The Art of the Score

Wednesday, December 20, 2023, 7:30 p.m.
16,971st Concert

Thursday, December 21, 2023, 7:30 p.m.
16,972nd Concert

Friday, December 22, 2023, 8:00 p.m.
16,973rd Concert

Saturday, December 23, 2023, 8:00 p.m.
16,974th Concert

Anthony Parnther, Conductor
(New York Philharmonic debut)
Massamba Diop, Tama
(New York Philharmonic debut)

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

This program will last approximately two and three-quarters hours, which includes one intermission.
The Art of the Score

Anthony Parnther, Conductor (New York Philharmonic debut)
Massamba Diop, Tama (New York Philharmonic debut)

Starring
CHADWICK BOSEMAN
MICHAEL B. JORDAN
LUPITA NYONG’O
DANAI GURIRA
MARTIN FREEMAN
DANIEL KALUUYA
LETITIA WRIGHT
WINSTON DUKE
with ANGELA BASSETT
with FOREST WHITAKER
and ANDY SERKIS

Music by
LUDWIG GÖRANSSON
Black Panther

Ludwig Göransson

“The never gets old,” T’Challa, Black Panther, says in loving awe, as his airship flies low over Wakanda, where he will assume the throne. The beauty of the landscape and the hidden wonders of Wakanda spread before him are underscored by a declamatory vocal from Senegalese singer Baaba Maal, and a heraldic fanfare combining tama — the traditional talking drum — with full traditional orchestra.

This is the audience’s first glimpse of Wakanda, and the scene, which appears early on in Black Panther, reveals the power of composer Ludwig Göransson’s Oscar-winning music to uplift its title character, and to sonically represent a culture unknown to the rest of the world.

Some of the credit goes to director Ryan Coogler, for devoting as much attention to the film score as to production design and visual effects while developing the architecture, fashion, technology, and rituals that make Wakanda so vibrant. Black Panther was a much-anticipated Marvel Studios release in 2018 — the first devoted to a Black hero, helmed by a Black creative team and cast.

For the music of this Afrofuturistic story, Coogler turned to an unlikely source: a white Swedish composer and producer named after Ludwig van Beethoven. In fact, the choice wasn’t so strange. Coogler and Göransson had known each other since they attended film school at the University of Southern California. Göransson scored Coogler’s acclaimed first feature, Fruitvale Station, in 2013, as well as his subsequent reboots in the Rocky franchise, Creed and Creed II.

Göransson was drawn to Hollywood by his love of film music. He was born in Linköping, Sweden, and studied guitar with his father, a music teacher, while leaning toward jazz performance. The movie bug struck early. He devoured classic scores by Ennio Morricone, John Williams, and Danny Elfman, and in high school even had the chance to have a short score he had written played by a professional orchestra.

During his time in Los Angeles he gained experience as a composer for television shows including New Girl and Community. On the latter he became acquainted with cast member Donald Glover, and the two began collaborating on albums under the actor’s stage persona, Childish Gambino. That fueled Göransson’s path into producing for acts including Adele, Haim, Chance the Rapper, and Justin Timberlake. He struck awards gold in 2019 when he won Grammys for Song of the Year and Record of the Year for This Is America — from the Childish Gambino album Awaken, My Love — and the Grammy for

In Short

Born: September 1, 1984, in Linköping, Sweden

Resides: in Los Angeles, California

Work composed: 2017

World premiere: the film, January 29, 2018, at the Dolby Theater in Los Angeles

New York Philharmonic premiere: these performances

Estimated duration: ca. 135 minutes
Best Score Soundtrack for Visual Media and the Academy Award for Best Original Score for *Black Panther*.

Göransson was brought into the *Black Panther* creative process early on. After reading the script, he knew it required a sound world that rang true for a fictional country steeped in tradition (having never been colonized), yet futuristically urbane (boasting technology that puts the rest of the world to shame). That mix would ultimately inform the main character, T’Challa, and his nemesis, Killmonger. The composer traveled to West Africa to study traditional instruments, seeking the counsel of Baaba Maal, in particular. In that early *Black Panther* scene with T’Challa, Maal sings in the Fula language about a fallen elephant, a metaphor for the fallen king and the rise of a new ruler. He is also heard elsewhere on the soundtrack, perhaps most memorably in a climactic sunset scene. Maal took Göransson along on his tour of Senegal, introducing him to the music, to the community atmosphere of concerts that take place in the overnight hours to avoid the hot climate, and to the tradition of griots, the traveling storytellers and keepers of West African oral history. Maal conveyed how music is not just for listening but is woven into the fabric of the culture, how rhythms and instruments are tied to rituals and ceremonies. Göransson witnessed how talking drums can be used to welcome important visitors into a community, and to relay information. Renowned Senegalese tama player Mansama Diop, who performs with the NY Phil tonight, was consulted on the prominent use of the instrument throughout the score. The drums’ ability to “speak” is notable in Diop’s playing in the waterfall ceremony, where drums spell out the name of T’Challa, the new king.

