NEW YORK PHILHARMONIC

GUSTAVO DUDAMEL
THE TANG MUSIC & ARTISTIC DIRECTOR DESIGNATE

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

2025–26 Season Sponsored by Leni and Peter May

Wednesday, May 27, 2026, 7:30 p.m.
Donor Rehearsal at 9:45 a.m.‡

Thursday, May 28, 2026, 7:30 p.m.

Friday, May 29, 2026, 7:30 p.m.

Saturday, May 30, 2026, 7:30 p.m.

Elim Chan, Conductor
Carter Brey, Cello
The Fan Fox and Leslie R. Samuels Chair

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

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New York Philharmonic
Elim Chan, Conductor
Carter Brey, Cello
The Fan Fox and Leslie R. Samuels Chair

May 27–30, 2026
17,342nd–17,345th Concerts

Noriko KOIDE
(b. 1982)

Swaddling Silk and Gossamer Rain
(2022; New York Premiere)

SAINT-SAËNS
(1835–1921)

Cello Concerto No. 1 in A minor, Op. 33
(1872)
Allegro non troppo
Allegretto con moto
Tempo primo

(played without pause)

CARTER BREY

Intermission

PROKOFIEV
(1891–1953)

Selections from *Zolushka (Cinderella),* Opp. 87 and 107 (1940–44)
Introduction
Veil Dance
The Sisters Dress for the Ball
Quarrel
Cinderella's Dream of the Ball
The Beggar Fairy
Cinderella's Arrival at the Ball
Grand Waltz
Fruits and Refreshing Drinks
Cinderella's Waltz
Midnight
The Morning After the Ball
Slow Waltz
Amoroso

Elim Chan's appearances are made possible with generous support from **The Claudette Sorel Fund.**

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

In consideration of the performers and audience, please silence your devices, and take photos and video only during applause.

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Mindy Kaufman

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Pascual Martínez Forteza
The Honey M. Kurtz Family Chair

Barret Ham

E-FLAT CLARINET

Benjamin Adler

BASS CLARINET

Barret Ham

(Continued)

Instruments made possible, in part, by **The Richard S. and Karen LeFrak Endowment Fund.**

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

Steinway is the Official Piano of the New York Philharmonic and David Geffen Hall.

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The New York Philharmonic uses the revolving seating method for section string players who are listed alphabetically in the roster.

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Notes on the Program

Swaddling Silk and Gossamer Rain

Noriko Koide

Noriko Koide's *Swaddling Silk and Gossamer Rain* challenges preconceived notions of symphonic music by harnessing the expressive capabilities of the orchestra through unusually innovative orchestration. While it is a tour de force of color and sound, it communicates intimately, drawing the audience in to reflect on the most profound and poignant aspects of the human experience.

A diverse concatenation of influences has shaped Koide's singular compositional voice, including Javanese gamelan, Western classical, and avant-garde pop. She was educated at Tokyo College of Music, where her teachers included Toshio Hosokawa, Shin-ichiro Ikebe, and Akira Fukada. She continued her studies in Europe, at Amsterdam Conservatory and the Royal Conservatoire The Hague, with Wim Henerickx, Martjin Padding, and Yannis Kyriakides. Her interest in gamelan, which began while she was a student in Japan, led her to Surakarta, Indonesia, where she gained expertise in its performance practice.

Gamelan — a traditional Indonesian music performed on metal percussive instruments including gongs, chimes, and metallophones — famously revolutionized Claude Debussy's conception of music after he first heard it at the 1889 Exhibition Universelle in Paris. It would take time for Koide to discover how her varied influences would blend, as she later explained to her publisher: "Western music language and gamelan music language often have the exact opposite direction." In a *Gramophone* podcast interview she added,

> Western music is not my mother tongue, right? I'm a Japanese composer. So, it's like I have two different OS installed inside me — Javanese music and Western music, and sometimes pop music.

Each of these genres is equally important to Koide's creative output, and they are so deeply absorbed that their influence manifests in unexpected ways. Koide describes her compositional style as comprising "delicate timbre and subtle resonance." Her works — which have been performed by the BBC Symphony Orchestra, New Japan Philharmonic, and Nieuw Ensemble, among many others — invite audiences to listen attentively, and richly reward the time invested. In a world of constant stimuli, Koide's music embraces silence. Debussy remarked, "The music is not in the notes, but in the silence between them," a sentiment that

