January 27 | 7:30 p.m.
Fri. January 28 | 8:00 p.m.
Sat. January 29 | 8:00 p.m.

Jaap van Zweden conductor
Anthony Roth Costanzo countertenor
Justin Vivian Bond vocalist

Joan TOWER *Fanfare for the Uncommon Woman, No. 1*
VARIOUS / Arr. Nico MUHLY Selections from *Only an Octave Apart* (songs from the Baroque to today)

Joel THOMPSON & Tracy K. SMITH *The Places We Leave* (World Premiere–New York Philharmonic Commission)
SCHUBERT Symphony in B minor, *Unfinished*

Alice Tully Hall at Lincoln Center

Thu. February 3 | 7:30 p.m.
Sat. February 5 | 8:00 p.m.

Jaap van Zweden conductor
Anthony Roth Costanzo countertenor

BEETHOVEN *Leonore Overture No. 3*
BERLIOZ *Les Nuits d'été*
Gregory SPEARS & Tracy K. SMITH *Love Story* (World Premiere–New York Philharmonic Commission)

EASTMAN Symphony No. II — *The Faithful Friend: The Lover Friend's Love for the Beloved*

An Evening with **Anthony Roth Costanzo** and **National Black Theatre**

Stanley H. Kaplan Penthouse
Fri. February 4 | 8:00 p.m.

Anthony Roth Costanzo curator / countertenor
National Black Theatre

Program to be announced from the stage

165 West 65th Street, 10th Floor

Programs subject to change. For a complete, updated schedule and tickets visit nyphil.org | Alice Tully Hall Box Office | (212) 875-5656

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