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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!

Deborah Borda
Linda and Mitch Hart President and CEO
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In Person
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...
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.”

In Person

Lucy Kraus, the former Senior Publications Editor at the Philharmonic, has written for The New York Times and other publications.
NEVER STOP ARRIVING
THE NEXT GENERATION
2021 ESCALADE

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Briefing

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!
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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

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— The Gecko®
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
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**Friday, November 26, 2021, 8:00 p.m.**
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**Saturday, November 27, 2021, 8:00 p.m.**
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**Jaap van Zweden, Conductor**
**Joshua Bell, Violin**

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Alice Tully Hall at Lincoln Center
Jaap van Zweden, Conductor
Joshua Bell, Violin

**BEETHOVEN** (1770–1827)  
Violin Concerto in D major, Op. 61 (1806)  
Allegro ma non troppo  
Larghetto  
Rondo: Allegro  
JOSHUA BELL

**Intermission**

**CHEN Yi** (b. 1953)  
**Duo Ye for Chamber Orchestra** (1985)  

**STRAVINSKY** (1882–1971)  
Suite from Pulcinella (1919–20 / 1922; rev. 1949)  
Sinfonia (Overture)  
Serenata  
Scherzino — Allegro — Andantino  
Tarantella  
Toccata  
Gavotta con due variazioni  
Vivo  
Minuetto — Finale

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Notes on the Program

Violin Concerto in D major, Op. 61

Ludwig van Beethoven

Ludwig van Beethoven studied the violin as a young man in Bonn and spent some time as an orchestral violist before moving to Vienna in 1792 to seek his fortune as a pianist and composer. In the early 1790s he tried his hand at a Violin Concerto in C major (WoO 5), which he left incomplete, and he penned two charming, single-movement Romances for violin and orchestra. He was also composing chamber music with violin, and by the time he got around to this Violin Concerto he had completed all but the last of his ten violin sonatas. He obviously arrived at the concerto project with considerable mastery of the instrument for which he was writing.

Still, the piece failed to impress at its premiere. Anton Schindler, the sometimes credible chronicler of Beethoven’s life, recalled in 1840:

The concert enjoyed no great success. When it was repeated the following year it was more favorably received, but Beethoven decided to rewrite it as a piano concerto. As such, however, it was totally ignored: violinists and pianists alike rejected the work as unrewarding (a fate it has shared with almost all of Beethoven’s works until the present time). The violinists even complained that it was unplayable, for they shrank from the frequent use of the upper positions.

It is true that Beethoven requires his soloist to spend a great deal of time in the stratosphere playing streams of swirling figuration, and that by the end of the concerto relatively little rosin will have been rubbed off on the G string, the lowest of the instrument’s four.

Carl Czerny, another member of the composer’s circle, said that Beethoven had written the concerto very quickly and had only managed to complete it two days before the premiere, so that Franz Clement, the soloist, had no choice but to sight-read the solo part at the performance. Other accounts relate the same story, but they may simply be repeating one another. It would seem odd that Clement should not at least have dropped in at Beethoven’s apartment to scan the score in progress as the performance date approached and panic began to set in. Nonetheless, even a best-case scenario would not have provided time in which to rehearse with the orchestra — a far from auspicious way to launch a work that is so symphonic at its core. Apparently, Clement acquitted...
himself with honor under the circumstances. The *Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung* of Leipzig ran a news item that suggests so:

To the admirers of Beethoven’s muse it may be of interest that this composer has written a violin concerto — the first, so far as we know — which the beloved local violinist Klement [sic], in the concert given for his benefit, played with his usual elegance and luster.

One wonders whether the same elegance and luster extended to Clement’s performance, on the same program, of a set of variations (almost certainly of his own composition) that he played on a single string while holding his violin upside down.

Schindler was quite right in describing the neglect this concerto suffered in its early years. Despite occasional, valiant attempts, the piece failed to whip up much audience enthusiasm until 1844, when the Philharmonic Society of London programmed it with Felix Mendelssohn conducting and the 12-year-old Joseph Joachim as soloist. It should be stated that the Beethoven Violin Concerto that Joachim played, and that violinists have played ever since, was not quite the same Beethoven Violin Concerto that Clement premiered.

