



JAAP VAN ZWEDEN
MUSIC DIRECTOR

New York Philharmonic Presents

Artist Spotlight

Monday, October 24, 2022, 7:30 p.m.

Sterling Elliott, Cello
Wynona Wang, Piano

Kenneth C. Griffin Sidewalk Studio
David Geffen Hall at Lincoln Center

This program will last approximately one and one-quarter hours. There will be no intermission.



October 24, 2022

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Brian Raphael NABORS
(b. 1991)

Sonata for Cello and Piano (2017;
rev. 2020)
Pesante
Reflective
Leggiero

SUK
(1874–1935)

**Ballade and Serenade for Cello and
Piano, Op. 3** (1890, 1898)
Ballade
Serenade

JANÁČEK
(1854–1928)

Pohádka (Fairy Tale) (1924)
Con moto
Con moto
Allegro

SHOSTAKOVICH
(1906–75)

**Sonata for Cello and Piano in D minor,
Op. 40** (1934)
Allegro non troppo
Allegro
Largo

THIS CONCERT WILL BE PERFORMED WITHOUT AN INTERMISSION.

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From the Artists

Since our first chamber experience together at Juilliard, we have had a wonderful time being both inspired and challenged by one another, while also cultivating our combined voice as a duo. It's been exhilarating sharing the stage in performances over the past few years, and we are absolutely delighted to kick off the New York Philharmonic's new *Artist Spotlight* series! We've developed special connections with each work on our program, and we look forward to communicating the stories and emotions of the program in the intimate space of the Kenneth C. Griffin Sidewalk Studio.

— Sterling Elliott and Wynona Wang

Brian Raphael Nabors's Sonata for Cello and Piano

This work represents for me the personal relationship between performer and composer — and audience, too. I discovered his work at midnight one night via a 15-second snippet of this piece on Instagram. I listened all night, then messaged him. My goal is always to transmit some personal connection to the audience. When I can heighten that by including a connection to the actual composer, that's even better.

Nabors writes music with a passion that I've never heard of before — all day, he told me, until hunger forces him to take a break. This passion is present in this piece, especially the outer movements, with the second serving as a tranquil, rhapsodic interlude.

— Sterling Elliott

Brian Raphael Nabors's Cello Sonata is a contemporary work that opens our program with an exciting sense of discovery, while complementing the works to come. Throughout the sonata, Nabors uses rhythm in a way that creates a distinctive sense of flow, and there is constant conversation between the two instruments. Jazzy harmonies, smooth color changes, and even spiritual power are some other elements that stand out to me in this brilliant new work.

— Wynona Wang

Suk's Ballade and Serenade for Cello and Piano, Op. 3

Josef Suk's Ballade and Serenade is an early work, heavily influenced by his teacher, Dvořák. I was very attracted to the direct emotional world of the piece, where one can forget about form and structure and simply follow where the music leads, moment by moment. It is totally unpredictable. Among the many nostalgic, Romantic gestures is a charming "goodbye" at the end of the work that reminds me strongly of the ending of Dvořák's great Piano Quintet.

— Wynona Wang

Suk was a prodigy and a student of Dvořák, and he composed this when he was 15 or 16. It has a childlike, lighthearted humanity that drew me to it. It's an immediate burst of youthful life.

— Sterling Elliott

Janáček's *Pohádka* (Fairy Tale)

I wanted the whole program to tell a story or message, and this piece encapsulates that idea. *Pohádka* features unique sonority and mysticism in a texture that Janáček utilizes to narrate the Russian fable on which the work is based.

— Sterling Elliott

I love Leoš Janáček's music and have frequently played his Piano Sonata. The textures, melodic shapes, and phrase structures in Janáček are totally unique: in spite of some debt to Dvořák, one would not easily mistake Janáček for another composer. It is a wonderful challenge for Sterling and me to experiment with sound and feeling in this work. In addition, pairing this *Pohádka* (Fairy Tale) with Suk's Ballade demonstrates how two different Czech composers approached storytelling, and how they continued Dvořák's narrative tradition (established in his great operas and tone poems) while ultimately finding their own voices.

— Wynona Wang

Shostakovich's Sonata for Cello and Piano in D minor, Op. 40

The Shostakovich Cello Sonata is the centerpiece of our program, and this work feels especially relevant today. As with much of Dmitri Shostakovich's music, the atmosphere is often nervous and unsettling, as if there is a loaded gun that could fire at any moment. Shostakovich witnessed some of the worst horrors of the 20th century; he composed under the shadow of Stalin and the Soviet regime, which attempted to dictate what kind of music he was allowed to write. It is always moving to me to experience the incredible power of his works in spite of the terrible circumstances he faced. Yes, his music often alternates between sarcasm and darkness, yet there are incredible moments of lyricism and humanity that shine through. He is, to me, one of the most inspiring examples of how to create deeply meaningful art in uncertain times.

— Wynona Wang

This is a unique piece for Shostakovich. It has his typical, angular style but is much more Romantic than his later works, when he was under political pressure from Stalin. There's a lot of compassion and lyricism, especially in the slower themes. In particular, the second theme of the first movement is so heartfelt — a description not normally applied to Shostakovich but absolutely justified here. Lonely, yet full of compassion.

