Wednesday, December 6, 2023, 7:30 p.m.
16,963rd Concert
Donor Rehearsal at 9:45 a.m.‡

Thursday, December 7, 2023, 7:30 p.m.
16,964th Concert

Friday, December 8, 2023, 8:00 p.m.
16,965th Concert

Saturday, December 9, 2023, 8:00 p.m.
16,966th Concert

Andrés Orozco-Estrada, Conductor
(New York Philharmonic debut)

Edgar Moreau, Cello
(New York Philharmonic debut)

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

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.
Andrés Orozco-Estrada, Conductor (New York Philharmonic debut)
Edgar Moreau, Cello (New York Philharmonic debut)

TCHAIKOVSKY
(Romeo and Juliet, Overture-Fantasy)
(1840–93)
(1869, rev. 1870, 1880)

HAYDN
(Cello Concerto in C major, Hob. VIIb:1)
(1732–1809)
(ca. 1765)
Moderato
Adagio
Finale: Allegro molto

EDGAR MOREAU

Intermission

BARTÓK
(Suite from The Miraculous Mandarin, Pantomime in One Act, Op. 19, BB 82)
(1881–1945)
(1917–19)

ENESCU
(Romanian Rhapsody in A major, Op. 11, No. 1)
(1881–1955)
(1901)

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Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky dedicated his *Romeo and Juliet, Overture-Fantasy* to Mily Balakirev, a mover and shaker of Russian musical politics, to whom the composer had dedicated his symphonic poem *Fatum (Fate)*, which he characterized as “the best thing I’ve written so far.” Balakirev, insensitive egotist that he was, showed his appreciation with a scathing appraisal of the work. That response must have hurt (especially since Tchaikovsky rarely had much faith in his own compositions), and the composer destroyed *Fatum*. A few months later Balakirev suggested that the 29-year-old Tchaikovsky write a concert overture based on Shakespeare’s tragedy *Romeo and Juliet*, and he sent a long letter detailing how the project should be realized. He kibitzed about the key, harmonic structure, and rhythmic niceties, and even offered a sample of what the opening measures would sound like if he were composing it.

Correspondence flew back and forth as Tchaikovsky worked on the piece, taking quite a lot of Balakirev’s advice to heart. Tchaikovsky assured him:

> The layout is yours. The introduction portraying the friar, the fight — Allegro, and love — the second subject; and, secondly, the modulations are yours: also the introduction in E, the Allegro in B-flat minor and the second subject in D-flat. . . . You can tear it to pieces . . . all you want! I will take note of what you say and will try to do better in my next work.

Of the broad melody evoking the young lovers, first stated by English horn and muted violas, Balakirev remarked: “I imagine you are lying nude in your bath and that Artôt-Padilla herself is washing your tummy with a hot lather of scented soap.” Balakirev had apparently failed to notice what was obvious to others in Tchaikovsky’s circle: Tchaikovsky’s homosexuality. It is true that during the preceding year he had harbored a sort of professional infatuation with the Belgian soprano Désirée Artôt, and convinced himself that he might be able to fall in love with her, and he decided that they should be married. His friends were aghast, and within a few months Artôt’s mother...
(having been advised by Tchaikovsky’s friend Nikolai Rubinstein that the composer was not husband material in the traditional sense) swept her daughter off to Warsaw, where Artôt married a Spanish baritone. In the end, this proved a great relief to Tchaikovsky; the real object of his affections just then was Eduard Zak, a 15-year-old student at the Moscow Conservatory. If anyone inspired the erotic languor of the famous melody in this musical study of teenaged lovers, it was surely Eduard rather than Désirée.

The work was not a success when Rubinstein conducted its premiere, in Moscow in March 1870, and that summer Tchaikovsky undertook extensive revisions. That gave rise to the opening music of the overture-fantasy as audiences now know it, and then in the summer of 1880 Tchaikovsky again put the piece through a severe rewrite. After fully a decade’s work, Romeo and Juliet (now enriched by a dire, unforgiving coda) reached masterpiece status, an achievement that was recognized in 1884, when it won the 500-ruble Glinka Award, the first of many prizes that would come Tchaikovsky’s way in his remaining years.