In Short

Born: April 26, 1982, in Chiba, Japan

Resides: in Tokyo

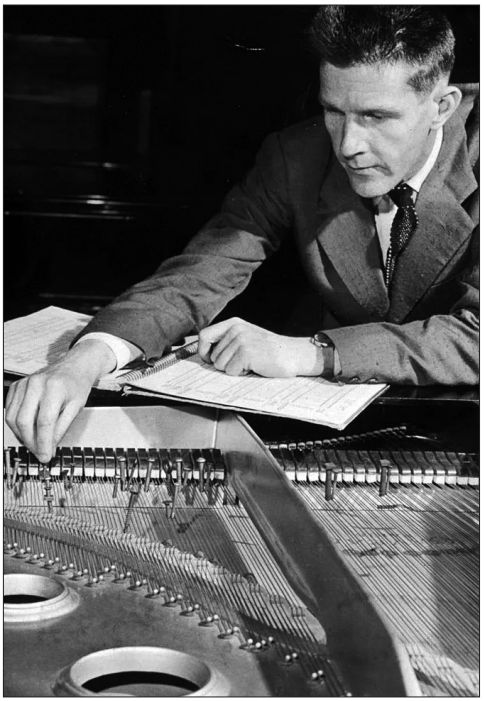
Work composed: 2022; commissioned by BBC Radio 3 for the BBC Proms Japan 2022

World premiere: October 29, 2022, by the BBC Symphony Orchestra, Dalia Stasevska, conductor, in The Symphony Hall, Osaka, Japan

New York Philharmonic premiere: these performances, which mark the work's New York Premiere

Estimated duration: ca. 12 minutes

Extended Techniques



From top: Henry Cowell in 1927; John Cage with a prepared piano in 1949

For centuries composers have experimented with innovative ways to create a wide range of effects. In the Renaissance, a period dominated by vocal music, composers often employed novel devices to heighten emotion or animate the action described in the lyrics. This practice was later applied to the instrumental music of the Baroque era, as artists explored how they could mimic a variety of sounds. For example, in the 17th century composer and violinist Heinrich Biber evoked the noise of marching into battle by having basses place paper between their strings to imitate the buzz of snare drums, while cellos aggressively plucked their strings to simulate lobbing "canons" at each other. Before he became famous, the virtuoso violinist Niccolò Paganini entertained audiences by producing donkey brays, birdsong, and sighs from his violin. In the early 20th century American composer Henry Cowell wrote music for the piano that required performers to reach inside and play directly on the strings. John Cage later built on that idea with the "prepared piano," with scores that included directions to insert screws, wool, weather stripping, and other materials between the strings to make distinctly percussive music. Developments in woodwind writing included key clicks that added a new rhythmic dimension and deploying forced overblown breath to expand sounds beyond pitched tones. These imaginative approaches are called extended techniques because they reach beyond the conventional ways of making music, giving composers access to a broader palette of sonorities and timbres through which they can express ideas.

resonates with the Japanese concept of *ma*, in which sound and silence share a symbiotic partnership.

Swaddling Silk and Gossamer Rain evokes the mood of *Timeless*, the novel by Japanese author Mariko Asabuki, whose works meditate on the nature of time and memory, and employ water as a symbol of impermanence. *Timeless* centers on two characters, Umi and Ami, who have different reasons to fear becoming emotionally entangled in a romantic relationship yet agree to marry for the sole purpose of having a child. In the *Gramophone* interview Koide explained that after reading the book she wanted to express its unique atmosphere while highlighting "key words" in the text that carry important meaning, including "rain" and "silkworms," animals swaddled in their cocoons until their silken threads are harvested, thus existing in a state near death.

To create the work's atmosphere, Koide developed a series of extended techniques, or unconventional ways of producing sound. The first three are deployed in the opening moments, after the initial chime-like chord from the vibraphone. Here, the violins are instructed to move the end of a pencil back and forth between two strings to make rattling sounds. Simultaneously, the low strings make "only subtle frictional noise" while using the left hand to gently mute the open strings as the right hand brushes. A particularly evocative technique is "rain lips": the musicians are asked to open and close their lips rapidly, "as if to say 'mi, mi, mi, mi ...' but without voicing," to evoke the patter of rain. You will also hear "half breathing," in which the woodwinds and brass shift their mouthpieces to the side, producing a "breathy non-pitched sound," and "tremolo pizzicato like mandolin" in the strings.

Throughout the piece these techniques and others are layered to magical effect. Glissandos slip and slide, and notes bend up or down. Fragments of achingly beautiful melody, or disturbingly harsh dissonance, drift past. The middle section is dominated by an extended harp and piano duet. Sprinkled in occasionally is a chord, reminiscent of the opening, from the vibraphone. Toward the end comes a burst of warmth, like a cherished recollection, followed by a wash of gentle waves, rippling and fading into silence.

