



Musical Milestones

The following list of key dates compiled by the Philharmonic Archives is not comprehensive and is highly subjective. If you have a favorite date in the history of the New York Philharmonic, please send us an email at archives@nyphil.org and we'll consider adding it to the Milestone list.

DATE	MILESTONE
Apr. 2, 1842	Philharmonic Society of New York founded, American Ureli Corelli Hill named first President.
Dec. 7, 1842	First concert by the New York Philharmonic, conducted by Ureli Corelli Hill, H.C. Timm, and Denis Etienne, Apollo Rooms on lower Broadway before an audience of 600.
Nov. 16, 1844	US Premiere of Beethoven's Symphony No. 8, George Loder conducting.
Nov. 22, 1845	US Premiere of Mendelssohn's Symphony No. 3, George Loder conducting.
May 20, 1846	US Premiere of Beethoven's Symphony No. 9 by New York Philharmonic, George Loder conducting, at Castle Garden (text sung in English).
Feb. 17, 1853	Philharmonic Society incorporated.
Nov. 22, 1856	First performance of the Philharmonic in the Academy of Music on 14th Street.
Nov. 21, 1857	US Premiere of Schumann's Manfred Overture, Theodore Eisfeld conducting.
Nov. 20, 1858	The Philharmonic increases its subscription season from four concerts to five.
Jan. 27, 1866	US Premiere of Berlioz' Symphonie Fantastique, Carl Bergmann conducting.
Apr. 19, 1873	Anton Rubinstein conducts his Ocean Symphony with Philharmonic.

DATE	MILESTONE
Apr. 22, 1876	US Premiere of Tchaikovsky's <i>Romeo and Juliet</i> , George Matzka conducting.
Nov. 4, 1876	US Premiere of Act I of Wagner's <i>Die Walküre</i> , Leopold Damrosch conducting.
Nov. 24, 1877	Theodore Thomas conducts the Philharmonic for the first time.
Nov. 9, 1878	First concert by the New York Symphony, conducted by Leopold Damrosch, Steinway Hall on 14th Street.
Nov. 12, 1881	World Premiere of Tchaikovsky's <i>Piano Concerto No. 2</i> , Theodore Thomas conducting.
Nov. 1882	First US tour of the New York Symphony, Leopold Damrosch conducting.
Nov. 13, 1886	First performance of the Philharmonic in the Metropolitan Opera House on Broadway and 39th Street.
Dec. 10, 1886	US Premiere of Brahms' <i>Symphony No. 4</i> , Walter Damrosch conducting the New York Symphony.
Jan. 31, 1890	US Premiere of Tchaikovsky's <i>Symphony No. 4</i> , Walter Damrosch conducting the New York Symphony.
Feb. 20, 1891	First New York Symphony performance of a work by a female composer, Mrs. Walter C. Wyman singing Cecile Chaminade's <i>Chanson Slave</i> at the Metropolitan Opera House.
May 5, 1891	Walter Damrosch and Tchaikovsky conduct the New York Symphony in the inaugural concert of Andrew Carnegie's Music Hall.
Nov. 17, 1891	Ignace Jan Paderewski's American debut, with the New York Symphony, Walter Damrosch conducting.
Dec. 30, 1891	First Young People's Educational Concert presented by Walter Damrosch with the New York Symphony.
Oct. 21, 1892	Dvořák conducts the Philharmonic and the New York Symphony in his "Te Deum."

DATE	MILESTONE
Nov. 18, 1892	First performance in Carnegie's Music Hall by the New York Philharmonic, Anton Seidl conducting.
Dec. 16, 1893	World Premiere of Dvořák's Symphony No. 9 From the New World, New York Philharmonic, Anton Seidl conducting.
Mar. 16, 1894	US Premiere of Tchaikovsky's Symphony No. 6 by the New York Symphony, Walter Damrosch conducting.
Dec. 7, 1900	Violinist Fritz Kreisler makes his Philharmonic debut.
May 8, 1901	Andrew Carnegie elected President of the Philharmonic.
Jan. 30, 1904	Victor Herbert conducts the Philharmonic for the first time, Herbert's Hero and Leander performed.
Mar. 26, 1904	Richard Strauss conducts program of own works with the Philharmonic; included is Death and Transfiguration.
Nov. 11, 1905	Debut of conductor Willem Mengelberg with the New York Philharmonic.
Nov. 3, 1906	US debut of Camille Saint-Saën, performing New York Premieres of two of his piano concertos with the New York Symphony, Walter Damrosch conducting.
Dec. 8, 1908	Gustav Mahler conducts the New York Symphony in US Premiere of his Symphony No. 2, Resurrection.
Nov. 4, 1909	Mahler begins tenure as the Philharmonic's Conductor.
Nov. 28, 1909	US Premiere of Rachmaninoff's Piano Concerto No. 3 with Rachmaninoff as soloist, Walter Damrosch conducting the New York Symphony.
Dec. 3, 1909	Opening date of first US tour of the New York Philharmonic, Mahler conducting.
May 28, 1912	Mary Seney Sheldon, the first woman elected President of the New York Philharmonic.

