*Tonight **Gustavo Dudamel** is stepping in for conductor Juanjo Mena, who is unable to appear due to illness. In addition, Debussy's* Ibéria *will not be performed.*

Gustavo Dudamel is driven by the belief that music has the power to transform lives, to inspire, and to change the world. Through his dynamic presence on the podium and his tireless advocacy for arts education, he has introduced classical music to new audiences around the globe and helped provide access to the arts for countless people in underserved communities. Currently Music and Artistic Director of the Los Angeles Philharmonic and Music Director of the Simón Bolívar Symphony Orchestra, in 2026 he becomes The Oscar L. Tang and H.M. Agnes Hsu-Tang Music and Artistic Director of the New York Philharmonic, after serving as Music Director Designate in the 2025–26 season, continuing a legacy that includes Gustav Mahler, Arturo Toscanini, and Leonard Bernstein.

Dudamel is one of the few classical musicians to become a bona fide pop-culture phenomenon. His film credits include Steven Spielberg's adaptation of Bernstein's *West Side Story, Star Wars: The Force Awakens,* and *The Simpsons,* and he led the LA Phil with Billie Eilish in the concert film *Happier Than Ever: A Love Letter to Los Angeles.* He has performed at the Super Bowl halftime show, Academy Awards, and Nobel Prize concert, and worked with international superstars Christina Aguilera; Ricky Martin; Tyler, The Creator; Coldplay; and others. His extensive discography includes 67 releases and 4 Grammy Awards.

Inspired by his transformative experience as a youth in Venezuela's immersive musical training program El Sistema, in 2012 he created the Dudamel Foundation, which he co-chairs with his wife, actress / director María Valverde, "to expand access to music and the arts for young people by providing tools and opportunities to shape their creative futures." In 2022 the Dudamel Foundation brought its Encuentros initiative to the Hollywood Bowl, as part of the venue's 100th-anniversary season, in an intensive global leadership and orchestral training program for young musicians from around the world; it culminated in a tour with the Orquesta del Encuentro to the Greek Theatre in Berkeley, California.

Thursday, April 25, 2024, 7:30 p.m.
17,030th Concert

Friday, April 26, 2024, 8:00 p.m.
17,031st Concert

Saturday, April 27, 2024, 8:00 p.m.
17,032nd Concert

Juanjo Mena, Conductor
Hilary Hahn, Violin

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

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

Lead support for these concerts is provided by **GigCapital Global — Dr. Avi Katz and Dr. Raluca Dinu.**

Hilary Hahn is **The Mary and James G. Wallach Artist-in-Residence.**

Major support for these concerts is provided by **Michael P. N. A. Hormel.**

April 25–27, 2024

Juanjo Mena, Conductor
Hilary Hahn, Violin

RAVEL
(1875–1937)

Rapsodie espagnole (Spanish Rhapsody) (1907)
Prelude to Night
Malagueña
Habanera
Festival

GINASTERA
(1916–83)

Concerto for Violin and Orchestra, Op. 30 (1962–63)
Cadenza and Etudes
Adagio for 22 soloists
Scherzo pianissimo and Perpetuum mobile

HILARY HAHN

Intermission

SARASATE
(1844–1908)

Concert Fantasy on Motifs from Bizet's Opera *Carmen* for Violin and Orchestra, Op. 25 (1881)
Introduction
Moderato
Lento assai
Allegretto moderato
Moderato

HILARY HAHN

DEBUSSY
(1862–1918)

Ibéria,* from *Images for Orchestra (1905–08)
By the Highways and By-Ways
Perfumes of the Night
Morning of a Festival Day

(The second and third movements are played without pause.)

RAVEL

Boléro (1928)

Support for Hilary Hahn's appearance on April 25 is provided by **Mrs. Martha Hall.**

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

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Notes on the Program

Rapsodie espagnole (Spanish Rhapsody)
Boléro

Maurice Ravel

The Spanish composer Manuel de Falla arrived for a residence in Paris in the summer of 1907 and immediately went to hear Maurice Ravel and Catalan pianist Ricardo Viñes read through the newly composed ***Rapsodie espagnole*** in its version for piano four-hands. "The *Rapsodie* … surprised me because of its Spanish character," Falla later wrote, adding:

> But how was I to account for the subtly genuine Spanishness of Ravel, knowing, because he had told me so, that the only link he had with my country was to have been born near the border! The mystery was soon explained: Ravel's was a Spain he had felt in an idealized way through his mother. She was a lady of exquisite conversation. She spoke fluent Spanish, which I enjoyed so much when she evoked the years of her youth, spent in Madrid, an epoch earlier than mine, but traces of its habits that were familiar to me still remained. Then I understood with what fascination her son must have listened to these memories that were undoubtedly intensified by the additional force all reminiscence gets from the song or dance theme inseparably connected with it.

Even if the opening movement were not explicitly titled *Prelude to Night*, listeners would be likely to sense something in these tones that evokes deepening darkness and mystery. But the night is as beautiful as it is frightening: perhaps the ravishing burst of color highlighted by harp and upward-surging strings represents the heady fragrance of a moonflower, or the little cadenza for two clarinets the sudden flight of a nocturnal moth.