Instrumentation: three flutes, two oboes, two clarinets and bass clarinet, two bassoons, four horns, two trumpets, three trombones, suspended cymbals, vibraphone, marimba, tam-tam, harp, piano, and strings.

— Kathryn Bacasmot is an independent writer about music.

Cello Concerto No. 1 in A minor, Op. 33

Camille Saint-Saëns

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

Camille Saint-Saëns started piano lessons at the age of two-and-a-half and embarked on composition and organ instruction at seven, by which time he was already performing in public. He made his formal recital debut in 1846 in a program at Paris's Salle Pleyel that included piano concertos by Mozart and Beethoven — with a cadenza he had written for the Mozart — plus solo pieces by Bach and Handel. "We have attended the debut of a charming child of ten who in a concert given chez M. Pleyel has made known to us one of the most formidable talents of the day," reported the magazine *L'Illustration*. "He knows everything, but lacks inexperience," quipped Hector Berlioz.

Saint-Saëns was born when Beethoven was still being mourned and died when Stravinsky's *Rite of Spring* was being assimilated into the repertoire. Some viewed him as a curious relic of antiquity, to be sure, but those with open ears could hardly overlook that his style continued to develop practically until the day he died, at the age of 86, while on vacation in Algiers; he was in the midst of a series of woodwind sonatas that are marked by neoclassical transparency.

By the time he composed his Cello Concerto No. 1, in November 1872, at the age of 37, Saint-Saëns was highly regarded in French musical circles but had not yet written the works for which he is most famous today. His first opera had been produced that June (*La Princesse jaune*, unveiled to little acclaim) and he had set aside another opera that seemed to be leading nowhere (*Samson et Dalila*, which he would pick up again with refreshed insights in 1873). His first two symphonies and his unnumbered symphony *Urbs Roma* were behind him — all are broadly ignored today — and his famous Third Symphony lay far in the future. Of his symphonic poems, he had achieved only

In Short

Born: October 9, 1835, in Paris, France

Died: December 16, 1921, in Algiers, Algeria

Work composed: November 1872

World premiere: January 19, 1873, at the Société des Concerts du Conservatoire de Paris, Édouard Deldevez, conductor, Auguste Tolbecque, the work's dedicatee, soloist

New York Philharmonic premiere: January 15, 1890, with Leopold Damrosch conducting the New York Symphony (which merged with the New York Philharmonic in 1928), Adolphe Fischer, soloist

Estimated duration: ca. 18 minutes

Le Rouet d'Omphale (Omphale's Spinning Wheel); his *Danse Macabre* would emerge in 1874. He was a bit farther along in the genre of the concerto, having completed the first three of his five piano concertos and two of his three violin concertos, as well as the popular Introduction and Rondo Capriccioso for Violin and Orchestra. (His Second Cello Concerto would follow in 1902.) With colleague Romain Bussine he had co-founded the Société Nationale de Musique, established to counter the French predilection for vocal over instrumental music and to promote music by French composers in their own land, which at the time was more respectful of Germanic scores.

The Saint-Saëns biographer Stephen Studd suggests that the composer's sudden interest in the cello — this concerto was immediately preceded by a sonata for the instrument — resulted from his mourning a recently departed great-aunt. "His feeling for the cello," writes Studd, "with its deep, dark tone and capacity for both dignified and impassioned utterance, was now rekindled by the melancholy that set in after his bereavement." While dependably fervid, this concerto is elegiac only in a short Tchaikovsky-esque interlude in the finale. Still, the second movement — a minuet introduced by strings, muted and staccato — may underscore his relative's connection to the music of an earlier time.

Instrumentation: two flutes, two oboes, two clarinets, two bassoons, two horns, two trumpets, timpani, and strings, in addition to the solo cello.

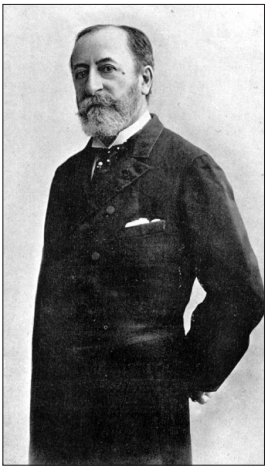
— James M. Keller is a former New York Philharmonic Program Annotator and the author of Chamber Music: A Listener's Guide *(Oxford University Press). An earlier version of this note appeared in programs of the San Francisco Symphony and is used with permission.*

Views and Reviews

Immediately following the premiere of Saint-Saëns's Cello Concerto No. 1, the *Revue et gazette musicale de Paris* reported:

> If Mr. Saint-Saëns should decide to continue in this vein, which is consistent with his violin concerto, the Trio in F, and other works of lesser significance, he is certain to recover many of the votes that he lost with his all-too-obvious divergence from classicism and the tendencies in a number of his recent works. … We must say that the Cello Concerto seems to us to be a beautiful and good work of excellent sentiment and perfect cohesiveness, and as usual the form is of greatest interest.