**Instrumentation:** two flutes and piccolo, two oboes and English horn, two clarinets, two bassoons, four horns, two trumpets, three trombones, tuba, timpani, cymbals, bass drum, harp, 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)

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**Views and Reviews**

Tchaikovsky wrote of the premiere of Romeo and Juliet in Moscow in 1870, “My overture had no success here at all, and was wholly ignored.” He spent the following summer effecting substantial revisions to the piece. The beginning of Romeo and Juliet as it is now known dates from this period, with the original E-major pseudo-liturgical chant being replaced by F-sharp-minor music that maintains an antique sound thanks to the wide-open intervals of the clarinets and bassoons.

Balakirev had objected to the original opening, complaining that it reminded him more of a Haydn string quartet than anything suggesting a Catholic friar. Tchaikovsky also deleted a fugue that had seemed out of place in the original version, where it was meant to depict the conflict between the Montagues and the Capulets. The much-feared Viennese critic Eduard Hanslick expressed reservations when he reviewed the piece in 1876, writing that it “steams cold glistening smoke and rages heated noise.” He continued:

As an illustration of a Verona family feud, the Allegro sounds decidedly too Russian. … Eight softening bars tell us unambiguously that we approach a love scene. But this motif, built on the alternation of two dissonant chords, sounds rather like scratching a glass plate with a sharp knife. The love-bliss runs down the spine like a cold snakeskin.
It is more than a little ironic that Joseph Haydn’s splendid Cello Concerto in C major, one of his most popular concertos, lay in oblivion for almost two centuries. Haydn did enter it in his Entwurf-Katalog (Draft Catalogue), an inventory he began around 1765, so the piece must have been written by that year at the latest. This was therefore a work of the composer’s first years at the Esterházy Court, which makes sense given the prominent solo-cello writing he employed in some of his other pieces of that time; the well-known Symphonies Nos. 6–8 come immediately to mind, as well as the Symphonies Nos. 13, 31, 36, and 72 — all, despite their eventual numbering, from 1765 or earlier.

The cellist all these works were meant to spotlight was Joseph Franz Weigl, one of the first musicians Haydn hired when he was brought on board by Prince Paul Anton Esterházy. Weigl’s contract began on June 1, 1761, and he remained at the court until 1769, leaving to assume the post of principal cello for the Italian Opera at the Kärntnertortheater in Vienna. Weigl was a kingpin of Haydn’s instrumental ensemble while he was in the Esterházy’s employ. His tenure offers an insight into a detail of performance practice: the part he used for performances of Haydn’s opera Lo speziale, which opened Prince Nikolaus Esterházy’s new opera house in Eszterháza (Hungary) in 1768, reveals that, as a member of the continuo group, Weigl played entire chords on his cello when accompanying some passages, rather than just single notes.

The cellist may have kept this concerto in his repertoire, but it was not published. At some point a copyist’s manuscript parts landed in the library of the Counts Kolovrat-Krakovský at Radenín Castle in what is now Czechia (also referred to as the Czech Republic). Their collection was deposited in the National Museum of Prague. The parts were uncovered there by musicologist Oldřich Pulkert in 1961. In the first movement, this work unrolls at a spacious pace, without calling attention to the considerable virtuosity required for its execution. Pairs of oboes and horns add body to the tutti sections, although Haydn limits the accompaniment to a string orchestra when the cello is playing. The wisdom of his decision to keep the textures light is confirmed by later cello concertos (by other composers) in which the soloist can be seen playing but can scarcely be heard. Of course, problems of balance between soloist and orchestra are considerably reduced when the “symphonic” forces are hardly larger than a

In Short

Born: probably March 31, 1732 — since he was baptized on April 1 — in Rohrau, Lower Austria

Died: May 31, 1809, in Vienna

Work composed: ca. 1765

World premiere: probably shortly after it was written at one of the Esterházy palaces, with the composer conducting and Joseph Franz Weigl as soloist

New York Philharmonic premiere: October 19, 1972, Stanisław Skrowaczewski, conductor, János Starker, soloist


Estimated duration: ca. 25 minutes
chamber group — as they were when this piece was new. Indeed, the winds remain silent throughout the second movement, an exercise in surpassing elegance, not far removed from the poignant style cultivated in Berlin by Carl Philipp Emanuel Bach.