### Who’s in Charge?

In his delightful book *Musical Blunders* (1996), the late flutist and raconteur Fritz Spiegl tells how, during World War II, many top-notch British musicians joined the Central Band of the Royal Air Force and pressed the bandmaster to include some “real” symphonic pieces in the band’s repertoire. The bandmaster, it seems, “was a little out of his depth in the classical repertoire,” and when the Beethoven Violin Concerto showed up on the music stands he “clearly had not studied the score (let alone recordings of the work).” Spiegl continues:

[He] began the first movement under the impression that it started with the oboes and bassoons in the second bar — having failed to spot the opening four solo timpani notes, whose rhythm pervades the whole of the first movement. He brought down his stick for the oboes but instead, the timpanist went “bom-bom-bom-bom” just as Beethoven indicated. On hearing the drumbeats he rapped on his desk and called to the timpanist, “Thank you very much, but I don’t need you to give me the tempo.”

### Listen for … the Timpani

Audience members at the premiere of Beethoven’s Violin Concerto could not have anticipated the first sounds of this concerto — five quiet beats on the timpani, the last of which coincides with the entrance of a more standard orchestral complement:

\[
\begin{align*}
&\text{Allegro ma non troppo} \\
&\begin{array}{cccccccc}
&\text{c} & \text{c} & \text{c} & \text{c} & \text{c} & \text{c} & \text{c} & \text{c} \\
p & & & & & & & \\
\end{array}
\end{align*}
\]

As tunes go, it’s not much to write home about, and perhaps those first listeners’ immediate response, once the wind choir announced a full-fledged theme, was to discount that opening as either a joke or simply bizarre. But right away the timpani returns with another five beats, and then for their entrance the orchestral strings mimic the same rhythm. That motif will be present often in the first movement; indeed, when Beethoven transformed this work into a piano concerto a year later, he incorporated the timpani as an obbligato participant in the first-movement cadenza he wrote for the solo pianist.
Due to the apparent haste of composition, some of the solo notation was on the sketchy side, and before he published the piece Beethoven subjected the entire concerto to severe revision in both the solo and orchestral parts.

**Instrumentation:** flute, two oboes, two clarinets, two bassoons, two horns, two trumpets, timpani, and strings, in addition to the solo violin.

**Cadenzas:** Beethoven did not provide cadenzas for Clement to play at the premiere, but he did compose cadenzas when he transformed this piece into a piano concerto a year later. Some violinists choose to play versions of those piano cadenzas retrofitted for the violin; others play cadenzas created by other violinists who have championed the work, and still others have worked out their own cadenzas entirely, as Joshua Bell does here.

— 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)

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**Angels and Muses**

The violinist Beethoven chose to serve as midwife for his concerto was Franz Clement (1780–1842), whom he had first met in 1794 when the Vienna native was a 13-year-old touring prodigy on the way to becoming one of Europe’s most acclaimed virtuosos. By that time Clement was already a firm fixture on the concert scene in London, where he rubbed elbows with Haydn during that composer’s visits. From 1802 to 1811 he served as leader of the Theater an der Wien’s orchestra, so that when he unveiled Beethoven’s concerto in that theater he was walking onto a very familiar stage.

Clement would go on to achieve success elsewhere as a conductor and violinist, with critics citing firmness of tone, elegant clarity, tender expressiveness, spot-on intonation, and deft bowing among his characteristic strengths. He published several compositions, too, including a D-major Violin Concerto of his own, but his career concluded badly, with financial mismanagement leading him to an ignominious and impecunious end.

In 1806, when he introduced Beethoven’s Violin Concerto, Clement had had plenty of experience making sense of Beethoven’s audacious style, which he had encountered in abundance as one of the first conductors to lead the *Eroica* Symphony. “Concerto par Clemenza pour Clement,” Beethoven inscribed at the top of the concerto’s manuscript — “Concerto for Clement, out of Compassion.”