In Short

Born: March 7, 1875, in Ciboure, Basses-Pyrénées, France

Died: December 28, 1937, in Paris

Works composed: *Rapsodie espagnole,* October 1907; the orchestration was completed the following February. *Boléro,* July 6–October 1928, in St-Jean-de-Luz; dedicated to Ida Rubinstein

World premieres: *Rapsodie espagnole,* March 28, 1908, in Paris, Concerts Colonne, Édouard Colonne, conductor; *Boléro,* November 22, 1928, at the Paris Opéra, in a ballet production by Rubinstein directed by Bronislava Nijinska, conducted by Walther Straram; concert premiere, November 14, 1929, by the New York Philharmonic, Arturo Toscanini, conductor

New York Philharmonic premieres: *Rapsodie espagnole,* November 21, 1909, by the New York Symphony (a forebear of the New York Philharmonic), Walter Damrosch, conductor

Most recent New York Philharmonic performances: *Rapsodie espagnole,* October 26, 2013, Charles Dutoit, conductor; *Boléro,* September 23, 2023, Jaap van Zweden, conductor, at The McKnight Center for the Performing Arts at Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, Oklahoma

Estimated durations: *Rapsodie espagnole,* ca. 16 minutes; *Boléro,* ca. 15 minutes

The second movement, *Malagueña*, follows, after just a pause for breath. It turns out to be far less impetuous than might be anticipated from a dance movement. By the end, the vigor that has been built up is dispelled in a languorous solo for the English horn, marked *Assez lent; Un peu plus lent que le prélude* (*Rather slow; a bit slower than the prelude*); and then this miniature movement, hardly two minutes in duration, simply evaporates into the mist. Falla claimed that

> when [Ravel] wanted to characterize Spain musically, he showed a predilection for the habanera, the song most in vogue when his mother lived in Madrid. … That is why the rhythm, much to the surprise of the Spaniards, went on living in French music although Spain had forgotten it half a century ago.

This *Habanera* began life as a work for two pianos in 1895, but it comes across as far more evocative in this orchestrated version of 12 years later. Curiously, Ravel remained unsatisfied. “I like the music,” he later told the composer Francis Poulenc, “but it’s so badly orchestrated!” Poulenc continues the account:

> “How can you possibly claim that?” I protested. And then he said something which could only have come from a truly extraordinary technician: “The orchestra’s too large for the number of bars.” A wonderful remark.

The *Habanera’s* spirit is perfectly summed up in its tempo heading: *Assez lent et d’un rhythme las* (*Rather slow, and with a weary rhythm*).

The considerable tension built up through the restraint of the first three movements is released with passionate abandon in the finale (*Assez animé; Rather animated*), where Ravel’s pulsating rhythms combine with full-bodied instrumentation to evoke the vigor of a celebration: a busy gathering in which disparate songs and sensations compete for our attention. In the *Rapsodie espagnole* Ravel achieved for the first time the subtle orchestration that would henceforth be his unique fingerprint.

Melody, harmony, rhythm, timbre, dynamics — these are the irreducible materials of musical composition, and in nearly every piece they follow a certain hierarchical pecking order. In Western

Listen for … the Guitar Rhythm

Any depiction of Spain is honor-bound to refer to the guitar, the Spanish instrument par excellence. In the ***Rapsodie espagnole*** Ravel does so most explicitly in the second movement, Malagueña. Here the basses (playing pizzicato) establish the underlying rhythm, and cellos strum above on off-beats — a superb example of orchestral strings pretending to be guitars:

music melody and harmony, the tune and the way the tune weaves through the gravity exerted by its key, are generally conceded to be the most important elements of composition, with rhythm — the pulse underlying these musical processes — placing a distant third. Timbre, the acoustical sound of the instruments playing the music, is widely viewed as icing on the cake, as are dynamics, the volume in which the music is played. Although both volume and timbre unquestionably affect how music comes across, composers have often considered them less vital in defining the essence of a composition.

All five of these elements are present in ***Boléro***, to be sure, but Ravel manipulates them in a way that skews their accustomed balance. The work's extended, sinuous melody is surely memorable, but there is no more than a single melody in the entire 15-minute piece, and it is repeated over and over without the slightest development or elaboration until near the very end. The harmony, working in lockstep with the melody, is similarly repetitive and unvarying. Since the melody never changes, its rhythm (like its pitches) remains always constant; and so does the essentially pitchless two-bar rhythmic figure that accompanies the melody. In the course of *Boléro*, that rhythmic cell is heard ceaselessly, 169 times over, collapsing only in the rupture of the final few measures. By dint of obsessive repetition, the interest of the melody, harmony, and rhythm is dissipated; the listener remains very much aware of them, but their unchanging patterns soothe the ear into complacency.