If the technical demands of the first movement are subsumed to the overall effect of the ensemble, the concerto’s Finale is a veritable tour de force. Following the opening tutti, the cello fairly dazzles with its quick scales, which erupt out of notes sustained over several measures. Rapid-fire arpeggios, unrelenting scales, quickly repeated notes, and very high-lying passage work push the soloist into virtuosic territory. This is a relatively long movement among Haydn’s concerto finales, and it displays a strong sense of personality, with each return of the ritenello offering a distinct character and a momentum of musical interest.

Instrumentation: two oboes, two horns, and strings, in addition to the solo cello.

— J.M.K.

Haydn’s Concertos

A perusal of Haydn’s canon reveals a surprising number of concertos — works that by and large go unheard today. There are two major reasons. Many of such pieces he wrote for his virtuoso musicians during his years as music director for the Esterházy princes are lost. It appears that he composed now-vanished works spotlighting violin, cello, baryton (left, a low-voiced, bowed instrument with an extra set of plucked strings that was a favorite of Prince Nikolaus Esterházy), bass, flute, bassoon, and two horns.

Still, many Haydn concertos survive, and the other reason those are not well known is that few are among his most compelling works. Despite the relish with which he provided his instrumentalists virtuosic passages in his symphonies, Haydn rarely made the most of the dramatic interplay of soloist and orchestra that marks the greatest concertos. There are exceptions, to be sure, and those are the handful of Haydn concertos that remain in the active repertoire today: two cello concertos, the D-major Keyboard Concerto, and, among his late works, his Trumpet Concerto and his Sinfonia concertante for a solo group of oboe, bassoon, violin, and cello.
Several stage works created in the years surrounding the First World War still have plenty of shock value, including Stravinsky’s orgiastic *The Rite of Spring* (1911–13), Prokofiev’s sadomasochistic *Chout* (composed in 1915 but not produced until 1921), and Béla Bartók’s *The Miraculous Mandarin* (composed in 1917–19 but not produced until 1926), the lurid tale of a seamy scheme of prostitution, fraud, theft, and murder.

The scenario was the work of Menyhért (Melchior) Lengyel (1880–1974), a Hungarian playwright and film writer of the Naturalist school, a movement that wore as a point of pride its unwillingness to shirk from full description, however crude, of details involving sex, lust, psychosis, violence, or extreme horror. Bartók described the plot as follows:

Three [thugs] force a beautiful girl to lure men into their den so they can rob them. ... The third [visitor] is a wealthy Chinese man. He is a good catch, and the girl entertains him by dancing. The Mandarin’s desire is aroused, he is inflamed by passion, but the girl shrinks from him in horror. The [thugs] attack him, rob him, smother him in a quilt, and stab him with a sword, but their violence is of no avail. They cannot kill the Mandarin, who continues to look at the girl with love and longing in his eyes. Finally feminine instinct helps: the girl satisfies the Mandarin’s desire, and only then does he collapse and die.

Bartók was already well known as a composer of adventurous works when he wrote *The Miraculous Mandarin*, thanks especially to the reception in Budapest of his only other stage works: the opera *Bluebeard’s Castle* (of 1911, also alarming in its story line, not to mention in its psychological underpinning) and his ballet *The Wooden Prince* (1917). After the previously unimagined horrors of World War I, the ability to outrage reigned as gold in the currency of modern art, and sexual shockers enjoyed a premium in Freud-dominated Central Europe.

Lengyel’s story was first published in the January 1, 1917, edition of the magazine *Nyugat*, of which Bartók was a dedicated subscriber, and the composer busied himself with the score from 1918 until July 1919. The piece would not be staged for another seven-plus years, and even then, on November 27, 1926, it was presented in Cologne rather than in the creators’ native Hungary. The premiere provoked an audience uproar. Church officials were so offended by its content that the production was suspended after a single performance.