DATE	MILESTONE
Nov. 1913	The Philharmonic becomes the first American symphony orchestra to establish an endowment, through a bequest from the publisher Joseph Pulitzer.
Jan. 24, 1914	First Philharmonic Young People's Concert, Josef Stransky conducting.
Jan. 22, 1917	First commercial recording made by the Philharmonic, on Columbia Records, Stransky conducting.
May 4, 1920	Opening date of the first European tour by an American orchestra, New York Symphony, led by Walter Damrosch.
Feb. 22, 1922	Joint concert of Philharmonic, New York Symphony and Philadelphia Orchestra, conducted by Mengelberg, Stokowski and Stransky in Carnegie Hall.
Jul. 6, 1922	First Philharmonic performance in Lewisohn Stadium's summer concert series, initiated by Minnie Guggenheimer.
Aug. 11, 1922	First broadcast by a major symphony orchestra, New York Philharmonic, program conducted by Willem van Hoogstraten from Lewisohn Stadium.
Feb. 16, 1923	US debut of conductor Bruno Walter, with the New York Symphony.
Jan. 26, 1924	Conductor Ernest Schelling begins long-running series of New York Philharmonic Young People's Concerts.
Apr. 24, 1924	First female member of the New York Philharmonic hired, harpist Stephanie Goldner.
Jan. 3, 1925	US debut of conductor Wilhelm Furtwängler, with the New York Philharmonic.
Jan. 8, 1925	US conducting debut of Igor Stravinsky, with the New York Philharmonic in an all-Stravinsky program.
Dec. 3, 1925	George Gershwin plays World Premiere of his Piano Concerto in F, commissioned by Walter Damrosch, with the New York Symphony under Walter Damrosch.
Jan. 14, 1926	Debut of conductor Arturo Toscanini with the New York Philharmonic.

DATE	MILESTONE
Aug. 6, 1926	Premiere of the movie "Don Juan," for which the Philharmonic is first symphony to record a soundtrack.
Nov. 26, 1927	New York Symphony debut of violinist Yehudi Menuhin.
Jan. 12, 1928	New York Philharmonic US debut of pianist Vladimir Horowitz.
Mar. 8, 1928	Maurice Ravel conducts the New York Symphony for the first time.
Mar. 30, 1928	Merger of the New York Symphony and the New York Philharmonic, to be known as The Philharmonic-Symphony Society of New York, Inc., Clarence MacKay, Chairman, Harry Harkness Flagler, President.
Dec. 13, 1928	World Premiere of Gershwin's An American in Paris, Walter Damrosch conducting.
Nov. 15, 1929	Toscanini conducts US Premiere of Ravel's Boléro.
May 3, 1930	Philharmonic's first performance in Europe, at the Théâtre national de l'opéra in Paris, during its first European tour led by Toscanini.
Oct. 5, 1930	Philharmonic's first coast-to-coast broadcast over the CBS radio network.
Jan. 19, 1933	Sergei Prokofiev plays his Piano Concerto No. 3, Bruno Walter conducting.
Jan. 13, 1934	First Philharmonic Young People's Concert broadcast live to France, conducted by Ernest Schelling.
Aug. 23, 1934	Members of the New York Philharmonic inaugurate Berkshire Festival in Stockbridge, Mass., Henry Hadley conducting. The Festival later became known as Tanglewood.
Nov. 11, 1934	Arthur Rodzinski makes his Philharmonic conducting debut.
Feb. 20, 1936	Pianist Rudolf Serkin makes his US debut.