As these aspects of the composition fade into familiarity, timbre and dynamics take on unaccustomed importance. From the nearly silent beginning — the pianissimo drum tattoo, the pizzicato string chords suggestive of a guitar, and the melody introduced by a flute in its low register — the composer builds

Angels and Muses

Ida Rubinstein in 1923

Ravel created ***Boléro*** on commission from the dancer Ida Rubinstein, for the ballet company she had formed in Paris. It was choreographed by Bronislava Nijinska (sister of famed dancer Vaslav Nijinsky), with whom Rubinstein had danced at Ballets Russes, and they offered this scenario for the program:

> Inside a tavern in Spain, people dance beneath the brass lamp hung from the ceiling. [In response] to the cheers to join in, the female dancer has leapt onto the long table and her steps become more and more animated.

Ravel reportedly thought the work, originally titled *Fandango,* should be set in a factory, to emphasize the mechanical nature of the main theme. After playing it for a friend, he had asked,

> Don't you think this theme has an insistent quality? I'm going to try and repeat it a number of times without any development, gradually increasing the orchestra as best I can.

— The Editors

a tour de force of additive instrumentation, increasing the texture of those parts with every repetition and seizing upon an astonishing variety of constantly changing instrumental combinations, including prominent input from such rarely spotlighted orchestral instruments as oboe d'amore and saxophone. What begins by occupying only three separate lines of musical score grows to occupy huge pages of staves, and, as one would expect, the volume increases accordingly, from gentlest pianissimo to grand fortissimo. The work's method, however revolutionary, was essentially simple.

In a 1931 letter to his friend, the critic M.D. Calvocoressi, Ravel wrote:

> It is an experiment in a very special and limited direction, and should not be suspected of achieving anything different from, or anything more than, it actually does achieve. [It is] a piece ... consisting wholly of orchestral tissue without music — of one very long, very gradual crescendo. The themes are impersonal — folk tunes of the usual Spanish-Arabian kind.

Ravel wrote this piece on request as a ballet score for the troupe of Ida Rubinstein. At first he demurred, suggesting instead that he merely orchestrate an existing piece by Albéniz. Ravel put off the project and in the end decided to write something original, explaining, "After all, I would have orchestrated my own music much more quickly than anyone else's." When all is said and done, the piece he wrote turned out to be principally orchestration. At the first orchestral rehearsal Ravel was as astonished as everyone else by the momentum it conveyed, but he nonetheless told friends that he had no doubt so radical an experiment would never find a place in normal orchestral concerts. Was he ever wrong! *Boléro* became an instant megahit. Invitations to conduct the piece poured into Ravel's mailbox, and today its niche in the orchestral repertoire remains utterly secure. "Malheureusement il est vide de musique," Ravel remarked — "Unfortunately, it contains no music." Audiences tend not to agree with him about that.

Instrumentation: *Rapsodie espagnole* calls for two flutes and two piccolos, two oboes and English horn, two clarinets and bass clarinet, three bassoons and contrabassoon, four horns, three trumpets, three trombones, tuba, timpani, bass drum, cymbals, triangle, tambourine, castanets, snare drum, tam-tam, xylophone, celesta, two harps, and strings. *Boléro* employs two flutes (one doubling piccolo) and piccolo, two oboes (one doubling oboe d'amore) and English horn, two clarinets plus E-flat clarinet and bass clarinet, two bassoons and contrabassoon, four horns, three trumpets and piccolo trumpet, three trombones, tuba, soprano saxophone, tenor saxophone, timpani, two snare drums, cymbals, tam-tam, bass drum, celesta, 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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Concerto for Violin and Orchestra, Op. 30

Alberto Ginastera

Born into a family of Catalan and Italian roots, Alberto Ginastera was schooled entirely in his native Argentina, principally at the National Conservatory of Music in Buenos Aires. When he was 18, he was awarded First Prize in a composition contest, and he began producing numerous pieces with a distinctive flavor, often employing native Argentine rhythms or folk melodies. Some of these nationalistic works remain his most frequently encountered today, including the chamber piece *Impresiones de la Puna* (1934) and the ballet *Estancia* (1941).

Argentina endured a period of political oppression in the mid-20th century under the regime of Juan Perón. Ginastera did not flourish in that climate, and in 1945 the government forced him to resign from his position on the music faculty of the National Military Academy because he had signed a petition in support of civil liberties. He was able to study in the United States from 1945 to 1947, working with Aaron Copland at Tanglewood for part of that time. Not until after Perón was overthrown, in 1955, did Ginastera assume several political-academic posts in Argentina. He served as dean of the music program at the Catholic University of Argentina (1958–63), and then led the Latin American Centre for Advanced Musical Studies at the Instituto Torcuato di Tella in Buenos Aires (1963–71), importing such notable Modernists as Messiaen, Xenakis, Nono, and Dallapiccola for guest residencies. He lived a cosmopolitan life, traveling frequently from Buenos Aires to musical centers in Europe and North America. In 1969, exasperated with the political situation in Argentina, he left definitively, and spent most of the rest of his life in Switzerland.