### Side-by-Side Soundtracks

Original songs curated and performed by Kendrick Lamar are part of the *Black Panther* soundtrack, integrated with Ludwig Göransson’s score. Director Ryan Coogler approached Lamar about contributing music to the film, and the singer responded by creating an album of songs reflecting on the wider themes of the film. Lamar collaborated with producer Sounwave and a number of top artists on *Black Panther: The Album*, released on February 9, 2018. Some songs are heard in the film, others are exclusive to the album. It had been teased with the release of three singles beginning in early January: *All the Stars*, featuring SZA; *The Ways*, with Khalid and Swae Lee, a nod to the strong women of Wakanda; and *Pray for Me*, by Lamar and The Weeknd.

Meanwhile, Göransson’s film soundtrack recording was released on February 16, 2018, as *Black Panther (Original Score)*. Both were well-received, earning critical praise in separate ways and topping *Billboard* charts. At the 2019 Grammys, *King’s Dead* from *Black Panther: The Album*, was named Best Rap Performance, and *Black Panther (Original Score)* won Best Score Soundtrack for Visual Media.

Percussion is at the forefront of the *Black Panther* score, with standard orchestral instruments taking an almost secondary position, for color or to add the soaring richness intrinsic to a superhero movie. Strings, led by cello, lend a plaintive quality to the scene in which T’Challa enters the ancestral plain; brass lifts the triumphant spirit of the Wakanda fanfare. Göransson blends them with other African instruments such as the harp-like kora, sabar drums, and tambin, or Fula flute, along with a choir singing in Xhosa. (Wakandans
Black Panther moves between Wakanda and the outside world, with sequences in Oakland, California; Busan, South Korea; London, England; and Vienna, Austria. In those settings, Göransson’s experience as a producer comes into play. Killmonger, first seen in London, is accompanied by a leitmotif that merges contemporary and traditional sounds as a reflection of his divided ancestry. His very American swagger is reflected in the use of trap hip-hop beats, while Fula flute references his Wakanda heritage. The soundtrack also includes original songs by rapper Kendrick Lamar, heard in the Busan scenes; All the Stars, with vocals by Lamar and SZA, plays over the end credits.

Göransson’s status as a leading film composer has only risen since Black Panther. He returned for the sequel, Black Panther: Wakanda Forever, in 2022, nabbing an Oscar nomination for the song Lift Me Up. He has also scored The Mandalorian, Tenet, and Turning Red, among others, and provided the music for this year’s Oppenheimer.

**Instrumentation:** three flutes (two doubling alto flute and one doubling piccolo), two oboes (one doubling English horn), three clarinets (two doubling bass clarinet and one doubling contrabass clarinet), two bassoons (one doubling contrabassoon), six horns, three trumpets, four trombones, tuba, timpani, African metal keys rattle shaker, African metal shaker, African rattle, African seeds rattle shaker, African shell shakers, anvil, bell tree, bongos, chimes, claves, field drum, frame drum, shekere, bass drum, muted toms, crash cymbals, puili sticks, rain sheet, rainstick, shaker, snare drum, sticks, suspended cymbals, taiko, tam tam, tambourine, thunder sheet, tom-toms, triangle, harp, synthesizer, and strings.

— Rebecca Winzenried, former Program and Publications Editor at the New York Philharmonic

Is there an EGOT in the Future?

In little more than a decade, Ludwig Göransson has amassed awards that have set him on the path toward an exclusive club. He has won two Emmys, three Grammys, and an Oscar, putting him only one award — a Tony — away from the coveted EGOT. The quadruple award designation is claimed by a select few artists and performers, including Rita Moreno, Whoopi Goldberg, Andrew Lloyd Webber, and Viola Davis. Göransson has told interviewers he doesn’t necessarily see himself joining their starry company anytime soon, citing his focus on film work. Then again, with Broadway’s penchant for turning films into musicals, you never know.
New York Philharmonic

2023–2024 SEASON
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Qiang Tu
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Ru-Pei Yeh
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OBOES
Liang Wang
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Sherry Sylar*
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Ryan Roberts

ENGLISH HORN
Ryan Roberts

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Principal
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Fortezza
The Honey M. Kurtz Family Chair
Barret Ham

E-FLAT CLARINET
Benjamin Adler

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Barret Ham

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Julian Gonzalez*
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Tanner West
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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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Deborah Borda
Zubin Mehta

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.
American conductor **Anthony Parnther** is in his fifth season as music director of California’s San Bernardino Symphony Orchestra. As conductor of the Gateways Music Festival Orchestra, Parnther led its sold-out Carnegie Hall debut, which showcased the world premiere of *I Can* by five-time Grammy winner Jon Batiste.