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Nov. 5, 1936	Conductor John Barbirolli makes his US debut.
Nov. 17, 1937	Pianist Arthur Rubinstein makes his Philharmonic debut.
Feb. 10, 1938	Soprano Kirsten Flagstad makes her Philharmonic debut.
Jul. 25, 1938	Antonia Brico, first woman to conduct the Philharmonic, makes her debut (performance at Lewisohn Stadium).
Mar. 28, 1940	World Premiere of Britten's Violin Concerto in D minor, with Antonio Brosa, violin, and John Barbirolli conducting.
Dec. 12, 1940	Benny Goodman makes his Philharmonic debut performing Debussy's Rhapsody for Clarinet and Orchestra, John Barbirolli conducting.
Dec. 19, 1940	Dimitri Mitropoulos makes his Philharmonic conducting debut.
Nov. 14, 1943	Leonard Bernstein makes his historic conducting debut with the Philharmonic as a last-minute replacement for an ailing Bruno Walter.
Oct. 5, 1944	World Premiere of Richard Strauss' Suite from Der Rosenkavalier, Musical Director Artur Rodzinski conducting.
Jan. 26, 1946	Igor Stravinsky conducts the World Premiere of his Symphony in Three Movements, commissioned by the Philharmonic.
Jun. 26, 1950	Philharmonic makes first appearance on television, broadcast from Lewisohn Stadium on the NBC television network.
Sep. 1, 1950	The Philharmonic begins performances of four concerts a day at the Roxy Theatre as the stage attraction for the film "The Black Rose," starring Orson Welles and Tyrone Power.
Feb. 22, 1951	Leonard Bernstein conducts World Premiere of Ives' Symphony No. 2.
Aug. 22, 1951	Opening concert of first tour to Scotland's Edinburgh Festival, Bruno Walter and Dimitri Mitropoulos conducting.

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Oct. 24, 1955	Leonard Bernstein leads the Philharmonic's first appearance at the United Nations for United Nations Day.
Jan. 18, 1958	Leonard Bernstein conducts first televised Young People's Concert.
Jan. 30, 1958	Aaron Copland conducts his Symphony No. 3 in his Philharmonic debut.
Apr. 29, 1958	Opening date of the Philharmonic's first tour to South America, Dimitri Mitropoulos and Leonard Bernstein conducting.
Apr. 8, 1959	Philharmonic debut of Jack Benny in a Pension Fund Concert, Bernstein conducting.
Aug. 22, 1959	Opening date of first tour to the Soviet Union, Bernstein conducting.
Apr. 26, 1961	Opening date of first tour to Japan, Bernstein conducting, Seiji Ozawa assistant conductor.
Sep. 23, 1962	Philharmonic opens Lincoln Center in its new home, Philharmonic Hall.
May 29, 1963	First Promenades concert, Andre Kostelanetz conducting; Carl Sandburg narrates Copland's A Lincoln Portrait.
Nov. 24, 1963	Leonard Bernstein conducts the Philharmonic at memorial service for President John F. Kennedy, broadcast live from New York City over the CBS television network.
Sep. 21, 1964	New York Philharmonic begins operating as the first orchestra in the United States to work under a 52-week contract.
Jul. 30, 1965	Duke Ellington's conducting debut at the Orchestra's French-American Festival.
Aug. 10, 1965	First free outdoor Summer Parks Concert, Sheep Meadow, Central Park.
Aug. 25, 1968	Leonard Bernstein named Laureate Conductor for Life.

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Mar. 13, 1969	Philharmonic conducting debut of Pierre Boulez.
Oct. 1, 1971	First "Prospective Encounter" concert of contemporary music, Boulez conducting, at the Public Theatre. Discussions include Charles Wuorinen and Steve Reich.
Dec. 15, 1971	Leonard Bernstein's 1,000th concert with the Philharmonic.
Aug. 19, 1972	Philharmonic conducting debut of Erich Leinsdorf.
Jun. 12, 1973	First "Rug Concert," Philharmonic Hall, Pierre Boulez conducting.
Sep. 20, 1973	Philharmonic Hall renamed Avery Fisher Hall in recognition of his major gift.
May 9, 1974	Philharmonic conducting debut of Zubin Mehta.
Aug. 16, 1974	Opening date of first tour to Australia and New Zealand, Leonard Bernstein conducting.
Nov. 10, 1975	Philharmonic collaborates with Ms. Magazine for Pension Fund Concert celebrating women composers, Sarah Caldwell conducting.
Jan. 30, 1976	Philharmonic performs the first "Live From Lincoln Center" television broadcast, Van Cliburn, pianist, André Previn conducting.
Oct. 19, 1976	Inaugural Gala Concert in the completely renovated Avery Fisher Hall, Pierre Boulez conducting.
Sep. 29, 1977	Pianist Emanuel Ax makes his Philharmonic debut.
Mar 5, 1978	Cellist Yo-Yo Ma makes his Philharmonic debut.
Sep. 14, 1978	Music Director Zubin Mehta conducts his first Philharmonic Opening Night.