Ginastera's later works moved toward an abstracted Modernism ("neo-Expressionism," he called it), often exploring serial composition, polytonality, and even microtonality. Nonetheless, he remained concerned about the gap that separated audiences from serious musical composition during his lifetime and proclaimed that the proper aspiration of a composer was "to be integrated into society, not stand apart from it."

Ginastera was invited by the New York Philharmonic to compose his Violin Concerto to celebrate the opening of its home at Lincoln Center. The first concert at the new Philharmonic Hall (now David Geffen Hall) took place in late September 1962, and Ginastera's concerto wasn't finished in time to be included in the first season. In a review that appeared the morning after its eventual premiere (which took place on October 3, 1963, in the second season the Philharmonic spent in its new home), *The New York Times* stated, "Although the Argentine started to compose it in 1962, it was completed only last month. At that,

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In Short

Born: April 11, 1916, in Buenos Aires, Argentina

Died: June 25, 1983, in Geneva, Switzerland

Work composed: 1962 to September 1963, on commission from the New York Philharmonic

World premiere: The Orchestra's only previous performances, marking the World Premiere, were October 3–6, 1963, at Philharmonic Hall (now David Geffen Hall), Leonard Bernstein, conductor, Ruggiero Ricci, soloist

Estimated duration: ca. 28 minutes

the score arrived here so late that there was fear its scheduled performance last night would have to be postponed."

In his Violin Concerto Ginastera makes free use of serial techniques, which were the coin of the realm for composers in the 1960s. Further, he approached the piece with the first performers specifically in mind. The soloist for the premiere was to be Ruggiero Ricci, an American violinist especially noted for interpreting the music of Niccolò Paganini. Ginastera spotlights the soloist with an opening cadenza and then breaks into a series of connected etudes exploring different advanced violin techniques: playing in chords, thirds, other harmonic

A Violin Concerto "for Orchestra"

The orchestral writing in Ginastera's Violin Concerto makes high-caliber demands of the sort the composer knew he could ask of the ensemble that commissioned it, but the middle movement is practically a "concerto for orchestra" crafted for its principal players. This movement, titled *Adagio for 22 Soloists,* is headed with the inscription "as an homage to the soloists of the New York Philharmonic."

"The soloist integrates the whole symphonic texture, being part of the musical material in which each instrument has a soloist share," wrote the composer. The 22 players who participate in this section represent all the standard symphonic instruments, with one musician per part: the solo violin plus a solo string quartet (comprising violin, viola, cello, and bass), piccolo, flute, oboe, English horn, clarinet, E-flat clarinet, bass clarinet, bassoon, contrabassoon, horn, trumpet, trombone, tuba, timpani, two percussionists (playing celesta and orchestra bells), and harp — a complete orchestra in miniature.

This restraint in orchestration extends to the other movements as well, even though the orchestral forces are substantial — indeed, larger than one would normally expect in a violin concerto. In a review in *The New York Times,* critic Raymond Ericson observed, "Mr. Ginastera has largely treated the mammoth orchestra he uses here in chamber-music fashion, but his imaginative handling of his resources for such a large work is constantly striking."

Ruggiero Ricci, soloist in the World Premiere, in 1961; Alberto Ginastera

intervals, arpeggios, harmonics, and quarter-tones. Each etude is accompanied by a different orchestral component. This suggests a "concerto for orchestra" aspect, which is explored in a different way in the second movement (see sidebar, page 27).

The concluding movement again draws inspiration from Ricci's Paganini connection. "The opening scherzo section," wrote Ginastera,

> is directed to be played at a flying pace, in a mysterious, scarcely audible whisper. In the middle, themes from Paganini's Caprices appear briefly, "as if the shadow of this great violinist were passing through the orchestra." … The concluding *Perpetuum mobile* section serves as an extended coda to the entire Concerto. The violin develops the perpetual motion in toccata form while the instruments of the orchestra describe irregular patterns, as if pursuing the soloist relentlessly with a persistent crescendo in dynamic and rhythmic power to the end.

Instrumentation: two flutes and piccolo, two oboes and English horn, two clarinets plus E-flat clarinet and bass clarinet, two bassoons and contrabassoon, four horns, three trumpets, three trombones, tuba, timpani, wind wood-chimes (small suspended canes of different lengths), temple blocks, crotales, triangles, bongos, snare drum, orchestra bells, guiro, reco-reco, woodblock, suspended cymbals, crash cymbals, timbales, bass drum, maracas, tambourine, claves, tam-tams, tom-toms, field drum, xylophone, marimba, harp, celesta, and strings, in addition to the solo violin.

— *J.M.K.*

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Concert Fantasy on Motifs from Bizet's Opera *Carmen* for Violin and Orchestra, Op. 25

Pablo de Sarasate

Pablo de Sarasate was a star violinist and composer from the late 19th and early 20th centuries, lionized by audiences, critics, and other violinists. His works revealed new possibilities for his instrument, especially his *Carmen* Fantasy, which seems to have been written from inside the violin.