Parnther has conducted many of the world’s preeminent artists, ranging from Joshua Bell, Lynn Harrell, Jessye Norman, and Frederica von Stade to Imagine Dragons, John Legend, Avenged Sevenfold, Wu-Tang Clan, and Rihanna. Upcoming highlights include appearances with the Cincinnati, Indianapolis, Nashville, Seattle, St. Louis, and Vancouver symphony orchestras, and Chineke! Orchestra, with which Parnther recently made his BBC Proms debut. Recent engagements include collaborations with the Atlanta, Baltimore, Detroit, National, and San Francisco symphony orchestras; Buffalo, Calgary, Los Angeles, and Rochester philharmonic orchestras; Hollywood Bowl and Philadelphia Orchestras; and Los Angeles Opera, Music Academy of the West, the Royal Scottish National Orchestra, and Australia’s Sydney Symphony. These performances mark his New York Philharmonic debut.

Dedicated to amplifying traditionally underrepresented voices, Parnther has reconstructed and performed orchestral works by Margaret Bonds, Duke Ellington, Zenobia Powell Perry, Florence Price, William Grant Still, and Samuel Coleridge-Taylor. In addition to leading LA Opera’s world premiere of Tamar-kali’s oratorio *We Hold These Truths* and Long Beach Opera’s revival of Anthony Davis’s Pulitzer Prize–winning *The Central Park Five*, Parnther has premiered and recorded works by Batiste, Kris Bow- ers, Chanda Dancy, Davis, Adolphus Hail- stork, Marian Harrison, Phillip Herbert, Daniel Kidane, Gary Powell Nash, James Newton, Perry, Price, Taylor, George Walker, Errollyn Wallen, James Wilson, and John Wineglass. For his extensive championing of works by Black, Latino, and women composers, Parnther was profiled in 2015 as a “Local Hero” by Los Angeles’s PBS SoCal/KCET.


**Massamba Diop** is one of the most renowned masters of the tama, a “talking drum” from Senegal known for its ability to imitate the sounds of human speech. Before the advent of telephones and radio, it was the
tama that announced important events and sent messages between villages. Recognizing the central role talking drums play in African cultures, composer Ludwig Göransson decided to put it — and Diop — front and center in his Oscar-winning score for *Black Panther*. Diop now tours as the featured soloist for *Black Panther* in Concert, racking up more than 60 appearances to date, performing alongside top-tier orchestras at world-class venues such as London’s Royal Albert Hall, Taiwan’s National Concert Hall, and Sydney’s Opera House. Diop also appeared on-screen in *Black Panther: Wakanda Forever* and contributed to its score.

Long before becoming the sound of King T’Challa, Diop was a stalwart of the world music scene. For four decades he has backed Senegalese singer Baaba Maal. Diop has recorded and performed with greats including Mumford & Sons, Carlos Santana, Herbie Hancock, and Peter Gabriel, and has made several appearances with Playing for Change’s *Songs Around the World*. Diop is a Remo Percussion artist and helped them design the first mass-produced tama available to the public.

In 1993 Massamba Diop and percussionist Tony Vacca co-founded the Senegal-America project, a grassroots cultural exchange program sponsoring various educational, healthcare, and artistic initiatives on both continents. The two regularly tour with a variety of school programs from their base in Northampton, Massachusetts. Diop’s other regular collaborators include Surabhi Ensemble (in Chicago, Illinois), Walo Walo (Portland, Oregon), and Total Rhythm (San Francisco, California). He currently calls Columbus, Ohio, home.
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.
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Induction loops are available in all performance spaces and at commerce points including the Welcome Center, Coat Check, and select bars. Receivers with headsets and neck loops are available for guests who do not have t-coil accessible hearing devices.
Noise-reducing headphones, fidgets, and earplugs are available to borrow.
Accessible seating is available in all performance areas and can be arranged at point of sale. For guests transferring to seats, mobility devices will be checked by staff, labeled, and returned at intermission and after the performance. Seating for persons of size is available in the Orchestra and Tiers 1 and 2. Accessible entrances are on the Josie Robertson Plaza. Accessible routes from the Karen and Richard LeFrak Lobby to all tiers and performance spaces are accessible by elevator.
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