*An image of Franz Clement at age eight, by Henri Hessell, 1789*
Although Chen Yi lives in Kansas City, Missouri, where she has served on the faculty of the University of Missouri–Kansas City since 1998, she is originally from Guangzhou, the capital city of the most densely populated province of China. Her extraordinary life story is a saga of artistic devotion and perseverance.

The daughter of classical music–loving doctors, she studied violin and piano from age three and listened to her parents’ record collection. At 15 she was sent to work in the fields as part of the Cultural Revolution’s re-education program for young citizens corrupted by Western capitalist influences.

More than a year later, after authorities heard her virtuosic violin renditions of revolutionary songs (the only permitted music at that time), they reassigned her to a Beijing Opera troupe in her hometown, where she served as concertmaster and arranger for the next eight years. In 1978 Beijing’s Central Conservatory reopened, and Chen Yi enrolled in the first class, along with composer Tan Dun and her future husband, Zhou Long. In 1986 she became the first female composer in China to have a whole concert of her symphonic music performed at Beijing Concert Hall.

Under the auspices of the Chinese-born American composer Chou Wen-chung, she then embarked on a journey to the United States to pursue a doctorate at Columbia University alongside a group of now famous émigré composers from China. In 1987, while she was a student at Columbia, China’s Central Philharmonic Orchestra performed her orchestral composition Duo Ye No. 2 all over the US, beginning at Avery Fisher Hall (since renamed David Geffen Hall) at Lincoln Center.

In the 1990s, Chen Yi served as composer-in-residence with The Women’s Philharmonic, and Yehudi Menuhin conducted one of her works at the first Lincoln Center Festival. Her subsequent accolades include the CalArts Alpert Award, the American Academy of Arts and Letters Charles Ives Living Award, and The Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center’s Elise L. Stoeger Prize.

Duo Ye, written while she was a student in China, is Chen Yi’s earliest piece for orchestra without soloist. (Her first work involving orchestra, Xian Shi, composed in 1983, was the first viola concerto composed in China.) It is based on Chen Yi’s solo piano piece, also called Duo Ye (1984), which had received First Prize in the Fourth Chinese National Music Composition Contest, in 1985. This piece’s success led the China Record Company to commission and record the chamber orchestra version before it received its first public performance the following year. This is the version you hear tonight.

Chen Yi subsequently created two additional versions. Duo Ye No. 2 (1987), for

---

**In Short**

- **Born:** April 4, 1953, in Guangzhou, China
- **Resides:** Kansas City, Missouri
- **Work composed:** 1985; commissioned and recorded by the China Record Company; based on an earlier solo piano piece, also titled Duo Ye, composed in 1984
- **World premiere:** February 10, 1986, Beijing Concert Hall, by the Beijing Symphony Orchestra, Lan Shui, conductor (although it had been recorded by the China Record Company in 1985). The original solo piano composition received its first performance in 1985, by Chen Yi’s sister, Chen Min, in Beijing.
- **New York Philharmonic premiere:** these performances
- **Estimated duration:** ca. 7 minutes
The Work at a Glance

The two-note “Duo Ye” motive is introduced by oboe and upper strings, expanding to a longer melody, a call-and-response with clarinet, bassoon, and tom-toms punctuated by snap pizzicatos (“Bartók pizzicatos”) in the cellos and basses. A French horn drone leads to another call-and-response, between strings and winds, leading to a romp for the whole orchestra. A contemplative passage follows, in which a Beijing Opera–esque melody (symbolizing the visitors from Beijing) passes from the flute to muted violas in counterpoint with the vibraphone, and eventually across the rest of the strings. An insistent vibraphone ostinato then accompanies the principal melody, which has now traveled all the way down to the basses.