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Jan. 14, 1980	Philharmonic debut of tenor Luciano Pavarotti.
Apr. 21, 1980	First performance at the Abyssinian Baptist Church in Harlem, conducted by Zubin Mehta.
Oct. 22, 1980	Philharmonic debut of tenor Plácido Domingo.
Jun. 6, 1981	Philharmonic conducting debut of Kurt Masur.
Jul. 29, 1982	Mehta and the Philharmonic perform at the White House in honor of Indira Gandhi.
Sep. 5, 1982	Philharmonic arranges on one-week notice a free concert as a gift to the people of Argentina, in Buenos Aires, Leonard Bernstein conducting; 100,000 people attend.
Dec. 30, 1982	Violinist Midori makes her professional orchestra debut.
Jun. 2, 1983	First "Horizons" festival of contemporary orchestral music, Jacob Druckman, director.
Mar. 29, 1984	Leonard Bernstein named Honorary Member of the Philharmonic.
Sep. 12, 1984	Opening date of the first Philharmonic tour to India, Mehta conducting.
Jul. 5, 1986	The Philharmonic plays to the largest audience ever to attend a classical music concert: 800,000 people, in Central Park to celebrate the centennial of the Statue of Liberty, Zubin Mehta conducting.
Apr. 25, 1988	First performance of Philharmonic at Harlem's Apollo Theatre, James DePreist conducting.
Apr. 11, 1990	Kurt Masur named Music Director of the Philharmonic.
Sep. 20, 1990	Pianist Evgeny Kissin makes his US debut.

DATE	MILESTONE
May 28, 1991	Zubin Mehta, the Philharmonic's longest-tenured Music Director, conducts his final concert, featuring Schoenberg's Gurrelieder
Sep. 12, 1991	Opening night with Kurt Masur conducting his first concert as the Philharmonic's Music Director Nov. 1991 The Philharmonic signs contract with Teldec for 32 live recordings, all with Kurt Masur. For the first time, a complete orchestra roster will be included for each recording
Nov. 19, 1991	First Philharmonic Forum, instituted at the request of Kurt Masur, takes place in Avery Fisher Hall.
Jan. 9, 1992	New York Premiere of John Corigliano's Symphony No. 1; New York Philharmonic "AIDS Awareness Week."
May 25, 1992	First Annual free concert at St. John the Divine, Kurt Masur conducts Benjamin Britten's War Requiem; 5,500 attend and several thousand more are turned away.
Oct. 5, 1992	Kurt Masur conducts the First Rush Hour Concert, a new series of hour-long programs of accessible music along with informal and instructive commentary geared toward newer audiences.
Dec. 7, 1992	150th Anniversary Concert of the New York Philharmonic is celebrated with three Music Directors on the podium, Pierre Boulez, Zubin Mehta, and Kurt Masur.
May 23, 1994	First Annual Composer's Week opens with British composer Oliver Knussen conducting his own "Whitman Settings," and discussing his music in 2 Pre-Concert Lectures
Oct. 3, 1996	The Philharmonic's celebration of American Classics begins with Mr. Masur conducting Hanson's Symphony No. 2. This four year initiative celebrates the diversity and vitality of our nation's own music.
Feb. 22, 1997	The New York Philharmonic begins a new series of live national broadcasts on syndicated radio underwritten by Time Warner.
Oct. 9, 1997	Launch of the New York Philharmonic's The Historic Broadcasts 1923-1987, a ten CD set from the new label New York Philharmonic Special Editions.
May 28, 1998	Principal Clarinet Stanley Drucker celebrates his 50th anniversary as a member of the Orchestra by performing Copland's Concerto for Clarinet and String Orchestra.
June 24, 1998	The New York Philharmonic performs for the first time in The Great Hall of the People, Beijing, China.