It should be clarified that this is in reality a *Concertstück,* since the three relatively short movements run together. The orchestra plays such a major role that it gives the work symphonic character, a tendency present in every concerto of any significance since Beethoven.



Saint-Saëns, ca. 1880

Selections from *Zolushka (Cinderella),* Opp. 87 and 107

Sergei Prokofiev

The year 1932 serves as a convenient dividing line in Sergei Prokofiev's career. For the 17 preceding years he had traveled widely — to London, Paris, Rome, Tokyo, San Francisco, New York, and Chicago, among other musical centers — benefiting from his exposure to international musical trends and influencing other composers in return. By 1932 his steps began to lead homeward to what in the meantime had become the Soviet Union. At first Prokofiev maintained his principal residence in Paris, but his visits to Russia increased in frequency until the spring of 1936, when he settled in Moscow for good. His artistic experiments continued in the Soviet Union, but they did so in the shadow of his more politically acceptable efforts in Socialist-Realist style. There is no question that great and important masterpieces emerged in this second half of his career, and his mature assurance of style practically guarantees compositional refinement in these later works. Nonetheless, it is in his pre-Soviet oeuvre that Prokofiev-the-experimenter makes his most dependable appearances.

Cinderella is a magnificent ballet score, although it does not break new ground; in this regard it is typical of his output from his post-Parisian career. One would surely not guess from listening to this charmed music that it was a wartime composition, but it was indeed, occupying the composer from 1940 to 1944 and receiving its premiere on November 21, 1945 — six and a half months following the declaration of victory in Europe, two and a half months after the signing of the Japanese surrender, and the day after the beginning of the Nuremberg war crimes trials.

Prokofiev was rather an old hand at composing ballets by the time he got to *Cinderella.* He had created his first in 1914–15, the colorful *Ala and Lolly* (later reworked into the orchestral *Scythian Suite*), and had continued with notable works such as *Chout* (*The Buffoon,* premiered in 1921), *Le pas d'acier* (*The Steel Step,* 1927), *The Prodigal Son* (1929), and the much-loved *Romeo and Juliet* (unveiled in Czechoslovakia in 1938). Following *Romeo and Juliet's* 1940 Russian premiere, the Kirov Theatre in Leningrad (now the Mariinsky Theatre in St. Petersburg) approached Prokofiev about writing a ballet to feature the eminent prima ballerina Galina Ulanova. Nikolai Volkov devised the scenario, based on Charles Perrault's telling of the classic story; his decision not to use the emblematically Russian version of the tale by Alexander Afanasiev probably had to do with the latter's more violent overtones.

World War II delayed the completion of this ballet. Various war-related commissions kept intervening, and Prokofiev didn't finish orchestrating *Cinderella* until the summer of 1944. The Kirov Theatre was having war-related problems of

In Short

Born: April 23, 1891, in Sontsovka, in the Ekaterinoslav district of Ukraine

Died: March 5, 1953, in Moscow

Work composed: 1940–44

World premiere: November 21, 1945, at the Bolshoi Theatre, Moscow, Yuri Fayer, conductor

New York Philharmonic premiere: May 7, 1987, Andrew Davis, conductor

Estimated duration: ca. 42 minutes

its own, its operations having been displaced 1,000 miles east to Perm for much of the war (as was Prokofiev himself). Because of delays on the company's end, the work was premiered instead at Moscow's Bolshoi Theatre, with Olga Lepeshinskaya instead of Ulanova in the title role (although Ulanova assumed the part in the course of the run).

Cinderella was a huge success both in Moscow and in its eventual Kirov performances, and it was one of the five works cited when Prokofiev was awarded a Stalin State Prize shortly thereafter. In 1946 the composer assembled music from the ballet into three separate orchestral suites. The music performed in this concert contains three selections from the *Cinderella* Suite No. 1, the most popular of the three, with the rest from the original complete ballet score.