Suddenly a new, highly embellished melody in the style of traditional Chinese mountain songs (shan’ge) emerges, first in the oboe, then flute, then in the two clarinets moving in parallel motion. (The paired clarinets evoke the sheng, a traditional Chinese free-reed instrument similar to the harmonica.) This freely flowing tune is accompanied by a melodic groove in the tom-toms and a repeating eight-beat pizzicato riff in the violas and cellos that forms a twelve-tone row. The groove is briefly broken and then shifts to another, even more propulsive five-beat rhythmic cycle in the second violins. Soon everyone joins in, and a loud thwack on the gong is followed by a potent restatement of the initial two-note motive. Frenetic figurations in the strings underscore successive iterations of the motive, leading directly to a dramatic block chord voiced across the orchestra that pounds in a seven-beat rhythmic cycle, interrupting a melody in the bassoon, cello, and basses. These various rhythmic juxtapositions are derived from traditional Chinese folk music practices.

The original motive returns once again, now soaring in the high strings, against the sweeping of the lower strings, building in intensity. It all suddenly stops. A final, Stravinskyesque passage in a driving two-beat meter grows more and more forceful, but then dissolves as a lyrical melody makes a final return in the oboe before being drowned out by one final triumphant statement of the initial motive.

Transcribed from the original Dong folktune

One of the original Dong folksongs that inspired Duo Ye, transcribed in Chinese notation in which the pentatonic scale Do Re Mi So La is represented as 1 2 3 5 6. A line below notes means eighth notes; two lines mean sixteenths. A dot means an octave lower. A slur between numbers is the same as a slur in Western notation.
In the Composer’s Words

Chen Yi has written the following about Duo Ye:

I took the element of the original singing tune, “Ya Duo Ye” [nonsense syllables sung in refrains], as a melodic motive to develop, and the dancing rhythmic chorale as the accompaniment. Developed from the primitive motive, the style of the lyrical melodies [in homophonic or polyphonic writing] and the hidden layers in the rhythmic patterns in the piece is mixed with high pitch mountain songs [with many grace notes imitating the speech-singing] and Beijing Opera tunes. The overall rhythmic arrangement is dominated by an application of a telescopic principle originating in Shifan Drum, a type of traditional percussion ensemble music in Southeastern China. The combinations and contrasts between parts, the meters designed and the numbers of note groupings, all are inspired by the original rhythmic organizations called The Sum of Eight and The Golden Olive, from folk music. The imagination of the primitive power, the high energetic spirit, and the charming folk singing as the soul of the music are represented in the composition.

When invited to comment on these performances, the composer said:

It’s a great honor and joy that the New York Philharmonic has programmed my Duo Ye for Chamber Orchestra this season. I’ve always known how great the Philharmonic is from the many concerts that I have attended, and I enjoyed a recording of their 1996 performance, with Chanticleer, of my orchestration of Alice Parker’s Singin’ in the Dark, a set of American folk songs, in Central Park. I am so grateful for the New York Philharmonic’s strong support for new music, their high spirit, and artistic quality.

large orchestra and containing substantial interpolations, established her reputation in the US. Finally, in 1995, she transcribed and adapted her initial solo piano work for solo pipa, the traditional four-stringed Chinese lute, also using the title Duo Ye. These performances of the chamber orchestra version of Duo Ye mark the first time that the New York Philharmonic has performed any incarnation of Duo Ye, though the Orchestra presented her chamber work At the Kansas City Chinese New Year Concert on a 2019 contemporary music concert.

Duo Ye is an amalgam of traditional Chinese and Western contemporary music, a synthesis that would become the hallmark of Chen Yi’s style. Described by some early reviewers as sounding like “Chinese Bartók,” Duo Ye is immediately striking upon first hearing, though it rewards repeated listening.

The work takes its inspiration from a folk performance Chen witnessed on a 1980s conservatory class field trip to a Dong ethnic-minority village in the Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region of south China. The village leader sang the nonsense syllables “Ya Duo Ye” while a group of male and female farmers danced around a bonfire, singing those syllables as the leader improvised. The interplay between a short recurring motive (in this case, “Ya Duo Ye”), a variety of longer musical gestures, and propulsive movement became the foundation of Chen Yi’s inventive reimagining of this material for the concert hall.

Instrumentation: flute, oboe, clarinet and E-flat clarinet, bassoon, horn, woodblock, four tom-toms, snare drum, vibraphone, suspended cymbal, gong, and strings.

