Thursday, November 9, 2023, 7:30 p.m.
16,949th Concert
Donor Rehearsal at 9:45 a.m.‡

Friday, November 10, 2023, 8:00 p.m.
16,950th Concert

Saturday, November 11, 2023, 8:00 p.m.
16,951st Concert

Sunday, November 12, 2023, 2:00 p.m.
16,952nd Concert

Stéphane Denève, Conductor
Nikolaj Szeps-Znaider, Violin
Kent Tritle, Organ

Wu Tsai Theater
David Geffen Hall at Lincoln Center
Home of the New York Philharmonic

Lead support for these concerts is provided by The Berry Charitable Foundation.

This program will last approximately one and three quarters hours, which includes one intermission.

‡ Donor Rehearsals are available to Philharmonic supporters; learn more at nyphil.org/memberevents.
Stéphane Denève, Conductor
Nikolaj Szeps-Znaider, Violin
Kent Tritle, Organ

Carlos SIMON  
(b. 1986)

Fate Now Conquers (2019)

BEETHOVEN  
(1770–1827)

Violin Concerto in D major, Op. 61 (1806)  
Allegro ma non troppo  
Larghetto  
Rondo: Allegro

NIKOLAJ SZEPS-ZNAIDER

Intermission

SAINT-SAËNS  
(1835–1921)

Symphony No. 3 in C minor, Op. 78 (1886)  
Adagio — Allegro moderato —  
Poco adagio  
Allegro moderato — Presto —  
Maestoso — Allegro

KENT TRITLE

Stéphane Denève’s appearances are made possible through the Charles A. Dana Distinguished Conductors Endowment Fund.

Support for Stéphane Denève’s appearance on November 9 is provided by the Jaye Penny Gould Foundation.

The Digital Organ is made possible by Ronnie P. Ackman and Lawrence D. Ackman.

Guest artist appearances are made possible through the Hedwig van Ameringen Guest Artists Endowment Fund.

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The son of a minister, Carlos Simon began playing the organ at the age of 12 in his father’s church. “That’s where my interest in music was born, and I decided to keep pursuing it through high school and into college,” he explained in an interview at Georgetown University, where he is on the faculty. “I noticed that there is something that music can say that words cannot, and I wanted to continue exploring that medium.” What he wants to say in music often has to do with social justice. “The projects I have been drawn to,” he said, “have always been about telling the stories of people who aren’t often heard or are misrepresented or marginalized.”

Simon holds degrees from Georgia State University and Morehouse College, and earned his doctorate at the University of Michigan. In 2015 he was cited by the American Society of Composers, Authors and Publishers (ASCAP) as one of its Composers to Watch. The next year he was honored with the Underwood Emerging Composer Commission by the American Composers Orchestra, and in 2018 he was named a Sundance / Time Warner Composer Fellow as part of the Sundance Institute. In 2021 he was awarded the Sphinx Medal of Excellence, which — as the Sphinx Organization describes it — recognizes “extraordinary classical Black and Latinx musicians ... who, early in their career, demonstrate artistic excellence, outstanding work ethic, a spirit of determination, and an ongoing commitment to leadership and their communities.”

He quickly became a widely acclaimed figure in concert music. Currently serving as composer-in-residence of the Kennedy Center, he has fulfilled commissions from the New York Philharmonic, Los Angeles Philharmonic, Philadelphia Orchestra, National Symphony Orchestra, and Washington National Opera. Simon’s works have been premiered by organizations including the Boston Symphony Orchestra and the Minnesota Orchestra, the latter introducing his *brea(d)th*, an oratorio with a libretto by Marc Bamuthi Joseph promoting (as they explain) “the aspiration of racial equity through music-centered community healing.” The work memorializes George Floyd, whose murder by a police officer in Minneapolis, in May 2020, ignited international protests against racial injustice.

Other recent compositions include *Amen!*, for orchestra or “symphony

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In Short

**Born:** 1986, in Atlanta, Georgia  
**Resides:** in Washington, DC  
**Work composed:** 2019, on commission from The Philadelphia Orchestra  
**World premiere:** October 8, 2020, in a digital broadcast by The Philadelphia Orchestra, Yannick Nézet-Séguin, conductor  
**New York Philharmonic premiere:** May 31, 2021, Gemma New, conductor, in a live-streamed concert from The Cathedral of Saint John the Divine  
**Most recent New York Philharmonic performance:** July 23, 2021, Jaap van Zweden, conductor, at the Bravo! Vail Music Festival  
**Estimated duration:** ca. 5 minutes
band” celebrating the African American Pentecostal Church; Profiles (co-commissioned by the New York Philharmonic and the Bravo! Vail Music Festival), inspired by artworks of the Harlem artist Romare Bearden; Breathe, honoring writings by theologian Howard Thurman; and Sweet Chariot, in which the famous spiritual rubs elbows with Gregorian chant. In 2021 he unveiled Requiem for the Enslaved, a multi-genre “rap opera” (for spoken word, ensemble, and piano) inspired by the revelation that, in 1838, the Jesuits at Georgetown University sold 272 enslaved people to settle the school’s debts. Recorded by the Decca label, the work was nominated for a 2023 Grammy Award for Best Contemporary Classical Composition.