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**In Short**

**Born:** March 25, 1881, in Nagyszentmiklós, Hungary (now Sînnicolau Mare, Romania)

**Died:** September 26, 1945, in New York City

**Work composed:** August 1918–July 1919, with revisions continuing through 1931

**World premiere:** November 27, 1926, in Cologne, Germany, with Jenö Szenkár conducting, at the Cologne Opera

**New York Philharmonic premiere:** March 10, 1960, Fritz Reiner, conductor

**Most recent New York Philharmonic performance:** May 1, 2015, Alan Gilbert, conductor, at the Kölner Philharmonie in Cologne, Germany

**Estimated duration:** ca. 20 minutes
and in the following 20 years it enjoyed only one further production — in Prague. Conservative Hungary remained Manda-rin-resistant throughout the composer’s lifetime; attempts to mount the piece in Budapest in 1931 and 1941 failed.

In 1919, before The Miraculous Mandarin had ever been produced, Bartók arranged segments of his half-hour score into a concert suite, cutting two sections from the middle of the stage work, creating a 14-measure concert ending for the frenzied dance in which the Mandarin pursues the girl, and eliminating the piece’s final music (which required a wordless chorus).

The Miraculous Mandarin Suite opens with turbulent orchestral music that depicts the city traffic outside. We meet the three thugs and the girl; she is first described by a clarinet cadenza. From her window she lures two potential clients, but neither has money: an elderly gentleman (trombone glissandos) and a bashful boy. The clarinet grows wilder as the girl returns for a third time to the window. This time she attracts an exotic Mandarin (a quasi-Asian theme in the trombones). The girl dances a seductive waltz; as the Mandarin becomes aroused, he chases her (a frenetic fugal section composed over an insistent repeated figure, with pounding timpani), and they struggle (fierce, dissonant major-minor chords). At this point in the pantomime’s scenario, Bartók ends his orchestral suite by attaching a short concert conclusion. The Suite therefore includes about two-thirds of Bartók’s complete Miraculous Mandarin music.

Instrumentation: three flutes (two doubling piccolo), three oboes (one doubling English horn), three clarinets (one doubling bass clarinet) and E-flat clarinet, three bassoons (one doubling contrabassoon), four horns, three trumpets, three trombones, tuba, timpani, snare drums, bass drum, cymbals, triangle, tam-tam, xylophone, harp, piano, celesta, organ, and strings.

— J.M.K.
George Enescu’s coming of age as a concert musician overlapped with and is stamped by a period of music-historical transition in Europe bridging late Romanticism and early 20th-century Modernist trends. Further, the interface of European cosmopolitanism and Romanian nationalism was a persistent dynamic throughout his career, in many ways framing the perception of his music and his legacy as a composer.

Born into a middle-class family in northeastern Romania, near the present-day border with Moldova and Ukraine, Enescu was a child prodigy who took up the violin at the age of four, began to compose at five, and at seven was enrolled at the Musical Academy in Vienna, where he studied violin and also learned cello, piano, and organ. Enescu had a string of direct encounters with some of the most prominent musical figures of his day. At a time when the respective devotees of Richard Wagner and Johannes Brahms often engaged in fierce partisan debates, Enescu relished both. In Vienna, he regularly attended performances of Wagner operas while also immersing himself in the music of Brahms, whom he got to know personally at the conservatory, playing the older composer’s music under his observation. Two years after he graduated from the Musical Academy in 1893, Enescu entered the Paris Conservatoire, where he studied with Jules Massenet and Gabriel Fauré and befriended his classmate Maurice Ravel. In Paris Enescu also studied with the Cuban-born Black violinist José White and played chamber music with Spanish cellist Pablo Casals, who later described Enescu as “one of the greatest geniuses of modern music.”

Even as Enescu identified with an international cohort of contemporary musicians, his reception as a composer was being shaped by Romanian nationalist sentiment. By the time he graduated from the Paris Conservatoire, in 1899, the 18-year-old was already an accomplished performer with an impressive pedigree as a young composer of note. His first opus was a folk-inspired work, the Poème roumain for orchestra and wordless chorus, which was premiered in Paris in 1897. Its performance a year later in Romania’s capital city of Bucharest earned Enescu celebrity as a cultural-nationalist composer and the patronage of the royal family. It is from this period that his two Romanian Rhapsodies, Op. II, come. He described the First as “just a few
tunes thrown together without thinking about it,” an example of the calculated self-deprecation he used, another being his later statement that “a piece deserves to be called musical composition only if it has a line, a melody, or, even better, melodies superimposed on one another.”