— Frank J. Oteri, a composer, music journalist, editor of NewMusicBox (the web magazine from New Music USA), and vice president of the International Society for Contemporary Music (ISCM)
Igor Stravinsky owed much of his early fame to ballet scores he created for Serge Diaghilev’s Ballets Russes: *Firebird* (premiered in 1910), *Petrushka* (1911), and *The Rite of Spring* (1913). Numerous other Diaghilev collaborations followed, of which *Pulcinella* (1920) has proved the most endearing. In his book *Expositions and Developments* (co-authored with Robert Craft), Stravinsky recalled what Diaghilev proposed: “I want you to look at some delightful 18th-century music with the idea of orchestrating it for a ballet.”

The impresario had recently scored a success with a ballet, choreographed by Léonide Massine, titled *The Good-Humored Ladies*, its plot derived from comedies by the 18th-century playwright Carlo Goldoni, its music “updated” and orchestrated from harpsichord sonatas by Domenico Scarlatti. Hoping to duplicate that triumph, Diaghilev (again collaborating with Massine) directed Stravinsky to the Neapolitan composer Giovanni Battista Pergolesi (1710–36). Stravinsky initially found the idea off-putting, since the only Pergolesi pieces he knew were the *Stabat Mater* and the opera *La serva padrona*, neither of which he liked. Nonetheless, he dug into available editions of the composer’s works, as well as some manuscripts supplied by Diaghilev himself, and came up with movements that might serve the project.

These were fitted to a story involving the commedia dell’arte character Pulcinella, specifically a scenario found in an old Italian source called *Four Identical Pulcinellas*. A hero of that traditional genre, which was popular in Pergolesi’s Naples, Pulcinella is variously depicted as wily while playing dumb or actually incompetent without realizing it — and, in any case, he is a shameless self-promoter. Here, young girls in town pursue him romantically and their boyfriends plot to kill him. The boyfriends disguise themselves as Pulcinella to gain the girls’ affections, and the real Pulcinella escapes the boyfriends’ blows by changing places with a double — whom the boyfriends believe (mistakenly) they have managed to kill. The real Pulcinella materializes as a magician and appears to bring his pummeled double back to life. The official plot summary sorts out the confusion: “Just as the young men, thinking they are finally rid of him, come to find their fiancées, the real Pulcinella appears and arranges all their marriages.”

Stravinsky crafted settings (for small orchestra and three vocal soloists) that maintained the original melodies and bass lines practically unaltered from the original musical sources, but nevertheless transposed the music to 1920 by way of modernist

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**Suite from Pulcinella**

**Igor Stravinsky**

In Short

**Born:** June 17, 1882, in Oranienbaum (now called Lomonosov) in the Northwest St. Petersburg region of Russia

**Died:** April 6, 1971, in New York City

**Work composed:** the complete Pulcinella ballet, summer 1919–April 24, 1920; the suite assembled, probably in 1922; revised slightly in 1949

**World premiere:** the ballet, on May 15, 1920, at the Paris Opéra, danced by the Ballets Russes, with Ernest Ansermet, conductor; the suite, on December 22, 1922, at Boston’s Symphony Hall, by the Boston Symphony Orchestra, Pierre Monteux, conductor

**New York Philharmonic premiere:** January 8, 1925, conducted by Igor Stravinsky in his first appearance in the United States

**Most recent New York Philharmonic performance:** July 25, 2021, Jaap van Zweden, conductor, at the Bravo! Vail Music Festival in Colorado

**Estimated duration:** ca. 24 minutes
Stravinsky’s US Debut

Go to the New York Philharmonic Leon Levy Digital Archives and pull up the program for the Philharmonic’s first performance of the Suite from *Pulcinella*, in 1925, and your eyes will notice a special insertion: “Mr. Stravinsky’s First Appearance in America.”

In 1923 Arthur Judson, Manager of the New York Philharmonic, invited Stravinsky, who had made his conducting debut only a year before, to come to North America. They negotiated a ten-week tour for the winter of 1925 that would mark his US debut with the New York Philharmonic, followed by stops in Boston, Philadelphia, Cleveland, Cincinnati, and Chicago.