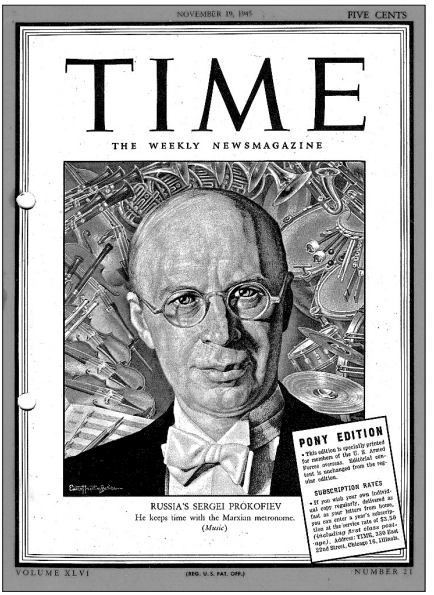
Instrumentation: two flutes and piccolo, two oboes and English horn, two clarinets and bass clarinet, two bassoons and contrabassoon, four horns, three trumpets, three trombones, tuba, timpani, xylophone, orchestra bells, cymbals, bass drum, tam-tam, tambourine, wood block, triangle, chime (or bell plate), harp, piano, celesta, and strings.

— J.M.K.

In the Composer's Words

In an extended preface to the score, Prokofiev explained:

> What I wished to express above all in the music of *Cinderella* was the poetic love of Cinderella and the Prince, the birth and flowering of that love, the obstacles in its path, and finally the dream fulfilled.
>
> The fairy story offered a number of fascinating problems for the composer — the atmosphere of magic surrounding the fairy godmother, [etc.]. … The producers of the ballet, however, wanted the fairy tale to serve merely as a setting for the portrayal of flesh-and-blood human beings with human passions and failings. …
>
> Apart from the dramatic structure I was anxious to make the ballet as "danceable" as possible, with a variety of dances that would weave themselves into the pattern of the story, and give the dancers ample opportunity to display their art. I wrote *Cinderella* in the traditions of the old classical ballet: it has pas de deux, adagios, gavottes, several waltzes, a pavane, passepied, bourrée, mazurka, and galop. Each character has his or her variation.


NOVEMBER 19, 1945 FIVE CENTS

TIME

THE WEEKLY NEWSMAGAZINE

PONY EDITION

SUBSCRIPTION RATES

RUSSIA'S SERGEI PROKOFIEV
He keeps time with the Marxian metronome.
(*Music*)

VOLUME XLVI (REG. U. S. PAT. OFF.) NUMBER 21

Prokofiev on the cover of TIME *magazine, 1945*

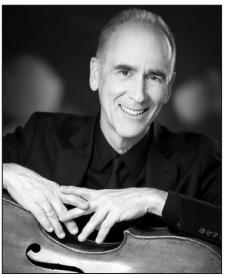
The Artists

Conductor **Elim Chan** embodies the spirit of contemporary orchestral leadership with her precision and zeal. She served as principal conductor of the Antwerp Symphony Orchestra, 2019–24, and principal guest conductor of the Royal Scottish National Orchestra, 2018–23.

Chan conducted the First Night of the Proms, with the BBC Symphony Orchestra, in 2024, and in 2025 conducted the Last Night. In the summer of 2025 she also reunited with the Boston Symphony Orchestra, Los Angeles Philharmonic, and The Cleveland Orchestra, toured with Amsterdam's Concertgebouw Orchestra Young, and made her Musikfest Berlin debut with the Staatskapelle Berlin.

Chan's 2025–26 season highlights include returns to Amsterdam's Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra, New York Philharmonic, Los Angeles Philharmonic, The Cleveland Orchestra, London Symphony Orchestra, Toronto Symphony Orchestra, ORF Radio-Symphonieorchester, Staatskapelle Dresden, Luxembourg Philharmonic, and Orchestre de Paris. She also makes her Philadelphia Orchestra subscription debut and debuts with the Munich Philharmonic, Orchester der Oper Zürich, Bamberg Symphony, and Orchestre symphonique de Montréal. She has conducted the San Francisco, Chicago, Pittsburgh, and Vienna symphony orchestras, London's Philharmonia Orchestra, Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra, Vienna Symphony, and Deutsches Symphonie-Orchester Berlin.

Born in Hong Kong, Elim Chan studied at Smith College in Massachusetts and the University of Michigan. In 2014 she became the first female winner of the Donatella Flick Conducting Competition and spent 2015–16 as assistant conductor at the London Symphony Orchestra. The following season she joined the Dudamel Fellowship program of the Los Angeles Philharmonic. She owes much to the support and encouragement of Bernard Haitink, whose master classes she attended in Lucerne in 2015.