In subsequent years Enescu was an important architect of concert life in his native country, establishing a symphony orchestra in 1917 and founding Romania’s first national opera company in 1921, conducting Wagner’s Lohengrin in its local debut. In some ways Enescu led a double life, both geographically — splitting time between Paris and Romania — and artistically, touring and recording as a solo violinist while making his name as one of the most promising composers of his generation. In 1923 he made the first of many visits to the United States, where he became a powerful mentor for the young violinist Yehudi Menuhin, who remembered Enescu as “the most formative influence I have ever experienced.” Meanwhile, Enescu’s reputation as a conductor also grew. It is speculated that in 1936 he was on the short list as a possible replacement for Arturo Toscanini as Music Director of the New York Philharmonic.

With chamber and choral music, symphonic works, songs, and an opera in his musical portfolio, Enescu’s stylistic palette was broad. Though his mother tongue

In the Composer’s Words

In two 1912 press interviews, George Enescu mused on the unique flavor of Romanian music:

Romanian music is complex, still very obscure, in its infancy. It is a composition of Arabic, Slavic, and Hungarian music, but it also possesses an atmosphere of its own, which you don’t find in the music of other peoples, an atmosphere to which I cannot give an expressive characterization. These foreign influences are too obvious to be denied. In Muntenia the music is more Turkish, in Moldavia more Russian, in Ardeal [Transylvania] more Hungarian. From all these dialects, however, springs its own individuality.

It’s very hard to make out this originality. Yet there is a general characteristic that emerges from our national music: it is sadness even in happiness. This feeling is inspired by our valleys and hills, by the peculiar color of our sky, by the thoughts that weigh down and at the same time give birth to a longing that cannot be well clarified. A foreigner, who is a friend of mine, once heard me perform a piece of mine and said to me: “In this composition there seems to be something that cannot be fulfilled.” This “something that cannot be fulfilled” was the original Romanian-inspired part of my piece. This unresolved but deeply moving longing seems to me to be the distinct characteristic of Romanian songs.

George Enescu in the 1910s
as a composer remained lush, late-Romantic tonality, he was also drawn to rigorous counterpoint, neoclassicism that anticipated Igor Stravinsky, and the more dissonant harmonic language of Richard Strauss. Enescu regretted that the popularity of his two Rhapsodies, written and premiered when he was not yet 20 years old, typecast him as a Romanian nationalist composer and overshadowed later works in other idioms. Nonetheless, it was the vibrant, dance-based Romanian Rhapsody No. 1 that became, and perhaps remains, his best-known work.

**Instrumentation:**
three flutes (one doubling piccolo), two oboes and English horn, two clarinets, two bassoons, four horns, two trumpets and two cornets, three trombones, tuba, timpani, triangle, snare drum, cymbals, two harps, and strings.

— Mark Burford, R. P. Wollenberg
Professor of Music at Reed College and author of *Mahalia Jackson and the Black Gospel Field,* who writes about African American popular music, European concert music, and opera

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**The Work at a Glance**

The Rhapsody No. 1 can be heard in two large-scale sections, the first of which is a parade of melodies. Both halves are anchored by a style of traditional Romanian music known as **lăutărească**. Enescu’s first violin teacher was a **lăutár** (a professional **lăutărească** musician) who could not read music and taught Enescu songs from this repertoire by ear. One of these was the well-known *Am un leu și vreau să-l beau* (*I Want To Spend My Money on Drink*), which opens the Rhapsody, introduced in a wistful dialogue between the clarinet and oboe. We hear three statements of this melody, each with new instrumentation and a strengthening pulse. Enescu gives a series of three new tunes — the first sounding like a Viennese waltz, the last like a Rossini climax — to the upper strings. A solo viola launches a final sequence of melodic ideas that are taken up by the entire orchestra. The second half of the piece is a steadily intensifying romp, highlighted by **lăutărească** music at its most electrifying, its driving dance rhythms and Enescu’s virtuosic orchestration surely a source of the Rhapsody’s irresistible and lasting appeal.
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Energy, elegance, and spirit — that is what particularly distinguishes conductor Andrés Orozco-Estrada as a musician. After a wonderful collaboration with the Orchestra Sinfonica Nazionale della Rai in May 2022, Orozco-Estrada has been appointed principal conductor of the Rai Orchestra, a post that has begun in the 2023–24 season. Beginning in the 2025–26 season, he will become general music director of the city of Cologne and Gürzenich Kapellmeister. Already in the coming season, he will be a guest at the Cologne Philharmonie with a special concert.