Fate Now Conquers is a more strictly musical conversation. As an adult, Beethoven developed a passion for reading

The NY Phil Connection

At the height of the COVID-19 pandemic, when New York City concert halls were still closed, the New York Philharmonic commissioned Carlos Simon to compose a work for NY Phil Bandwagon, the citywide series of outdoor performances by small ensembles of NY Phil musicians for masked, socially distanced audiences. He composed loop for string trio, which received its World Premiere in August 2020. At the time Simon wrote:

The pandemic of COVID-19 has continued to influence my social, professional and personal life in ways that I never imagined. Day to day life has been like a continuous “loop”; a never-ending quarantine loop. This piece reflects my feelings about the mandated stay-at-home order during this crisis.

Since then the Philharmonic has continued to champion Simon’s work, performing Fate Now Conquers at the Free Memorial Day Concert in 2021, streamed live, and at the Bravo! Vail Music Festival that summer. A year later the NY Phil and Bravo! Vail co-commissioned Simon’s Profiles, based on works by Black artist Romare Bearden (1911–88), whose colorful paintings and collages capture New York City street life, particularly in Harlem; the Orchestra premiered the work at Bravo! Vail in 2022, and reprised the first movement, The Block, on October 7, 2022, at the concert honoring the workers who built the new David Geffen Hall.

Carlos Simon bowing after the performance of The Block from Profiles, October 2022
German poetry and the classics. Johann Reinhold Schultz, a Londoner who visited Beethoven in 1823, wrote of that encounter:

He is a great admirer of the ancients. Homer, particularly his *Odyssey*, and Plutarch he prefers to all the rest; and of the native poets, he studies Schiller and Goethe, in preference to any others; this latter is his personal friend.

“This piece,” Simon writes, “was inspired by a journal entry from Ludwig van Beethoven’s notebook written in 1815”:

Iliad. The Twenty-Second Book
But Fate now conquers; I am hers;
and yet not she shall share
In my renown; that life is left to
every noble spirit
And that some great deed shall
beget that all lives shall inherit.

Simon continues:

Using the beautifully fluid harmonic structure of the second movement of Beethoven’s Seventh Symphony, I have composed musical gestures that are representative of the unpredictable ways of fate. Jolting stabs, coupled with an agitated groove with every persona. Frenzied arpeggios in the strings that morph into an ambiguous cloud of free-flowing running passages depict the uncertainty of life that hovers over us. We know that Beethoven strived to overcome many obstacles in his life and documented his aspirations to prevail, despite his ailments. Whatever the specific reason for including this particularly profound passage from the *Iliad*, in the end, it seems that Beethoven relinquished to fate. Fate now conquers.

**Instrumentation:** flute, piccolo, two oboes, two clarinets, two bassoons, two horns, two trumpets, timpani, and strings.

— James M. Keller, former New York Philharmonic Program Annotator; San Francisco Symphony program annotator; and author of *Chamber Music: A Listener’s Guide* (Oxford University Press)
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 that featured 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 concerto 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

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**In Short**

**Born:** probably on December 16, 1770 (he was baptized on the 17th), in Bonn, Germany  
**Died:** March 26, 1827, in Vienna, Austria  
**Work composed:** late 1806, probably in the space of about a month beginning in early-to mid-November; dedicated to Stephan von Breuning, a friend of the composer  
**World premiere:** December 23, 1806, at Vienna’s Theater an der Wien, with Franz Clement as the soloist and the composer conducting  
**New York Philharmonic premiere:** December 21, 1861, Theodore Eisfeld, conductor, Edward Mollenhauer, soloist  
**Most recent New York Philharmonic performance:** November 27, 2021, Jaap van Zweden, conductor, Joshua Bell, soloist  
**Estimated duration:** ca. 45 minutes
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. Due to the apparent haste of composition, some of the solo notation was on the sketchy side, and before he published the piece

**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.”

A depiction of Franz Clement at age eight, by Henri Hessell, 1789
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, as Nikolaj Szeps-Znaider does here, playing ones written by Fritz Kreisler.

