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

Lead support for these concerts is provided by Barbara Tober, in loving memory of Donald Tober.

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Jaap van Zweden, Conductor
Yefim Bronfman, Piano

MOZART
(1756–91)
Piano Concerto in E-flat major, K.482 (1785)
Allegro
Andante
Allegro [Rondo]
YEFIM BRONFMAN

Intermission

BRUCKNER
(1824–96)
Symphony No. 7 in E major (1881–83; rev. 1885; ed. Haas, 1944)
Allegro moderato
Adagio. Sehr feierlich und sehr langsam (Very solemn and very slow)
Scherzo. Sehr schnell (Very fast)
Finale. Bewegt, doch nicht schnell (Moving, yet not fast)

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Notes on the Program

Piano Concerto in E-flat major, K.482

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart

When Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart established himself in Vienna in 1781, he did so hoping to make a name as a composer and as a pianist. He was supremely equipped to do both. The obvious intersection of Mozart’s two disciplines came in the composition of piano concertos, works he wrote, in most cases, to spotlight his own talents as a performer. This was nothing new to his Vienna years; by that time, he had already composed six works featuring that instrument (including those for two and for three pianos), not to mention a handful of others that were essentially piano-and-orchestra arrangements of movements by other composers. However, with his arrival in Vienna Mozart’s livelihood depended on such pieces to a degree that it had not before, and as his acclaim as a performer increased, so did his production of piano concertos.

The catalogue of his works in that genre neatly chronicles the rise and fall of Mozart’s popularity as a concert musician. During the 1782–83 season he produced three piano concertos (K.413–415). They did the trick, and in 1784 he enjoyed enough audience demand to justify the composition of six more (K.449–451, 453, 456, and 459). That was the high point of Mozart’s success on the concert platform, but in each of the following two years (1785 and 1786) he was still able to sell enough tickets for his subscription concerts to merit another three concertos (K.466, 467, and 482; K.488, 491, and 503). After that, Mozart ceased to be the pianistic flavor of the month; he wrote not a single piano concerto in 1787, one in 1788 (K.537), none in 1789 or 1790, and one last effort (K.595) in 1791, at the beginning of his final year. These statistics don’t tell the complete story of Mozart-as-pianist, to be sure, as he also appeared frequently in performances that did not include premieres of new concertos; still, they do mirror the general trajectory of his popularity as a pianist in Viennese concert life.

Mozart signaled the completion of the E-flat major Piano Concerto (K.482) by entering it into his Verzeichniss aller meiner Werke (Catalogue of All My Works) on December 16, 1785, when he was already busy composing his opera Le nozze di Figaro (which would be premiered the following May). It was the last of his three piano concertos of 1785, a year in which he played in some 20 concerts; the two that preceded it, the D-minor and the C-major

In Short

Born: January 27, 1756, in Salzburg, Austria
Died: December 5, 1791, in Vienna
Work composed: 1785, with the score dated December 16 of that year
World premiere: apparently December 23, 1785, between the acts of Dittersdorf’s oratorio Ester, in Vienna
New York Philharmonic premiere: March 5, 1925, Willem Mengelberg, conductor, Wanda Landowska, soloist
Most recent New York Philharmonic performance: January 7, 2020, Jeffrey Kahane, conductor and soloist
Estimated duration: ca. 34 minutes
The Concerto in E-flat major remains perhaps more in the domain of connoisseurs, who esteem it not a *groschen* less than its immediate predecessors. It glows with a rich infusion of woodwind colors. This was the first of Mozart’s piano concertos to include clarinets in its orchestration; the composer was apparently so pleased with the result that he promptly re-scored his A-major Concerto (K.488, which he had already begun) to include them, too.

Overall, this is a particularly elegant work, filled with ornate, often complicated, writing for the soloist, yet completely unostentatious in its natural sense of aristocratic poise. In the indispensable book *Mozart and his Piano Concertos* (1948 / 64), Cuthbert Girdlestone observed: “Of all his concertos, this one is the queenliest. Combining grace and majesty, the music unfolds like a sovereign in progress.”