The contract guaranteed that Stravinsky would conduct at least ten concerts, receiving $1,200 for each. Clarence H. Mackay, Chairman of the Board of the New York Philharmonic, personally guaranteed the $12,000 total. On December 27, 1924, Stravinsky left Le Havre on the SS *Paris*. He arrived in New York on January 4 and was already rehearsing with the Philharmonic on the morning of the 5th, with the first concert on the 8th.

In addition to the Suite from *Pulcinella*, the concert featured his *Firebird* Suite, *The Song of the Nightingale*, *Fireworks*, and *Scherzo fantastique*. The audience applauded them whole-heartedly, but the critics, accustomed to veteran maestros like Monteux and Stokowski, criticized Stravinsky’s conducting. Lawrence Gilman of the *Herald Tribune* wrote that “in finesse and clarity, in tonal balance, in nuance, [the performance] left something to be desired.” The New York Times’s Olin Downes noted that few composers are the best interpreters of their own works, adding, “one of the least eloquent interpreters of Stravinsky is Stravinsky.”

On January 25, 1925, Stravinsky and New York Philharmonic musicians gave a chamber concert at Aeolian Hall featuring Stravinsky’s recent compositions in the neoclassical style. It included two US Premieres: the concert version of *Ragtime* (for 11 instruments) and the Octet for Winds.

— The Editors
harmonies, rhythms, and asymmetrical elongations or diminutions of phrase lengths. Fifteen years after the piece was introduced, he underscored the work’s uniqueness in a memo he wrote to the Société des Auteurs to support his claim of French copyright for the music:

The ballet is an original composition that completely transforms the elements borrowed from Pergolesi. Pulcinella is not a harmonization or orchestration — which terms constitute the usual meaning of “arrangement” — but a true composition in its own right, the borrowed material having been developed in an original way.

In fact, in the century since the work was composed musicologists have determined that many of the pieces Stravinsky chose had been misattributed to Pergolesi, although he and Diaghilev had no reason to suspect that when they developed the work. Of the movements that appear in the orchestral suite, the Serenata is from Pergolesi’s opera Il flaminio, the Vivo is from his Sinfonia for Cello and Basso, and the Minuetto is from his opera Lo frate ‘nnammorato. The Sinfonia (Overture), Scherzino, the first Allegro, Andantino, and concluding Allegro assai originated in trio sonatas by Domenico Gallo (1730–68); the Tarantella is by Unico Wilhelm van Wassenaer (1692–1766); and the Toccata and Gavotta are from a harpsichord suite by Carlo Ignazio Monza (1680–1739).

The premiere production of the ballet Pulcinella included sets by Pablo Picasso, and Massine danced the title role himself. Stravinsky characterized it as “one of those productions where everything harmonizes, where all the elements — subject, music, dancing, and artistic setting — form a coherent and homogenous whole.” In 1922 (apparently), he created a concert suite of 11 movements — several are joined into attached spans — out of his ballet score, with instruments replacing the vocal lines that had figured in the original Serenata and Minuetto sections.

Instrumentation: two flutes (one doubling piccolo), two oboes, two bassoons, two horns, trumpet, trombone, and strings, including a featured solo string quintet comprising two violins, viola, cello, and bass.

— J.M.K.

Imitation as Homage

Although Stravinsky viewed Pulcinella as a standalone project, he later realized that his prolonged exposure to the 18th-century music he recomposed for the ballet actually played an important part in ushering him into the neoclassical phase of his career. We read in Expositions and Developments (co-authored by Stravinsky and Robert Craft):