Like many legendary violinists, Sarasate was a child prodigy. He was already playing at age five, and at eight he gave his first public performance, at La Coruña, impressing a wealthy patron, the Countess Espoz y Mina. She paid for his early studies in Madrid, and he was also supported by Queen Isabella II. When he was 12 his parents sent him to the Paris Conservatoire to study with Jean Delphin Alard. His journey to Paris was traumatic: his mother, who accompanied him, died suddenly at the border.

In Paris he studied composition and violin, winning the coveted Premier Prix as well as other honors. He then launched himself on an international concert tour that ran, almost continually, for three decades, wowing audiences in Europe, North and South America, South Africa, and Asia. On arriving in New York in 1870, he wrote his adoptive mother:

> I performed yesterday in front of the American public in the enormous Steinway Hall, and I was greeted by applause from more than 2,000 people. All this happened so quickly; life here is so fast paced that it feels like a dream.

He never married, but — like the 19th-century piano virtuoso and composer Franz Liszt — had legions of fanatical female fans. He was in constant demand as a soloist, and was also a dedicated chamber music player, especially proficient in the Brahms quartets.

Because of his singular popularity and because Sarasate never abandoned his roots, he is often credited with laying the groundwork for the European taste for all things Spanish, exemplified by the Debussy and Ravel works also heard on this program, as well as Georges Bizet's *Carmen*, the opera that went from being a flop to becoming a beloved repertory opera. His home base continued to be Paris, where he commissioned James McNeill Whistler to decorate his apartment. Whistler's portrait of Sarasate, *Arrangement in Black*, became the iconic image of the violinist.

The 19th century was a golden age of superstar violinists, including Joseph

In Short

Born: March 10, 1844, in Pamplona, Spain

Died: September 20, 1908, in Biarritz, France

Work composed: 1881, probably in Paris

World premiere: April 17, 1881, by the Sociedad de Conciertos de Madrid, at Madrid's Teatro Real, Mariano Vasquez, conductor, with the composer as soloist

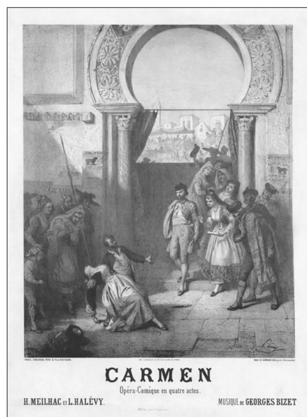
New York Philharmonic premiere: August 2, 1937, George Raudenbush, conductor, Jascha Heifetz, soloist, at Lewisohn Stadium, in Upper Manhattan

Most recent New York Philharmonic performance: July 23, 2003, Roberto Minczuk, conductor, Julia Fischer, soloist, at Colorado's Bravo! Vail Music Festival

Estimated duration: ca. 12 minutes

Joachim, Antonio Bazzini, Eugene Ysaÿe, and Niccolò Paganini, the latter an electrifying performer who made the strings "quiver with pleasure," in the words of novelist Leigh Hunt. Sarasate staked out his own territory. He had a unique coolness and serenity along with a "frictionless" bow style; his playing sounded effortless, casual, the epitome of the salon style — qualities documented in nine astonishing and currently available recordings from 1904. Sarasate enjoyed the friendship and admiration of numerous composers who dedicated pieces to him, including Bruch's Violin Concerto No. 2 and *Scottish Fantasy;* Lalo's Concerto in F minor and *Symphonie espagnole;* Wieniawski's Violin Concerto No. 2; Joachim's Variations for Violin and Orchestra; Saint-Saëns's Concertos Nos. 1 and 3 and Introduction and *Rondo Capriccioso;* and Dvořák's *Mazurek.* Sarasate added these pieces to his repertoire and played them to great acclaim.

The Work at a Glance



From top: The poster for the 1875 premiere of Bizet's Carmen; *an undated photograph of Sarasate*

The *Carmen* Fantasy is an ingenious reinvention of scenes from the opera by Bizet, with the violin taking on the role of singer, seducer, and dancer. It is also an anthology of virtuosic violin techniques and effects — Sarasate wrote it for himself, after all — that are both sizzling and subtle.

Rather than moving through the story chronologically, Sarasate chooses moments from various scenes and pieces them together to create a self-contained mini-concerto. It opens with an exuberant orchestral introduction that thrusts us immediately into the seductive world of the opera, featuring castanets and haunting modal harmonies.

In the opening *Aragonaise,* culled from the *entr'acte* to Act Four, the violin plays slithery glissandos and droll left and right hand pizzicatos (plucks). The *Habanera,* from Act One, opens soulfully in the basses, after which the soloist struts, plucks, and "sings," interrupted by orchestral outbursts, racing ahead suddenly at the end in a forecast of the finale. Also taken from Act One is the *Lento assai,* full of magical harmonics and whispered string music, followed by the *Seguidilla,* Bizet's Franco-Spanish version of the starker Flamenco *seguidilla.* The finale, from the opening of Act Two, is one of the most viscerally exciting movements in the violin repertoire. The soloist races at increasingly dangerous speed over a transparently scored orchestra in a near-delirious frenzy. Hilary Hahn, the soloist in these performances, has called it "a romp. It is so fun to play. My arms are so tired by then, and the orchestra's exuberance and oomph just pick me up. It's like riding a wave to the end."

