AB: Hello. This is Alec Baldwin. Welcome to the New York Philharmonic This Week. We’re so very happy to be back at home, in the newly-opened and reimagined David Geffen Hall.

This week we present the first work that was performed in the new Wu Tsai Theater: Bruckner’s Symphony No. 7. It was perfectly suited for the architects and acousticians to do some final tuning of the hall and wait until you hear what it sounds like!

Our program will open with Mozart’s Piano Concerto No. 22. The soloist will be the orchestra’s longtime friend and former artist-in-residence, Yefim Bronfman. Music Director Jaap van Zweden will conduct...The New York Philharmonic This Week.

(SLIGHT PAUSE)

(FIMA ACTUALITY?)

AB: Pianist Yefim Bronfman.
Mozart went through a lot during his first four years in Vienna. From 1782-1785, he enjoyed sporadic wealth and was in great demand as a composer, a pianist, and as a teacher. But by the end of 1785, the Austrian Empire...and Vienna’s Golden Age were in trouble. But between uprisings on various borderlands and the sparks of what would become a War with Turkey, Mozart and the music industry suffered decline as art took a back seat to politics.

Mozart composed three magnificent piano concertos in 1785: K. 466, K. 467, and the work that opens this program--K. 482. From the very month in which he began K. 482, we see the first in what would be an ongoing series of sad, almost pathetic letters from the composer, begging for cash.

Mozart completed this piece on December 16, 1785. The work was premiered THAT SAME EVENING, in between acts of the oratorio Esther by Carl Ditters von Dittersdorf.
Despite Mozart’s personal difficulties, there were still enough wealthy and interested connoisseurs available to pack the subscription concert that introduced this concerto as a stand-alone work on December 23, 1785. It was very well received—especially the slow movement, which had to be encored.

In terms of structure, we encounter similar compositional practices heard in Mozart’s previous piano concertos—notably a dark, solemn slow movement:

(MUSIC)

VO: ...and a finale that might be straight from the pages of a comic opera before turning inward.

(MUSIC)

VO: Perhaps most noteworthy in this piece, however, is the dialogue between the soloist and a quintet of woodwinds in the 2nd and 3rd movements:

(MUSIC)

VO: This is the first instance of Mozart employing clarinets in one of his piano concertos and he was apparently so pleased with the result, that he immediately re-scored his K. 488 concerto in similar fashion.
It isn’t difficult to find a pianist or pianophile to wax sentimental on this work, but Mozart scholar Cuthbert Girdlestone may have summed it up best when we wrote in his book, *Mozart & His Piano Concertos* quote: “Of all his concertos, this one is the queenliest. Combining grace and majesty, the music unfolds like a sovereign in progress ….”

And in the hands of a master like Yefim Bronfman, the experience of this work in the concert hall should be nothing short of sublime.

…and let’s head down to the stage at David Geffen Hall’s Wu Tsai Theater for the Piano Concerto No 22, K. 482 by Mozart. Yefim Bronfman is the soloist and Jaap van Zweden conducts...the New York Philharmonic.

Piano Concerto No. 22 by Mozart. The New York Philharmonic was conducted by Jaap van Zweden. The soloist was Yefim Bronfman.
VO: Jaap van Zweden will return to the stage shortly and when he does, he’ll lead a performance of the Symphony No. 7 by Anton Bruckner. I’m Alec Baldwin and you’re listening to the New York Philharmonic This Week.

(ID)

VO: Anton Bruckner’s student—the music critic and composer Hugo Wolf—once wrote of him, “I have just spoken of Herr Bruckner as a Titan at battle with the gods. I could not, in truth, think of a more appropriate metaphor with which to characterize this composer, combining as it does both praise and disparagement in equal portions: raw natural forces against the predominance of the intellect.” Indeed, it took 60 years and...well...the next piece on our program for Bruckner to earn acceptance in the music community of Vienna and beyond.

(ACTUALITY)
Of special note in Bruckner’s Seventh Symphony are the composer’s hallmark brass sonorities, enriched by the Wagner tuba (a cross between a French horn and a tuba, invented for the Ring operas). While composing the Adagio for the Seventh, Bruckner learned of Wagner’s illness and wrote to a friend: “One day I felt very sad. The thought had crossed my mind that the Master would not live much longer. Then the C-sharp Minor theme of the Adagio came to me.” Three weeks later Wagner died, and Bruckner revised the Adagio, adding an elegiac coda for the man he idolized and revered, “in memory of the dearly beloved Master.”

And now we hear the Symphony No. 7 in E-major by Anton Bruckner. Jaap van Zweden conducts the New York Philharmonic.
AB: Premiered in 1884 and resulting in some 15
minutes of ovations at that time, that was the
Symphony No. 7 in E-major by Anton Bruckner.

The composer was already 60 years old at the
time, causing at least one critic to write
quote, "Having heard his music, and now seeing
him in person, we asked ourselves in amazement,
'How is it possible that he remained so long
unknown to us?' Indeed, this symphony finally
ended Bruckner’s struggle for acceptance. We
just heard it performed by the New York
Philharmonic with Jaap van Zweden conducting.

I’m Alec Baldwin and this is the New York
Philharmonic This Week.

AB: Caroline Shaw and Roomful of Teeth return to
David Geffen Hall next time, on the New York
Philharmonic This Week. This is Alec Baldwin
hoping that you’ll join us for Ms. Shaw’s
"Microfictions, Vol. 3" as well as the Symphony
No. 4 by Florence Price and music of Debussy.
Jaap van Zweden will conduct...The New York
Philharmonic This Week.