There is no need to express preference for one movement of this piece over the others, since each offers joys both abundant and unique. That said, the *Andante*, a melancholy and expressive set of variations in C minor, seems to have touched its first listeners most deeply. In January 1786 Mozart’s father, Leopold, wrote to his daughter (the composer’s sister), Nannerl, to pass along this report:

> I have had a reply from your brother in which he says that he gave without much preparation three subscription concerts to 120 subscribers, that he composed for this purpose a new piano concerto in E-flat, in which (a rather unusual occurrence!) he had to repeat the *Andante*.

**The New York Philharmonic Connection**

Mozart’s entire catalogue of music seems ubiquitous today, but that was not always the case. For example, the New York Philharmonic premiere of his Piano Concerto in E-flat major, K.482, did not take place until 1925. The soloist was Wanda Landowska (1879–1959), a French-Polish musician best known for bringing renewed interest to the harpsichord and for helping to usher in the period-instrument movement. Landowska had made her Philharmonic debut on that instrument in 1923, performing works by J.S. Bach, Handel, and Purcell, and her next appearance, in February 1924, found her doing double duty, playing a Bach harpsichord concerto followed by Mozart’s Piano Concerto in D minor, K.466.

The *New York Times* critic Olin Downes devoted almost three-quarters of his review of the Philharmonic’s March 5, 1925, concert to Landowska’s performance of Mozart’s Piano Concerto, K.482, writing that she had

> interpreted a composition which belongs to Mozart’s greatest period, and which contains pages of the rarest beauty, with a self-abnegation, a depth of feeling and a purity of style past praise. … The purely technical problems were disposed of with such finish and authority that the listener soon forgot that they existed: he became absorbed in the incomparable ease and sparkle and song of the performance.

— The Editors
Instrumentation: flute, two clarinets, two bassoons, two horns, two trumpets, timpani, and strings, in addition to the solo piano.

Cadenzas: in the first movement Mr. Bronfman plays Badura-Skoda’s cadenza, and in the final movement he plays his own.


Celebrity

Mozart received a nice Christmas present in the form of a glowing, if brief, review of his new Piano Concerto in E-flat major, published on December 24, 1785, in the Wiener Zeitung:

Musical Concert.
On 22 and 23 inst. the local Society of Musicians held the concert usual each year for the benefit of its widows and orphans…. His Majesty the Emperor as well as H.H. the Archduke Franz and the Princess Elisabeth were present, together with the highest nobility and a numerous public…. On the second day Herr Wolfgang Amade Mozart made a change with a concerto of his own composition on the fortepiano, the favorable reception of which we forbear to mention, since our praise is superfluous in view of the deserved fame of this master, as well known as he is universally valued.

The same edition of that newspaper also advertised the availability of new calendars for the year 1786, including one, the Österreichischer National-Kalendar that included an image of Mozart as one of four composers (the others being Gluck, Haydn, and Salieri) featured as luminaries of Austrian culture.

Silhouettes of Mozart, Haydn, Gluck, and Salieri, on the calendar for 1786
The popular image of Anton Bruckner is of a devout, provincial, rather pedantic composer who nonetheless managed to create magnificent symphonies. He long harbored insecurities about his works, many of which he revised or allowed to be altered by admiring associates. Bruckner led an unassuming life devoted principally to God and to music, two passions that he combined in astonishing ways. He dedicated his final, unfinished symphony, the Ninth, to “the dear Lord.”

Posterity wants to know about the lives of great composers even though they often do not lead ones of much interest, which puts biographers at pains to construct engaging stories. In Bruckner’s case, almost the opposite is true: casting his life as largely uneventful has its own perverse appeal. Rather than struggling with hearing loss or psychosis, dramatic afflictions that have added to the mystiques of Beethoven and Schumann, Bruckner suffered from depression, which, although genuinely debilitating, does not make for an interesting biography. Nor did he have a glamorous wife, like his younger colleague Mahler. (In fact, it appears he never enjoyed a successful romantic relationship.) Bruckner never shed his small-town, upper-Austrian roots, and retained his regional dialect and dress after he moved to Vienna in his mid-40s. He traveled infrequently, although trips to France and England around 1870 convinced some that he was the greatest organist and improviser of his day.