— J.M.K.

**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:

![Allegro ma non troppo](image)

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.
Monsieur Saint-Saëns possesses one of the most astonishing musical organizations I know of;” wrote the composer Charles Gounod of his fellow Parisian. “He is a musician armed with every weapon. He is a master of his craft as no one else is.” He might also have noted that Saint-Saëns was a highly accomplished organist (who for two decades reigned in the loft at the Church of the Madeleine), a champion of forgotten earlier music and of contemporary composers, an inspiring teacher (who, as professor at the École Niedermeyer in Paris, did much to shape the raw talents of Gabriel Fauré and André Messager), a gifted writer, a world traveler, and an avid and informed aficionado of such disciplines as Classical languages, astronomy, archaeology, philosophy, and even the occult sciences.

Saint-Saëns started piano lessons at the age of two-and-a-half, soon began studying piano with a former pupil of Mendelssohn, and embarked on composition and organ instruction at seven (by which time he was already performing Bach, Handel, and Mozart in public). In 1846, when he was ten, Saint-Saëns made his formal recital debut at the Salle Pleyel in Paris, with a program that included piano concertos by Mozart and Beethoven. The applause was resounding, so he topped off the event by offering to play any of Beethoven’s piano sonatas from memory, as an encore.

The last of Saint-Saëns’s completed symphonies, the Third was composed at the behest of the Philharmonic Society of London, then conducted by Sir Arthur Sullivan (of “Gilbert &” fame). In August 1883 the orchestra’s secretary expressed the wish that Saint-Saëns might come to London the following year, either to play one of your concertos, or to compose a new one and play it, or to play a concerto by some other master, whichever you prefer; but I need scarcely add, they would prefer you to appear in one of your own compositions.

Talk soon turned instead to the possibility of a new symphony, and by March Saint-Saëns was far enough along in his planning to inform the orchestra of the new work’s instrumentation (“there are no harps, happily”), that it would be cast in two movements (in that regard mirroring his coeval Fourth Piano Concerto and Violin Sonata No. 1), that it would be difficult, that “this devil of a symphony” had moved up in his mind by a semi-tone (“it didn’t want to stay in B minor, and is now in C minor”), and that one “aggravation” would be that the piano part would involve one player at first and two later

In Short

**Born:** October 9, 1835, in Paris, France

**Died:** December 16, 1921, in Algiers, Algeria

**Work composed:** April 1886; dedicated to the memory of Franz Liszt

**World premiere:** May 19, 1886, at St. James’s Hall in London, at a concert of the Philharmonic Society, the composer conducting

**New York Philharmonic premiere:** February 19, 1887, Theodore Thomas, conductor, which marked the US Premiere

**Most recent New York Philharmonic performance:** July 22, 2018, David Robertson, conductor, Kent Tritle, soloist, at Colorado’s Bravo! Vail Music Festival

**Estimated duration:** ca. 38 minutes
At the Time

In 1886, as Saint-Saëns is composing his Symphony No. 3, the following are taking place:

- In France, after two years of work, Georges Seurat unveils his painting *A Sunday Afternoon on the Island of La Grande Jatte* (right); Auguste Mustel invents the celesta, taking its name from the French word for “heavenly.”

- In the United Kingdom, Robert Louis Stevenson’s novella *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* is published; Prime Minister W. E. Gladstone introduces a bill allowing home rule for Ireland, but the measure is later defeated in Parliament.

- In the United States, the Statue of Liberty is dedicated in New York Harbor; advertisements begin appearing in Atlanta for a carbonated beverage called Coca-Cola, invented by pharmacist John Stith Pemberton; in the case *Santa Clara County v. Southern Pacific Railroad*, the Supreme Court rules that corporations have the same rights as living persons.

- In Germany, Karl Benz introduces the Benz Patent Motorwagen, the first commercial gas-powered automobile (above); architect Ludwig Mies van der Rohe is born.

- In Italy, former slave Augustus Tolton (right) is ordained in Rome on Easter, becoming the first Catholic priest to identify as African American; he then returns to the United States to serve in the Chicago area.
(“Happily, pianists are not rare in our epoch”).

Prominent use of the organ has earned this piece the nickname “Organ Symphony,” a rubric never sanctioned by the composer. In fact, that term may be a bit misleading since French composers of that time introduced a good many pieces that were titled “organ symphonies”; these were not orchestral works at all but rather big-boned, multi-movement pieces for solo organ. Saint-Saëns recognized that requiring an organ could limit performance possibilities, since many concert halls lacked them, but he was perfectly content with the idea of a small organ being brought in for the occasion.