Carter Brey was appointed Principal Cello, The Fan Fox and Leslie R. Samuels Chair, of the New York Philharmonic in 1996. He made his official Philharmonic solo debut in 1997 performing Tchaikovsky's *Rococo* Variations led by then Music Director Kurt Masur. Brey has since appeared as soloist almost every season, and was featured during *The Bach Variations*, when he gave two performances of the cycle of all six of Bach's cello suites. Winner of the Gregor Piatigorsky Memorial Prize, Avery Fisher Career Grant, Young Concert Artists' Michaels Award, and other honors, he was the first musician to win the Arts Council of America's Performing Arts Prize. Brey is a member of the New York Philharmonic String Quartet, established in the 2016–17 season, and has appeared regularly with the Tokyo and Emerson string quartets, The Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center, and at festivals such as Spoleto (in the United States and Italy) and the Santa Fe and La Jolla Chamber Music festivals. He and pianist Christopher O'Riley recorded *Le Grand Tango: Music of Latin America*, released on Helicon Records. Brey was educated at the Peabody Institute, where he studied with Laurence Lesser and Stephen Kates, and at Yale University, where he studied with Aldo Parisot and was a Wardwell Fellow and a Houpt Scholar. His violoncello is a rare J.B. Guadagnini made in Milan in 1754.

Gustavo Dudamel and the New York Philharmonic

Gustavo Dudamel is committed to creating a better world through music. His rise, from humble beginnings in Venezuela to an unparalleled career of artistic and social achievements, offers living proof that culture can bring meaning to the life of an individual and greater harmony to the world at large. Currently Music & Artistic Director of the Los Angeles Philharmonic and Venezuela's Simón Bolívar Symphony Orchestra, in 2026 he becomes the New York Philharmonic's Oscar L. Tang and H.M. Agnes Hsu-Tang Music & Artistic Director, continuing a legacy that includes Mahler, Toscanini, and Bernstein.

Throughout 2025 Dudamel celebrated El Sistema's 50th anniversary, honoring the global impact of José Antonio Abreu's visionary education program and acknowledging the vital importance of arts education. Celebrations with the Simón Bolívar Symphony Orchestra included a European tour to Paris, London, Luxembourg, Berlin, Munich, Brussels, and Madrid; a London Residency that included opening for Coldplay at Wembley Stadium and performing at the Royal Festival Hall; and recordings on the Platoon label that included the Grammy-nominated recording of Ravel's *Boléro*.

Dudamel maintains longstanding artistic relationships with the world's leading orchestras, returning regularly for appearances and international tours with the Berlin Philharmonic and the Vienna Philharmonic.

The **New York Philharmonic** is a cultural leader in New York City, the United States, and the world, connecting with millions through live concerts at home and abroad, as well as broadcasts, recordings, and education programs. Gustavo Dudamel is the Oscar L. Tang and H.M. Agnes Hsu-Tang Music & Artistic Director Designate in the 2025–26 season before becoming Music & Artistic Director in September 2026. The Orchestra has commissioned and / or premiered important works including Dvořák's *New World* Symphony and Pulitzer Prize winners by John Adams and Tania León, the latter made possible through *Project 19*, the world's largest women-only commissioning project. The Philharmonic has released more than 2,000 recordings since 1917, and can be heard on the nationally syndicated radio program *The New York Philharmonic This Week*. Its history is available free online through the New York Philharmonic Shelby White & Leon Levy Digital Archives. Annual free concerts are complemented with the Phil for All: Ticket Access Program, education projects including Young People's Concerts and the New York Philharmonic Very Young Composers Program, and free discussions. Founded in 1842, the New York Philharmonic — which has appeared in 437 cities in 63 countries — is the oldest symphony orchestra in the US and one of the oldest in the world; past Music Directors include Bernstein, Toscanini, and Mahler.

MILESTONES: Jubilees and Retirees

Once a year the New York Philharmonic family — active and retired Musicians, Board Members, and Staff — gather at David Geffen Hall for a concert and post-concert reception to honor their colleagues who are retiring or marking milestone anniversaries.

This year's celebration, on May 29, honors flute and solo piccolo player Mindy Kaufman, who is retiring after 47 years of service; Principal Cello Carter Brey, retiring after 30 years; bass player Randall Butler, who is being saluted on his 50th anniversary; and Assistant Concertmaster Michelle Kim-Solman, Principal Flute Robert Langevin, and clarinetist Pascual Martínez-Forteza, all marking their 25th anniversaries. Learn more about them below.

Looking Back with Mindy Kaufman

By Edward Lovett

Just as the piccolo stands out in an orchestra's sound, piccolo player Mindy Kaufman, The Edward and Priscilla Pilcher Chair, reflects on her standout career at the New York Philharmonic.