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Sep. 16, 1998	Kurt Masur opens the season with the complete cycle of Beethoven symphonies, which have not been performed in their entirety by a single conductor in one season at the Philharmonic since 1941-42 with Toscanini.
Feb. 18, 1999	13,000th Concert of the New York Philharmonic, more than any other symphony orchestra in the world, conducted by Kurt Masur.
Nov. 1999	The Orchestra performs six works - "Messages for the Millennium" commissioned by Maestro Masur and the New York Philharmonic.
Feb. 5, 2001	At a press conference on the Grand Promenade of Avery Fisher Hall, Lorin Maazel is formally introduced as the 22nd Music Director of the New York Philharmonic.
Sep. 19, 2001	Weekly "Drive Time Broadcasts" begin on New York's WQXR radio.
Sep. 20, 2001	Responding to the September 11th disaster, the traditional Opening Night Gala is replaced with a Memorial Concert of the Brahms Requiem led by Kurt Masur.
Oct. 12, 2001	In response to the World Trade Center Disaster, the first of a series of downtown chamber concerts for the people who live and work in lower Manhattan takes place at in the Equitable Building on lower Broadway.
Sep. 19, 2002	World Premiere of John Adam's On the Transmigration of Souls, commissioned by the New York Philharmonic. This work, in commemoration of the victims of 9/11 received the Pulitzer Prize for music and the World Premiere performance, led by Lorin Maazel, was commercially released by Nonesuch records.
Feb. 2003	The Orchestra is honored by The Recording Academy ® with a Trustees Award in recognition of its outstanding contributions to the industry and American culture. Members of the Philharmonic also perform on the 45th Annual Grammy ® Awards ceremony, televised internationally from New York's Madison Square Garden – the first time that a major symphony orchestra has performed solo on the Grammy telecast.
Feb. 2005	The New York Philharmonic's recording of the World Premiere performance of John Adams' On the Transmigration of Souls wins Grammys as Best Classical Album and as Best Orchestral Performance. John Adams wins for Best Classical-Contemporary Composition.
Jul. 18, 2007	The appointment of Alan Gilbert as the next Music Director of the New York Philharmonic is announced to begin in 2009-2010.

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Feb. 26, 2008	Music Director Lorin Maazel conducts the New York Philharmonic in Pyongyang, Democratic People’s Republic of Korea. The concert opens with the North Korean national anthem followed by The Star–Spangled Banner; the program also includes Dvořák’s Symphony No. 9, From the New World (which was premiered by the Philharmonic in 1893), and Gershwin’s An American in Paris (which the Philharmonic premiered in 1928).
May 27, 2009	Alan Gilbert performs the New York Premiere of Ligeti’s Le Grand Macabre with live animation by Doug Fitch.
June 4, 2009	In recognition of his 60 years as a member of the clarinet section and as principal clarinet, longer than any other musician in the Philharmonic’s history, Stanley Drucker is named an Honorary Member of the Society.
Apr. 28, 2011	Pianist Emanuel Ax performs his 100th concert with the New York Philharmonic and is named an Honorary Member of the Society.
Sep. 10, 2011	Alan Gilbert conducts a free Concert for New York to commemorate the 10 the anniversary of 9/11. Mahler’s Symphony No. 2 Resurrection is featured and broadcast on the Lincoln Center Plaza.
Jun. 29, 2012	Alan Gilbert, Magnus Lindberg and Matthias Pintscher conduct Philharmonic 360, a spatial music performance at the Park Avenue Armory’s Wade Thompson Drill Hall featuring Stockhausen’s Gruppen.
May–Jun. 2014	Inaugural NY PHIL Biennial, a collaborative contemporary music festival at various venues around New York, directed by Alan Gilbert.
Sep. 2014	Inaugural Residency of the Global Academy as part of the Shanghai Orchestra Academy and Residency Partnership.
Jun. 2015	50 th Anniversary of the New York Philharmonic Concerts in the Parks.
Jan. 27, 2016	The appointment of Jaap van Zweden as the next Music Director of the New York Philharmonic is announced to begin in 2018-19; van Zweden served as Music Director Designate in 2017-18.
Sept. 21, 2016	The Philharmonic is the first orchestra to broadcast a live, fully-produced concert on Facebook Live.
Dec. 7, 2017	175 th Birthday of the New York Philharmonic.

DATE	MILESTONE
Apr. 4-6, 2019	The Philharmonic and Jaap van Zweden present <i>Phil the Hall</i> , special discounted concerts for New York’s first responders, volunteers, and other service professionals.