In his capacity as cultural critic George Bernard Shaw wrote of “the fine quietude with which he performs miraculous technical feats,” and the Hungarian violinist-teacher Carl Flesch wrote of his “aesthetic moderation, euphony, and technical perfection … he represented a completely new type of violinist.” This combination of cool refinement and “miraculous” virtuosity is reflected in Sarasate’s compositions, such as the *Carmen* Fantasy and the equally popular *Zigeunerweisen* and Spanish Dances — pieces that are hyper-virtuosic but never overheated or bombastic.

By the time he died, of bronchitis, in 1908, Sarasate could look back on a hugely successful career, but he scoffed at being proclaimed a genius: “A genius! For 37 years I’ve practiced 14 hours a day, and now they call me a genius!” Genius or not, he was a household name, especially in London, prompting Arthur Conan Doyle to work a Sarasate concert into one of his Sherlock Holmes stories (“The Red-Headed League”). Wherever he went, as Shaw put it, his brilliance as both performer and composer “left criticism gasping miles behind him.”

Instrumentation: two flutes (one doubling piccolo), two oboes, two clarinets, two bassoons, four horns, two cornets, three trombones, timpani, tambourine, harp, and strings, in addition to the solo violin.

— Jack Sullivan, professor of English at Rider University and Westminster Choir College and the author of New World Symphonies *and* Hitchcock’s Music, *both from Yale University Press*

Ibéria, from *Images for Orchestra*

Claude Debussy

Claude Debussy's *Images for Orchestra* underwent a protracted and difficult gestation that extended across seven years. In 1905 the composer conceived of the *Rondes de printemps* and *Ibéria* as pieces for two pianos, settings he would never realize. By the time *Gigues* was finished, in 1912, the earlier two pieces had already been premiered in concerts ten days apart in the winter of 1910. It seems clear that Debussy considered these works a cycle only in the loosest sense, and he never objected to their being performed as stand-alone works even after the complete set was played, in 1913. The three-movement *Ibéria* is probably heard as often individually as it is in its larger context.

At its premiere *Ibéria* received a powerful ovation, and the conductor, Gabriel Pierné, was about to repeat it when a counter-demonstration broke out in the audience. The critics were similarly divided.

Among its admirers, however, was the great Spanish composer Manuel de Falla, who wrote in an article he contributed to an all-Debussy issue of the *Revue musicale*, published in December 1920:

> Without knowing Spain, or without having set foot on Spanish ground, Claude Debussy has written Spanish music. He came to know Spain through books and paintings, through songs and dances performed by native Spaniards.

He continued, replete with admiration:

> Debussy, who did not actually know Spain, spontaneously — I dare say unconsciously — created such Spanish music as was to arouse the envy of many who knew Spain only too well. He crossed the border only once, and stayed for a few hours in San Sebastián to attend a bullfight: little enough experience indeed. However, he kept a vivid memory of the unique light in the bullring, of the astonishing contrast between the side flooded by sunlight and the one in shadow. Perhaps an evocation of that afternoon passed on Spain's threshold is to be found in *Morning of a Festival Day* from *Ibéria.*

Debussy's Spain, then, was a romantic Spain born mostly of fantasy. It was an imaginary journey the composer would take often and that would inspire a number of compositions. Some proclaimed their Spanish connection explicitly, such as his piano piece *La Soirée dans Grenade* (from *Estampes*), while others reflected it more subtly, through the specific sounds of their music, as when the string players

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In Short

Born: August 22, 1862, in St. Germain-en-Laye, just outside Paris, France

Died: March 25, 1918, in Paris

Work composed: begun in 1905 as a piano duet; completed as an orchestral work on December 25, 1908

World premiere: February 20, 1910, by the Orchestre des Concerts Colonne in Paris, Gabriel Pierné, conductor

New York Philharmonic premiere: January 3, 1911, Gustav Mahler, conductor

Most recent New York Philharmonic performance: October 18, 2011, Lorin Maazel, conductor

Estimated duration: ca. 20 minutes

mimic the strumming of a guitar in the second movement of his String Quartet.

Falla applauded Debussy's achievements as revelatory for Spanish composers themselves. "While the Spanish composer to a large extent uses in his music the authentic popular material," Falla wrote,

> the French master avoids them and creates a music of his own, borrowing only the essence of its fundamental elements. There is still another interesting fact regarding the particular texture of Debussy's music. In Andalusia they are produced on the guitar in the most spontaneous way. It is curious that Spanish composers have neglected, even despised as barbaric, those effects, or they have adapted them to the old musical procedures. Debussy has taught the way to use them.