BERT BIAL / NEW YORK PHILHARMONIC ARCHIVES

Mindy Kaufman bowing after her star turn in Vivaldi's Concerto for Piccolo, Strings, and Continuo, with then Music Director Zubin Mehta looking on, May 12, 1981, at a concert that was part of Festival Internacional Cervantino at Teatro Juarez, Guanajuato, Mexico

The name piccolo comes from the Italian word for small, as in *piccolo flauto*, small flute. But there's nothing small about Mindy Kaufman's talent, achievements, or tenure at the New York Philharmonic, from which she is retiring after 47 years.

This was clear from the beginning. Mindy's love of music began not with children's music or accessible classical pieces but with her LPs at home, including the *Stravinsky Conducts Stravinsky* album. "I played it over and over," she recalls. "I loved the multitonalities and uneven meters."

Her schooling, in White Plains, New York, epitomizes how good public music education can launch young musicians with talent and drive. "I was fortunate that my school system offered music instruction at an early age," she says. She began studying piano at age seven, then flute in school at age eight, and her "fantastic" teachers, and a robust cohort of talented and ambitious peers, sustained a

CHRIS LEE

plethora of ensembles and performance opportunities that challenged and honed her skills.

Preferring not to go to conservatory in New York City, Mindy went upstate, to the Eastman School of Music. In her junior year she took her first audition, for the Rochester Philharmonic Orchestra. She got the job, and worked there until she joined the New York Philharmonic in May 1979. At that time, there were only 12 other women out of the 104 musicians in the Orchestra. Now, more than half are women.

"Growing up, I was very aware of the Philharmonic," she says. She attended Rug Concerts during high school. "I loved listening to [legendary then Principal Flute] Julius Baker, and was lucky to play with him for four years. The way he could just float above the orchestra influenced my concept of playing." His example also helped her play softly or loudly, and to project in a way that was beautiful without sounding forced.

Mindy Kaufman describes the unique role of piccolo player as "very difficult. To make it sound delicate is the most difficult thing. I have tried to make it into a voice." Her mastery is appreciated by her fellow players. Principal Harp Nancy Allen says, "Mindy combines intense focus with humor and humility. No matter how many notes are on her music stand, Mindy can do it, the more challenging the better. She aces piccolo trills in Beethoven's Fifth, spins out beautiful flute phrases in Debussy's *Syrinx,* and shines in Sousa solos — all with effortless grace and pizzazz. Mindy is a priceless and endearing 'character' of the New York Philharmonic. A few of us named her 'Mindy, La Terreur' because she's so dedicated to perfection it's almost frightening!"

Mindy says it was "inspiring to work with such brilliant Music Directors; every one had different gifts." Zubin Mehta was Music Director when she joined. "He was very charismatic," she says, recalling fondly his love of "grand-scale, big pieces," and concerts to match: Pavarotti in Central Park, the Acropolis in Athens.

Kurt Masur "was especially good in choral works, like Mendelssohn's *Elijah* and Bach's Passions." He would hold the long, soft piccolo note at the end of Prokofiev's *Romeo and Juliet* so long that Orchestra Librarian Lawrence Tarlow would tell Mindy how many seconds it was when she walked offstage — once it was 28 seconds. "Don't tell me how long it was!" Mindy told Larry. "I'm not sure I can hold it that long, and it's better not to know!"

Lorin Maazel? "So brilliant. And his beat made it easy to take a breath and come in at exactly the right time." She appreciated Alan Gilbert's programming of more contemporary music, which required extended techniques. "You never stop learning," she says, "that's what keeps things fresh." Jaap van Zweden excelled in the German Romantic repertoire.

As for Gustavo Dudamel, "he's such a natural, so easy to play with" thanks to his "very clear conducting." And she has loved playing the Latin and Latin-inflected music Dudamel has selected, like Gonzalo Grau's *Odisea:* Concerto for Venezuelan Cuatro, in last season's Parks concerts.

Add in her other highlights — the Danny Kaye *Live From Lincoln Center* (you can still find it on YouTube); playing for stellar guest conductors like Leonard Bernstein, Klaus Tennstedt, and Rafael Kubelík; tours of Europe, India, South America, and North Korea — and Mindy concludes, "being in this orchestra has changed my life. I experienced things I never would in a normal job."

While she will miss it, Mindy looks forward to birding, photography, travel, and other personal and musical projects. Her colleagues, in turn, will miss her. Principal Flute Robert Langevin says, "Mindy has always been willing to jump in to replace an ailing colleague; she may be one of the few players in the orchestra who has sat in every chair in her section. Her dedication has been without fail. She will be seriously missed. I wish her all the best in her retirement from the Philharmonic."