Pulcinella was my discovery of the past, the epiphany through which the whole of my late work became possible. It was a backward look, of course — the first of many love affairs in that direction — but it was a look in the mirror, too. No critic understood this at the time, and I was therefore attacked for being a pasticheur, chided for composing “simple” music, blamed for deserting “modernism,” accused of renouncing my “true Russian heritage.” People who had never heard of, or cared about, the originals cried “sacrilege”: “The classics are ours. Leave the classics alone.” To them all my answer was and is the same: You “respect,” but I love.
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Steinway is the Official Piano of the New York Philharmonic.
Jaap van Zweden became Music Director of the New York Philharmonic in September 2018. He also serves as Music Director of the Hong Kong Philharmonic, a post he has held since 2012. He has appeared as a guest with leading orchestras such as, in Europe, the Orchestre de Paris, Amsterdam’s Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra, Leipzig Gewandhaus Orchestra, Vienna Philharmonic, Berlin Philharmonic, and London Symphony Orchestra, and, in the United States, the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, The Cleveland Orchestra, and Los Angeles Philharmonic.

In the 2021–22 season Jaap van Zweden and the Philharmonic perform at Alice Tully Hall and the Rose Theater at Jazz at Lincoln Center during the renovation of David Geffen Hall — scheduled to reopen in the fall of 2022 — and in concerts presented by Carnegie Hall. He conducts symphonic cornerstones as well as four World Premieres, a US Premiere, and two New York Premieres. In 2019–20 he presided over the launch of Project 19 — the multiyear initiative marking the centennial of the 19th Amendment with commissions by 19 women composers, including Tania León’s Pulitzer Prize–winning Stride — and the US Premiere of a staged production of Schoenberg’s Erwartung coupled with Bartók’s Bluebeard’s Castle.

Jaap van Zweden’s most recent Philharmonic recording is the World Premiere of David Lang’s prisoner of the state (2020), following Julia Wolfe’s Grammy-nominated Fire in my mouth (2019), both released on Decca Gold. With the Hong Kong Philharmonic he conducted the first-ever performances in Hong Kong of Wagner’s Ring Cycle (Naxos). His recording of Wagner’s Parsifal received the Edison Award for Best Opera Recording in 2012.

Born in Amsterdam, Jaap van Zweden, at age 19, was appointed the youngest-ever concertmaster of the Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra. He began his conducting career almost 20 years later, in 1996. He is Honorary Chief Conductor of the Netherlands Radio Philharmonic, where he was Chief Conductor (2005–13); served as Chief Conductor of the Royal Flanders Orchestra (2008–11); and was Music Director of the Dallas Symphony Orchestra (2008–18), where he is now Conductor Laureate. He was named Musical America’s 2012 Conductor of the Year and in 2018 was the subject of a CBS 60 Minutes profile on his arrival at the Philharmonic. Under his leadership the Hong Kong Philharmonic was named Gramophone’s 2019 Orchestra of the Year, and was awarded the prestigious Concertgebouw Prize in 2020.

In 1997 Jaap van Zweden and his wife, Aaltje, established the Papageno Foundation to support families of children with autism. In 1995 the Foundation opened the Papageno House — with Her Majesty Queen Maxima in attendance — where young adults with autism live, work, and participate in the community. Today, the Foundation focuses on the development of children and young adults with autism by providing in-home music therapy; cultivating funding opportunities to support autism programs; and creating a research center for early diagnosis and treatment of autism and analyzing the benefits of music therapy. More recently, the Foundation launched the app TEAMPapageno, which allows children with autism to communicate with each other through music composition.
Grammy Award–winning violinist Joshua Bell, with a career spanning almost four decades, is one of the most celebrated artists of his era. Having performed with virtually every major orchestra in the world, he continues to maintain engagements as soloist, recitalist, chamber musician, conductor, and music director of the Academy of St Martin in the Fields.

Mr. Bell’s highlights in the 2021–22 season include leading the Academy of St Martin in the Fields at the 2021 BBC Proms, throughout Europe, and in the United States on tour; returns to The Philadelphia Orchestra (for a play / conduct program), Verbier Festival, and Minnesota Orchestra, as well as the New York Philharmonic; and tours with the Israel Philharmonic and NDR Elbphilharmonie Orchestras as soloist.