Ibéria is the most imposing of Debussy's imaginary "postcards from Spain," occupying three full movements for a colorfully constituted orchestra, themselves the central group of the composer's symphonic triptych *Images.* (Although Debussy titled the set only *Images*, it is commonly referred to as *Images for Orchestra* to distinguish it from his two earlier sets of *Images for piano.*) The three *Images for Orchestra* drew on national music from different lands — the first part, *Gigues*, evokes English folk dance; the third, *Rondes de printemps*, portrays an Italian May Day celebration — and as a whole they occupied him for some eight years. He began *Ibéria* in 1905 and by the following July reported to his publisher that he expected to complete it by the next week. Two and a half years later he finally did finish it, and by that time what he had envisioned as a work for piano duet had grown into a score for full orchestra.

"It is useless to ask me for anecdotes about this work," Debussy protested to the exasperated program annotator charged with producing materials to accompany the premiere of *Ibéria*, in 1910. "There is no story

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In the Composer's Words

Debussy may have insisted that *Ibéria* was not based on any plot or program, but in a letter to his colleague André Caplet, written six days after the work's premiere, he revealed just how specific his imagery was:

> You can't imagine how naturally the transition works between *Perfumes of the Night* and *Morning of a Festival Day.* It sounds as though it's improvised. … The way it comes to life, with people and things waking up … . There's a man selling watermelons and urchins whistling: I see them all quite clearly.

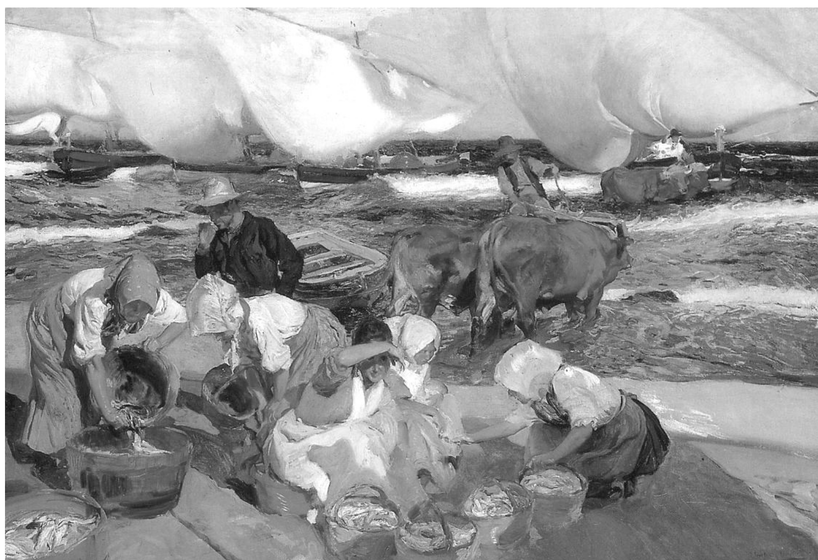
Debussy, in 1908

attached to it, and I depend on the music alone to arouse the interest of the public." Even if *Ibéria* has no extramusical plot, the scenes it evokes are nonetheless specific. The first movement is a street scene, its brilliant light thrown into greater relief by the shadowy contrast heard midway. Mystery pervades the night air in the second movement. And the third, which follows without pause, vividly portrays a festival.

Instrumentation: three flutes (one doubling piccolo) and piccolo, two oboes and English horn, three clarinets, three bassoons and contrabassoon, four horns, three trumpets, three trombones, tuba, timpani, tambourine, castanets, snare drum, xylophone, chimes, two harps, celesta, and strings.

— J.M.K.

Sources and Inspirations



Sorolla's Beach at Valencia or Afternoon Sun, *1908*

The three pieces of Debussy's *Images* evoke three different cultures: *Gigues* points to England, with its use of the Northumbrian folk song "The Keel Row," and *Rondes du printemps* draws on two French folk songs, "Nous n'irons plus au bois," and "Do, l'enfant, do." *Ibéria* contains no specific national musical references to Spain, but a Spanish feeling can surely be felt throughout it, so much so that it could surprise a listener to learn that Debussy had not spent significant time in that country. The Spanish composer Manuel de Falla inferred that his French colleague had learned the sights, sounds, scents, and sense of Spain through the art created by Spaniards, such as Joaquín Sorolla y Bastida (1863–1923).

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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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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

Juanjo Mena began his conducting career in his native Spain as artistic director of the Bilbao Symphony Orchestra in 1999. His uncommon talent was soon recognized internationally, leading to appointments as principal guest conductor of the Bergen Philharmonic and chief guest conductor of the Orchestra del Teatro Carlo Felice in Genoa. In 2011 he was named chief conductor of the BBC Philharmonic, which he led for seven seasons, taking the orchestra on tours of Europe and Asia and conducting annual televised concerts at the Royal Albert Hall as part of the BBC Proms. May 2023 marked Juanjo Mena's final performances as principal conductor of the Cincinnati May Festival, the longest-running choral festival in North America, concluding his pivotal six-year tenure at the organization, during which he expanded the commissioning of new works and put the community at the heart of the festival.