— Sterling Elliott

The Artists

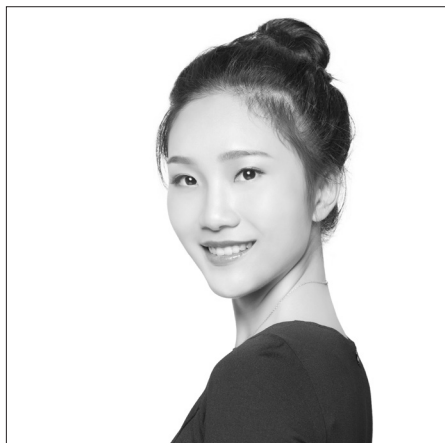


Cellist **Sterling Elliott** is a 2021 Avery Fisher Career Grant recipient and the winner of the Senior Division of the 2019 National Sphinx Competition. Acclaimed for his stellar stage presence and joyous musicianship, he has already appeared with major ensembles such as The Philadelphia and Cleveland Orchestras; Boston, Detroit, and Dallas symphony orchestras; Los Angeles Philharmonic — and the New York Philharmonic, with which he made his debut on a Young People's Concert in 2018 — collaborating with noted conductors including Yannick Nézet-Séguin, Thomas Wilkins, Jeffrey Kahane, Bramwell Tovey, and Mei Ann Chen.

In the summer of 2022 Elliott made his Aspen Music Festival debut, performing the Brahms Double Concerto with violinist Gil Shaham, following his German debut in May 2022 performing chamber music with violinist Daniel Hope in Munich. In the 2022–23 season Elliott makes his debuts with the Colorado, Cincinnati, North Carolina, and Fort Worth symphony orchestras, among others, and returns to ensembles including the Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra. He gives recitals under the auspices of the San Francisco Symphony and at Baltimore's Shriver

Hall, Tippett Rise Festival, and Capitol Region Classical (Albany, New York), in addition to being featured on the inaugural performance in the NY Phil's *Artist Spotlight* series. In October he participates in the Caramoor Music Festival's Evin Rising Stars series, a weeklong program of coaching and chamber music culminating in a performance in Katonah, New York.

Sterling Elliott is a Kovner Fellow at The Juilliard School, where he is pursuing his master's degree studying with Joel Krosnick, after receiving his undergraduate degree there in May 2021. He performs on a 1741 Gennaro Gagliano cello on loan through the Robert F. Smith Fine String Patron Program, in partnership with the Sphinx Organization.



Pianist **Wynona Wang** was selected as First Prize winner of the 2018 Concert Artists Guild International Competition, the latest in a series of First Prize performances including the 2017 Wideman International Piano Competition in Louisiana. She was also awarded a 2019 Charlotte White Career Grant by the Salon de Virtuosi in New York City.

An active performer in China, Europe, and the United States, her recent engagements include the Northwest Florida Symphony Orchestra, Meadows Symphony Orchestra of Southern Methodist University in Dallas, and festivals such as PianoTexas, Morningside Music Bridge in Calgary (Canada), International Keyboard Institute & Festival in New York City, and Chautauqua Institution. International solo appearances have included the Academic Symphony Orchestra of the National Philharmonic Society of Ukraine and the Romanian Mihail Jora Philharmonic Orchestra in Italy. She has given numerous solo piano recitals in

China — in Beijing, Qingdao, Hangzhou, Wuhan, Shenzhen, Kunming, Ningbo, and Dalian — as well as in Madrid, Spain, and Jakarta, Indonesia.

Born in Beijing, Wynona Wang began playing piano at age four, and went on to study at both the Music Elementary and Secondary schools at the Central Conservatory of Music in Beijing. In the fall of 2016 she was awarded a full scholarship for her performer's diploma at Southern Methodist University in Dallas. She now lives in New York and is pursuing her undergraduate degree at The Juilliard School as a student of Robert McDonald.

Jaap van Zweden and the New York Philharmonic



Jaap van Zweden became Music Director of the New York Philharmonic in 2018; in the 2022–23 season he presides over the Orchestra’s return to the new David Geffen Hall. He is also Music Director of the Hong Kong Philharmonic since 2012, and becomes Music Director of the Seoul Philharmonic in 2024. He has appeared as guest with the Orchestre de Paris; Amsterdam’s Royal Concertgebouw and Leipzig Gewandhaus Orchestras; Vienna, Berlin, and Los Angeles philharmonic orchestras; and London Symphony, Chicago Symphony, and Cleveland orchestras.

Jaap van Zweden’s NY Phil recordings 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 *MusicalAmerica*’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 millions of music lovers each season through live concerts in New York and around the world, as well as broadcasts, recordings, and education programs. The 2022–23 season marks a new chapter in the life of America’s longest living orchestra with the opening of the new David Geffen Hall and programming that engages with today’s cultural conversations through explorations of *HOME*, *LIBERATION*, *SPIRIT*, and *EARTH*, in addition to the premieres of 16 works. This marks the return from the pandemic, when the NY Phil launched NY Phil Bandwagon, presenting free performances across the city, and 2021–22 concerts at other New York City venues.

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 Shelby White & 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.