His appearances, both debuts and returns, in the 2023–24 season will bring him to the Vienna Philharmonic, New York Philharmonic, Orchestre de Paris, Swedish Radio Symphony Orchestra, Rotterdam Philharmonic, and Berlin Radio Symphony Orchestra, among others. He also returns to the hr-Sinfonieorchester, where he was principal conductor from 2014 to 2021, and the Houston Symphony, where he was music director from 2014 to 2022. He will accompany the SWR Sinfonieorchester on a tour of Spain; tour with the Filarmonica della Scala; and undertake a European tour with his Filarmónica Joven de Colombia and violinist Hilary Hahn, which includes appearances in Paris, Berlin, Munich, Frankfurt, Dortmund, and cities in Switzerland.

Orozco-Estrada will make debuts at Milan’s Teatro alla Scala (leading Mozart’s Marriage of Figaro) and the Amsterdam Opera (Beethoven’s Fidelio); in the latter city he also conducts the Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra. He also returns to the Berlin Staatsoper, after numerous successful productions, for Puccini’s Tosca.

Born in Medellín, Colombia, Andrés Orozco-Estrada began his musical education playing the violin, receiving his first conducting lessons at the age of 15. In 1997 he moved to Vienna, where he was accepted into the conducting class of Uroš Lajovic, a student of the legendary Hans Swarowsky, at the renowned Hochschule für Musik und Darstellende Kunst. Since October 2022 Orozco-Estrada has been professor of orchestral conducting at the Vienna University of Music and Performing Arts.

Prizewinner at the 2009 Rostropovich competition and 2011 Tchaikovsky Competition, and winner of the 2014 Young Concert Artist Award, cellist Edgar Moreau was born in 1994 and began playing the cello at age four. At age 11 he made his debut with the Teatro Regio Orchestra in Torino, playing Dvořák’s cello concerto. Today he performs regularly in prestigious halls and with renowned conductors and orchestras around the world. Particularly passionate about chamber music, he collaborates with artists such as Martha Argerich, Yo-Yo Ma, Renaud Capuçon, Khatia Buniatishvili, Daniil Trifonov, Nicholas Angelich, András Schiff, Emmanuel Pahud, Sergei Babayan, Lisa Batiashvili, Julian Rachlin, Alexey Volodin, Bertrand Chamayou, and David Kadouch, as well as his sister Raphaëlle and brothers David and Jérémie.
An Erato exclusive artist, Edgar Moreau released his debut album, *Play*, in 2014. His 2016 album, *Giovincello*, received an ECHO Classic Award. Several recordings followed, including *A Family Affair*, recorded with his siblings, and *Transmission*, an album celebrating Jewish heritage and musical tradition through works by Bruch, Bloch, Korngold, and Ravel. His latest album — a collaboration with Andris Poga and WDR Sinfonieorchester Köln — features Dutilleux’s and Weinberg’s cello concertos.

Moreau received awards at the Victoires de la Musique Classique (the French Grammy Awards) in 2013 and 2015. He was named an ECHO Rising Star in 2017. He is a laureate of the Fondation Banque Populaire, received the Young Soloist Award from French Public Radio Stations 2013, has received support from the Safran Corporate Foundation, and received Adami’s Révélation Classique 2012. He has been a cello professor at the Paris Conservatoire National Supérieur since the fall of 2023. Edgar Moreau plays a David Tecchler cello from 1711, and his bow was made by Dominique Peccate.
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.