A sought-after guest conductor, Mena has led Europe's top ensembles, including the Berlin Philharmonic, Bavarian Radio Symphony Orchestra, Leipzig Gewandhaus Orchestra, London Philharmonic, Oslo Philharmonic, Rotterdam Philharmonic, Danish National Symphony Orchestra, Swedish Radio Symphony Orchestra, Orchestre National de France, Orchestra Filarmonica della Scala, Tonhalle Orchester Zürich, Bamberg Symphony Orchestra, and the Dresden Philharmonic. He also appears regularly with all the major orchestras in his native Spain.

Following his North American debut with the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra in 2004, he has conducted the Chicago, Boston, Pittsburgh, National, Cincinnati, Detroit, Atlanta, Montreal, and Toronto symphony orchestras; The Cleveland, Philadelphia, and Minnesota Orchestras; and the New York and Los Angeles Philharmonic orchestras. In Asia, he is a regular guest conductor at Tokyo's NHK Symphony Orchestra.

In the 2023–24 season Juanjo Mena makes two return visits to New York, including with the New York Philharmonic. Further season highlights include projects with the Barcelona, Montreal, Detroit, and Pittsburgh symphony orchestras as well as the BBC Philharmonic, Gürzenich Orchestra, and Spanish National Orchestra.

Juanjo Mena studied conducting with Sergiu Celibidache following his musical education at the Madrid Royal Conservatory, where he was mentored by Carmelo Bernaola and Enrique García Asensio. In 2016 Mena was awarded the Spanish National Music Award. He lives with his family in his native Basque Country.

Three-time Grammy Award–winning violinist **Hilary Hahn** melds expressive musicality and technical expertise with a repertoire guided by artistic curiosity. In the 2023–24 season she serves as the New York Philharmonic's Mary and James G. Wallach Artist-in-Residence, performing works by Prokofiev, Ginastera, and Sarasate; giving an all-Bach recital; and appearing in a

Kravis Nightcap event she curated. She is also in her third season as the Chicago Symphony Orchestra's first artist-in-residence, visiting artist at The Juilliard School, and curating artist of the Dortmund Festival.

This season Hahn performs concertos by Mozart, Mendelssohn, Sibelius, Brahms, Tchaikovsky, Prokofiev, Korngold, and Ginastera, as well as Sarasate's *Carmen* Fantasy. Her small-ensemble performances include solo recitals, recitals with pianist Iveta Apkalna and cellist Seth Parker Woods, and chamber concerts in Dortmund and Chicago.

Hahn has related to her fans naturally from the start of her career, committing to signings after concerts and maintaining a collection of fan art. Her *Bring Your Own Baby* concerts create a welcoming environment for parents of infants to share their enjoyment of classical music with their children. Her social media initiative #100daysofpractice has transformed practice into a community-building celebration of artistic development, with almost one million posts from fellow performers and students.

Hilary Hahn is a prolific recording artist and commissioner of new works; her 23 feature recordings — on the Decca, Deutsche Grammophon, and Sony labels — have all opened in the top ten of the *Billboard* charts, and three have won Grammys. She is the recipient of numerous honors. Most recently, she was named *Musical America's* 2023 Artist of the Year, delivered the keynote speech of the Women in Classical Music Symposium, and received the 2021 Herbert von Karajan Award and the Glasshütte Original Music Festival Award, which she donated to the music education nonprofit Project 440.

Jaap van Zweden and the New York Philharmonic

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 through performances with Principal players as concerto soloists, and 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 Seoul Philharmonic and will assume that role at Orchestre Philharmonique de Radio France in 2026, having recently concluded his 12-year tenure at the Hong Kong Philharmonic. 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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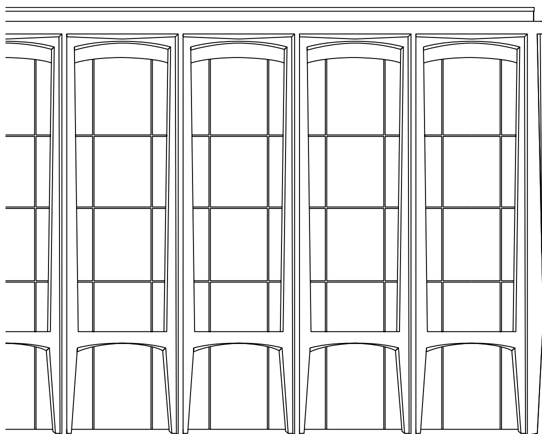

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New York Philharmonic Guide

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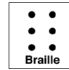

David Geffen Hall

All gender **restrooms** with accessible stalls are in the Karen and Richard LeFrak Lobby. Accessible men's, women's, and companion restrooms are available on all levels. Infant changing tables are in all restrooms.

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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.

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For Your Safety

For the latest on the **New York Philharmonic's health and safety guidelines** visit nyphil.org/safety.

Fire exits indicated by a red light and the sign nearest to the seat you occupy are the shortest routes to the street. In the event of fire or other emergency, do not run — walk to that exit.

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Automated external defibrillators (AEDs) and **First Aid kits** are available if needed during an emergency.