On May 18, 1886, the composer wrote from London to his publisher, Jacques Durand: “We have sight-read the symphony. I was right: it is really terribly challenging.” Nevertheless, the next day the premiere went well, and the composer could follow up with a glowing report: “The symphony enjoyed a colossal success, spiced up by just enough opposition to make the success more intense.”

Instrumentation: three flutes (one doubling piccolo), two oboes and English horn, two clarinets and bass clarinet, two bassoons and contrabassoon, four horns, three trumpets, three trombones, tuba, timpani, triangle, cymbals, bass drum, organ, piano (two-hands and four-hands), and strings.

— J.M.K.

A Touching Dedication

Saint-Saëns dedicated his Symphony No. 3 to Franz Liszt, who was by then a grand old man of music. On learning of this tribute, Liszt wrote on June 19, 1886:

Very dear friend,

Happy in the friendship you have so often shown to me, I express to you my heartfelt gratitude. The success of your symphony in London gives me great pleasure, and it will continue in a crescendo in Paris and elsewhere. For any dedication I would ask you simply to inscribe my name. I must content myself with writing just the same thing beneath these lines due to the weakness of my vision.

With much devotion and cordial friendship,
Franz Liszt

Saint-Saëns did not follow Liszt’s request precisely. On July 31 Liszt died; when the symphony appeared in print that November, it was headed with the words “À la Mémoire de Franz Liszt” (“To the Memory of Franz Liszt”).
New York Philharmonic

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Benjamin Adler

Steinway is the Official Piano of the New York Philharmonic and David Geffen Hall.
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The New York Philharmonic uses the revolving seating method for section string players who are listed alphabetically in the roster.

HONORARY MEMBERS OF THE SOCIETY
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Programs are supported, in part, by public funds from the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs in partnership with the City Council, the National Endowment for the Arts, the National Endowment for the Humanities, and the New York State Council on the Arts, with the support of the Office of the Governor and the New York State Legislature.
The Artists

**Stéphane Denève** is music director of the St. Louis Symphony Orchestra, artistic director of the New World Symphony, and principal guest conductor of the Netherlands Radio Philharmonic Orchestra. He recently concluded tenures as principal guest conductor of The Philadelphia Orchestra and music director of the Brussels Philharmonic, having previously served as chief conductor of Stuttgart Radio Symphony Orchestra (SWR) and music director of the Royal Scottish National Orchestra. He regularly appears at major concert venues with the world’s greatest orchestras and soloists. He has a special affinity for the music of his native France, and is a passionate advocate for music of the 21st century.

Denève made his Carnegie Hall debut with the Boston Symphony Orchestra — with which he has appeared in Boston and at Tanglewood — and he conducts ensembles including the New York Philharmonic, The Philadelphia, The Cleveland, Chicago Symphony, Los Angeles Philharmonic, San Francisco Symphony, Dallas Symphony, National Symphony (Washington, DC), Pittsburgh Symphony, and Toronto Symphony orchestras. He is a popular guest at summer festivals including the Hollywood Bowl, Music Academy of the West, and the Bravo! Vail, Blossom, Grand Teton, and Sun Valley music festivals. Abroad he performs with Amsterdam’s Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra, Orchestra sinfonica dell’accademia nazionale di Santa Cecilia, Bavarian Radio Symphony Orchestra, Orchestre national de France, Orchestre philharmonique de Radio France, Vienna Symphony, Czech Philharmonic, Deutsches Symphonie-Orchester Berlin, NDR Elbphilharmonie Orchestra, WDR Symphony Orchestra Cologne, and the Hong Kong, Seoul, Rotterdam, and Royal Stockholm Philharmonic Orchestras (the latter at the 2020 Nobel Prize concert), and the Finnish Radio, Iceland, and NHK symphony orchestras.

A gifted communicator and educator, Stéphane Denève is committed to inspiring the next generation of musicians and listeners. In addition to his position with the New World Symphony and his longstanding relationship with the Colburn School, he has worked regularly with young people in programs including those of the Tanglewood Music Center, European Union Youth Orchestra, and Music Academy of the West.

A virtuoso violinist, **Nikolaj Szeps-Znaider** maintains his reputation as one of the world’s leading exponents of the instrument, with a busy calendar of concerto and recital engagements. The 2023–24 season marks his fourth as music director of the Orchestre National de Lyon, a partnership that has been extended until 2026–27. In addition to the New York Philharmonic, his guest appearances as a violinist include the Danish National Symphony, The Cleveland, Israel Philharmonic, and Chicago Symphony orchestras, as well as the Singapore Symphony Orchestra, where he combines his roles as violinist and conductor. He also returns to
London’s Wigmore Hall with pianist and longtime collaborator Saleem Ashkar.