Bruckner dedicated many years to learning his craft. In the 1850s, when he was already in his 30s, he meticulously studied counterpoint with the noted Viennese theorist Simon Sechter (with whom Schubert had sought counsel at the end of his life). Sechter said that he never had a more diligent student, and for six years Bruckner essentially ceased doing original work to focus on honing his technique. In 1868 he moved to Vienna, where he lived, taught, and composed for the rest of his life. He spent most days teaching at the Vienna Conservatory, the University of Vienna, and St. Anna’s (a teacher-training college), as well as privately, and also played the organ at the Imperial Court Chapel.

Bruckner’s compositional achievement took a long time to be recognized, due in part to the fraught musical politics of the time and to the view of some, promoted by the powerful critic Eduard Hanslick, that he was moving music in the wrong direction. Hanslick, an ardent supporter of Brahms, opposed what he viewed as a Wagnerian agenda at work in Bruckner’s symphonies. However, these were exactly the qualities

In Short

Born: September 4, 1824, in Ansfelden, Austria
Died: October 11, 1896, in Vienna
Work composed: September 1881–September 1883; revised in 1885
World premiere: December 30, 1884, at the Leipzig Gewandhaus, Arthur Nikisch, conductor
New York Philharmonic premiere: November 13, 1886, Theodore Thomas, conductor
Most recent New York Philharmonic performance: November 19, 2011, Bernard Haitink, conductor
Estimated duration: ca. 64 minutes
that were applauded by others, such as the young Hugo Wolf. It is something of a paradox that the religious, unworldly, and politically conservative Bruckner was supported by the musical avant-garde and perceived as a more musically progressive figure than Brahms, who was secular, cosmopolitan, and liberal.

Bruckner began composing his Seventh Symphony in September 1881, weeks after finishing his Sixth, and worked on it for two years. This was a period of his deepening engagement with the music of Richard Wagner, the transforming influence on him since the 1860s (and to whom he had dedicated his Third Symphony). In July 1882 Bruckner traveled to Bayreuth to attend the premiere of Parsifal, Wagner’s last opera. The following January he had a premonition:

One day I returned home feeling very sad. The thought had crossed my mind that the Master would not live much longer, and then the C-sharp-minor theme of the Adagio came to me.

The magnificent slow movement of the Seventh Symphony became a memorial to Wagner, who died on February 13, 1883, in Venice. When Bruckner received the news, he wrote the movement’s lamenting coda, the final reiteration of a sad chorale featuring four so-called Wagner tubas — a brass instrument that is a cross between French horn and tuba that Wagner had used in Der Ring des Nibelungen. With the Seventh Symphony (and, later, his Eighth and Ninth), Bruckner introduced the instrument into the symphonic repertory.

After struggling for most of his career to win recognition for his music, Bruckner enjoyed his ultimate triumph with the Seventh Symphony, first in Leipzig, then Munich, and finally in his adopted hometown of Vienna. Arthur Nikisch conducted the first performance with the Leipzig Gewandhaus Orchestra in December 1884.

The Religious Impulse

Anton Bruckner’s compositional legacy consists primarily of Masses and symphonies, although he wrote a variety of smaller works, both sacred and secular, including a fine string quintet. No matter the genre, his devout Catholicism is often evident. Three great Masses came relatively early in his career, and when he turned to writing symphonies, some of their spiritual aspects were transferred as well. A flowing cello line in a symphonic slow movement may seem as if it set words from the Mass, perhaps a Benedictus. In fact, Bruckner did on occasion quote from his sacred music within symphonies, and there is an allusion to his Te Deum in the Adagio of the Seventh Symphony, which he composed at the same time.