Born in Bloomington, Indiana, Joshua Bell began studying the violin at age four, and at twelve began studies with his mentor, Josef Gingold. He made his debut with Riccardo Muti and The Philadelphia Orchestra at 14, and his Carnegie Hall debut with the St. Louis Symphony at 17. At 18 he signed with his first label, London Decca, and received the Avery Fisher Career Grant. He was named 2010 Instrumentalist of the Year by Musical America and a 2007 Young Global Leader by the World Economic Forum. He has also been nominated for six Grammy awards and received the 2007 Avery Fisher Prize. He received the 2003 Indiana Governor’s Arts Award, a Distinguished Alumni Service Award in 1991 from the Jacobs School of Music, and, in 2000, was named an Indiana Living Legend.

Mr. Bell has performed for three American presidents and the sitting justices of the Supreme Court of the United States. He participated in former President Barack Obama’s Committee on the Arts and Humanities’ first cultural mission to Cuba, joining Cuban and American musicians on Joshua Bell: Seasons of Cuba, an Emmy-nominated 2017 Live From Lincoln Center PBS special celebrating renewed cultural diplomacy between Cuba and the United States.
New York Philharmonic

The New York Philharmonic plays a leading cultural role in New York City, the United States, and the world. Each season the Orchestra connects with up to 50 million music lovers through live concerts in New York and around the world, as well as broadcasts, recordings, and education programs. In the 2021–22 season, Music Director Jaap van Zweden and the Philharmonic present 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 accelerated renovation of David Geffen Hall, scheduled to reopen in the fall of 2022. The Orchestra gives World, US, and New York premieres of ten commissions; explores The Schumann Connection, conducted by Gustavo Dudamel; and joins with The Mary and James G. Wallach Artist-in-Residence Anthony Roth Costanzo in Authentic Selves: The Beauty Within, a two-week exploration of questions of identity. The Philharmonic also builds on the strong connections with New York City’s communities forged through impactful collaborations with local organizations developed over the course of the COVID-19 pandemic.

In the 2019–20 season, soon after the first premieres through Project 19 — which marks the centennial of the 19th Amendment with commissions by 19 women composers — safety concerns due to the pandemic compelled the cancellation of live concerts. The Philharmonic’s response included NY Phil Bandwagon — free, outdoor concerts featuring ensembles of the Orchestra’s musicians that brought live music back to New York City — and the launch of NYPhil+, a state-of-the-art streaming platform.

The New York Philharmonic has commissioned and/or premiered works by leading composers from every era since its founding in 1842, from Dvořák’s New World Symphony and Gershwin’s Concerto in F to Pulitzer Prize winners such as John Adams’s On the Transmigration of Souls and Tania León’s Stride. The Orchestra has made more than 2,000 recordings since 1917; the most recent include Julia Wolfe’s Grammy-nominated Fire in my mouth and David Lang’s prisoner of the state (both available on Decca Gold). The Orchestra’s extensive history is available free online through the New York Philharmonic Leon Levy Digital Archives, which comprises approximately four million pages of documents, including every printed program since 1842 and scores and parts marked by past musicians and Music Directors such as Mahler and Bernstein.

A resource for its community and the world, the Orchestra complements annual free concerts across the city with education projects, including the famed Young People’s Concerts and Very Young Composers Program. The Orchestra has appeared in 435 cities in 63 countries, including Pyongyang, DPRK, in 2008, the first visit there by an American orchestra.

Founded in 1842 by local musicians, the New York Philharmonic is the oldest symphony orchestra in the United States, and one of the oldest in the world. Notable figures who have conducted the Philharmonic include Tchaikovsky, Richard Strauss, Stravinsky, and Copland. Jaap van Zweden became Music Director in 2018–19, succeeding musical leaders including Leonard Bernstein, Arturo Toscanini, and Gustav Mahler.
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Philharmonic Schedule  
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 (Ricercata), 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 99 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 | 7:00 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)  
SCHUBERT Symphony in B minor, Unfinished

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Fri. November 12 | 8:00 p.m.  
Sat. November 13 | 8:00 p.m.  
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John Holiday countertenor  
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MOZART Piano Concerto No. 17  
DVOŘÁK Symphony No. 7  

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