Szeps-Znaider’s extensive discography comprises much of the violin’s core repertoire, including the complete Mozart violin concertos with the London Symphony Orchestra, which he directed from the violin; Nielsen’s concerto with Alan Gilbert and the New York Philharmonic; Elgar’s Violin Concerto with Colin Davis and the Dresden Staatskapelle; award-winning recordings of the Brahms and Korngold concertos with Valery Gergiev and the Vienna Philharmonic; the Beethoven and Mendelssohn concertos with Zubin Mehta and the Israel Philharmonic Orchestra; Prokofiev’s Concerto No. 2 and the Glazunov concerto with Mariss Jansons and the Bavarian Radio Symphony Orchestra; the Mendelssohn concerto with Riccardo Chailly and the Leipzig Gewandhaus Orchestra, on DVD; and the complete works of Brahms for violin and piano with Yefim Bronfman.

Passionate about supporting the next generation of musical talent, Nikolaj Szeps-Znaider is president of the Nielsen Competition. He plays the “Kreisler” Guarnerius “del Gesu” 1741, on extended loan to him by The Royal Danish Theatre through the generosity of the VELUX Foundations, the Villum Fonden, and the Knud Højgaard Foundation.

Kent Tritle, Organist of the New York Philharmonic, performs regularly as a soloist across the United States and in Europe. He is also director of cathedral music and organist at the Cathedral of St. John the Divine in New York City, where he leads the Great Music in a Great Space series. Tritle previously performed Saint-Saëns’s Symphony No. 3 with the NY Phil in 2018 — conducted by Antonio Pappano in subscription concerts, and David Robertson at the Free Memorial Day Concert and at the Bravo! Vail Music Festival — and in 2010, in subscription concerts led by Andrew Davis. He has performed recitals at such historic venues as the Leipzig Gewandhaus, Zurich Tonhalle, Cambridge’s King’s College, London’s Westminster Abbey, and Prague’s St. Vitus Cathedral.

He can be heard on Philharmonic recordings of Brahms’s Ein deutsches Requiem, Britten’s War Requiem, and Henze’s Symphony No. 9, all conducted by Kurt Masur, and the Grammy-nominated Sweeney Todd, conducted by Andrew Litton. He is featured on the DVDs The Organistas and Creating the Stradivarius of Organs. Other releases include The Romantic Organ; Kent Tritle at St. Ignatius Loyola; Kevin Oldham’s Organ Symphony No. 1; Duruflé’s Suite for Organ, Op. 5; and a disc of works played on the Noack tracker organ at the Old Dutch Church of Sleepy Hollow.

Kent Tritle is also one of America’s leading choral conductors. He is music director of the Oratorio Society of New York and of Musica Sacra in addition to his posts at The Cathedral of St. John the Divine. He founded Sacred Music in a Sacred Space, the acclaimed concert series at New York’s Church of St. Ignatius Loyola, in 1989, and led it for 22 years.
Jaap van Zweden became Music Director of the New York Philharmonic in 2018. In 2023–24, his farewell season celebrates his connection with the Orchestra’s musicians as he leads performances in which six Principal players appear as concerto soloists. He also revisits composers he has championed at the Philharmonic, from Steve Reich and Joel Thompson to Mozart and Mahler. 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 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 and began his conducting career almost 20 years later. He was named Musical America’s 2012 Conductor of the Year, was profiled by CBS 60 Minutes on arriving at the NY Phil, and in the spring of 2023 received the prestigious Concertgebouw Prize. 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, broadcasts, streaming, education programs, and more. In the 2023–24 season — which builds on the Orchestra’s transformation reflected in the new David Geffen Hall — the NY Phil honors Jaap van Zweden in his farewell season as Music Director, premieres 14 works by a wide range of composers including some whom van Zweden has championed, marks György Ligeti’s centennial, and celebrates the 100th birthday of the beloved Young People’s Concerts.

The Philharmonic has commissioned and/or premiered important works, from Dvořák’s New World Symphony to Tania León’s Pulitzer Prize–winning Stride. The NY Phil has released more than 2,000 recordings since 1917, and in 2023 announced a partnership with Apple Music Classical, the new streaming app designed to deliver classical music lovers the optimal listening experience. The Orchestra builds on a longstanding commitment to serving its communities—which has led to annual free concerts across New York City and the free online New York Philharmonic Shelby White & Leon Levy Digital Archives—through a new ticket access program.

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, following titans including Bernstein, Toscanini, and Mahler. Gustavo Dudamel will become Music and Artistic Director beginning in 2026 after serving as Music Director Designate in 2025–26.