When we consider as well that Bruckner was a master organist, another crucial element of his musical style can be identified in his deployment of the instrumental choirs of the orchestra. A cliché about his symphonies — that they are “gothic cathedrals of sound” — is just as understandable as those about his personal life. Although both simplify, they nevertheless capture essential elements of the man and his art.
at a concert to raise funds for a Wagner monument. It was the first time that a Bruckner symphony was premiered outside Austria, and the work was generally well received. The great triumph came a few months later, when Hermann Levi, who had conducted the premiere of Parsifal, led the work in Munich. A Berlin critic commented about the 60-year-old composer who “beguiled us all so that when the last chord of his creation died away, we asked with amazement: how is it possible that you remained unknown to us for so long?”

**Instrumentation:** two flutes, two oboes, two clarinets, two bassoons, four horns, four Wagner tubas, three trumpets, three trombones, tuba, timpani, cymbals, triangle, and strings.

**Edition:** These performances employ the edition prepared by Robert Haas in 1944, published by the International Bruckner Society, but with the restoration of the climactic cymbal crash and triangle roll near the end of the slow movement, which had been deleted by someone unknown and omitted from the Haas edition.

— Christopher H. Gibbs,
James H. Ottaway Jr.
Professor of Music at Bard College

### Listen for … Musical Influences

Many of Bruckner’s symphonies, most notably his final three, open by using the same effective compositional strategy: a lush and spacious melody unfolding over a hushed string tremolo. The precedent is Beethoven’s Ninth Symphony, a work that profoundly influenced Bruckner. His Seventh Symphony offers the most expansive example, as when the cellos, initially doubled by solo French horn, intone a broad theme consisting of a simple arpeggiated chord that generates many of the musical ideas that follow.

Bruckner’s slow movements are the heart of his symphonies, again looking back to Beethoven’s Ninth. None is more profound and deeply moving than in the Seventh (marked “Very solemn and very slow”), with its added homage to Wagner at the end.

The fast third-movement Scherzo uses the Classical era’s ABA form, but is greatly expanded — an urgent start with a prominent trumpet solo leads to a relaxed trio before a repeat of the first section. The finale’s opening theme is related to the principal one of the first movement, beginning softly and rapidly building excitement; a hymnlike second theme and dramatic third one follow. The symphony is capped off by the blazing coda that has a return of the arpeggiated melody with which the entire work so memorably began.
New York Philharmonic

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The New York Philharmonic uses the revolving seating method for section string players who are listed alphabetically in the roster.

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Jaap van Zweden became Music Director of the New York Philharmonic in September 2018. Also Music Director of the Hong Kong Philharmonic, he will become Music Director of the Seoul Philharmonic in 2024. He has appeared as guest with the Orchestre de Paris and Amsterdam’s Royal Concertgebouw, Leipzig Gewandhaus, Vienna Philharmonic, Berlin Philharmonic, London Symphony, Chicago Symphony, Cleveland, Los Angeles Philharmonic orchestras, and other distinguished ensembles.

In October 2022 Jaap van Zweden and the NY Phil reopened the renovated David Geffen Hall with HOME, a monthlong housewarming for the Orchestra and its audiences. Other season highlights include musical explorations of SPIRIT, featuring Messiaen’s Turangalîla-symphonie and J.S. Bach’s St. Matthew Passion, and EARTH, featuring Julia Wolfe’s unEarth and John Luther Adams’s Become Desert. He conducts repertoire ranging from Beethoven and Bruckner to premieres by Marcos Balter, Etienne Charles, Caroline Shaw, and Carlos Simon.

In February 2020 van Zweden premiered the first three works commissioned through Project I9 — which marks the centennial of the 19th Amendment with new works by 19 women composers, including Tania León’s Pulitzer Prize–winning Stride. In the 2021–22 season, during the David Geffen Hall renovation, the Music Director led the Orchestra at venues across New York City, including his first–ever Philharmonic appearances at Carnegie Hall.

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). Other recordings include first–ever performances in Hong Kong of Wagner’s Ring Cycle (Naxos) and Wagner’s Parsifal, which received the 2012 Edison Award for Best Opera Recording.

Born in Amsterdam, Jaap van Zweden was appointed the youngest–ever concertmaster of the Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra at age 19. He began his conducting career almost 20 years later, in 1996. Recently named Conductor Emeritus of the Antwerp Symphony Orchestra, 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–II); 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. Under his leadership the Hong Kong Philharmonic was named Gramophone’s 2019 Orchestra of the Year, and in 2020 he was awarded the prestigious Concertgebouw Prize.

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. The Foundation app TEAMPapageno allows children with autism to communicate with each other through music composition.
Internationally recognized as one of today’s most acclaimed and admired pianists, Yefim Bronfman stands among a handful of artists regularly sought by festivals, orchestras, conductors, and recital series. His commanding technique, power, and exceptional lyrical gifts are consistently acknowledged by the press and audiences alike.

Following summer festival appearances in Verbier and Salzburg and on tour with mezzo-soprano Magdalena Kozena, the 2022–23 season began with the opening week of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, and includes return visits to the New York Philharmonic, The Philadelphia Orchestra, and the Houston, New World, Pacific, Madison, New Jersey, Toronto, and Montreal symphony orchestras. In Europe he will tour with the Rotterdam Philharmonic and can also be heard with the Berlin Philharmonic, Bavarian Radio Symphony Orchestra, Bamberg Symphony, Dresden Staatskapelle, Maggio Fiorentino, and Zurich Opera Orchestra.

Born in Tashkent in the Soviet Union, Yefim Bronfman immigrated to Israel with his family in 1973, where he studied with pianist Arie Vardi, head of the Rubin Academy of Music at Tel Aviv University. In the United States, he studied at The Juilliard School, Marlboro School of Music, and the Curtis Institute of Music, under Rudolf Firkušny, Leon Fleisher, and Rudolf Serkin. A recipient of the prestigious Avery Fisher Prize, one of the highest honors given to American instrumentalists, in 2010 he was further honored as the recipient of the Jean Gimbel Lane Prize in Piano Performance from Northwestern University and in 2015 with an honorary doctorate from the Manhattan School of Music.
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 millions of music lovers 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. The NY Phil explores its newly renovated home’s potential through repertoire that activates the new Wu Tsai Theater, and by launching new presentations, including at the intimate Kenneth C. Griffin Sidewalk Studio. The season began with *HOME*, a monthlong festival introducing the hall and its new spaces. Later, the Philharmonic examines *LIBERATION*, a response to cries for social justice; *SPIRIT*, a reflection on humanity’s relationship with the cosmos; and *EARTH*, which reflects on the climate crisis. Over the season the Orchestra gives World, US, and New York Premieres of 16 works and collaborates with Community Partners—in-Residence, building on impactful collaborations forged over the course of the COVID–19 pandemic through the launch of NY Phil Bandwagon — free, outdoor, “pull-up” concerts that brought live music back to New York City.

In the 2021–22 season the NY Phil presented concerts at Alice Tully Hall and the Rose Theater at Jazz at Lincoln Center’s Frederick P. Rose Hall, and gave World, US, and New York premieres of ten commissions. Programming highlights included *Authentic Selves: The Beauty Within*, featuring then Mary and James G. Wallach Artist-in-Residence Anthony Roth Costanzo, and *The Schumann Connection*, conducted by Gustavo Dudamel.

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 two Pulitzer Prize winners: John Adams’s *On the Transmigration of Souls* and Tania León’s *Stride*, commissioned through Project 19, which marks the centennial of the 19th Amendment with commissions by 19 women composers. 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*. Concerts are available on NYPhil+, a state-of-the-art streaming platform, and the Orchestra’s extensive history is available free online through the New York Philharmonic Shelby White & Leon Levy Digital Archives.

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 436 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 one of the oldest orchestras 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 Bernstein, Toscanini, and Mahler.
Lincoln Center and the New York Philharmonic are extremely grateful to our Gala Co-Chairs, Leadership Committee, and all our Sponsors for their generosity as we celebrate the opening of the new David Geffen Hall.

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