"How lucky I am to have known her from Day 1 of my New York career!" says Associate Principal Oboe Sherry Sylar. "From the first she was encouraging, helpful, kind, and genuine. Mindy Kaufman and the piccolo are synonymous with excellence. In so many pieces I wait to hear her sweet tone rising brilliantly above the orchestra as if it were icing on a beautiful cake. For example, the coda to Dvořák's *Carnival Overture* or the moment of technical perfection in the *Scherzo* of Tchaikovsky's Fourth Symphony that lasts two seconds, on which she must have practiced hundreds of hours. She has held the hearts of many conductors; Bernstein and Mehta both loved their 'Mindela!' She has been a beautifully distinct and positive voice, both on and offstage, and a treasured friend and colleague."

— Edward Lovett is Associate Director, Publications, at the New York Philharmonic.

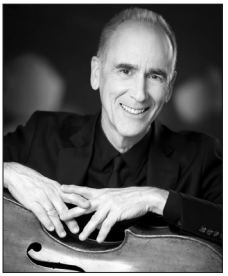
Mindy Kaufman at the Philharmonic

The breadth of Mindy Kaufman's contributions during her New York Philharmonic tenure can begin to be perceived through a few numbers:

Mindy Kaufman (back row, fourth from left) seen with the first women members of the New York Philharmonic and then Music Director Zubin Mehta, ca. 1981

- Performed under **300-plus** conductors
- Played **132** works with Philharmonic colleagues in **106** chamber concerts in all five New York City boroughs and in six other cities, including Buenos Aires, Florence, and Shanghai
- Appeared as concerto soloist in **26** concerts in David Geffen Hall (and its previous incarnation as Avery Fisher Hall) and on tour

Carter Brey, *Principal Cello, The Fan Fox and Leslie R. Samuels Chair, Retiring After 30 Years*



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Carter Brey's biography is full of impressive achievements: top prize at the Rostropovich International Cello Competition, plus the Gregor Piatigorsky Memorial Prize, Avery Fisher Career Grant, Young Concert Artists' Michaels Award, and the inaugural Arts Council of America's Performing Arts Prize. There's all the statistics of his Philharmonic tenure in the article on page 10, plus his cycle of Bach's Suites for Unaccompanied Cello during a Philharmonic festival. It all began in Westchester County public schools.

When Carter was around eight years old, homebound due to a childhood illness, he recalls, "My dad came home from the city and produced, with a flourish, an LP with Britten's *Young Person's Guide to the Orchestra,* and I fell in love with the sounds of the strings. In fourth grade I demanded that I start violin lessons, and was handed a school rental instrument. On my walk home I was unable to resist opening the case to smell the rosin." At 13 he switched to cello.

"We had wonderful, gifted teachers who saw my talent and encouraged me," Carter says. "I will always be immensely grateful for their support. A teacher in my high school introduced me to great chamber music — Haydn and Mozart string quartets, Schubert's String Quintet in C major — and I was blown away by the music's beauty and emotional breadth. I just knew I had to have it in my life, all the time." It wasn't until age 16 that he began private study, doing yard work to pay for his lessons.

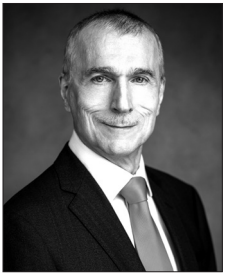
Carter received his bachelor's in music from Peabody and began pursuing a master's at Yale. When a flood of professional chamber music engagements interfered with his studies, he turned to the registrar for advice. With a smile, he encouraged Carter to focus on his concerts.

Thus began an active solo and chamber music career, albeit one with a lot of travel. On the birth of his second child he decided to audition for the Philharmonic's Principal Cello position, which would allow him to be with his family — his wife, an Italian-born author; their daughter, who today works at a book-to-film literary agency; and their son, who, after serving in the Marine Corps, now teaches strength and conditioning at Le Moyne College.

Carter discovered more than stability at the Philharmonic. He found a second family. "The camaraderie and shared experience with these marvelously gifted humans is so special," he reflects. "And it's healthy to be part of something that is larger than oneself. When I'm playing in the Orchestra, I feel invested in Chris Martin's beautiful trumpet solos, the amazing virtuosity of the violins in Schumann's Second Symphony, my cello section's unworldly ability to phrase flexibly without any input from me."

A lightning round on his Philharmonic Music Directors. Masur: "Ours was a very avuncular relationship, and we only were able to clash because I felt comfortable with him." Maazel: "He was a brilliant man, and the more complex the music, the more his brilliance would show through." Gilbert: "I highly respected his humility in front of complex scores, and he brought such an intellectual curiosity to his programming." Van Zweden: "He has a wonderful string player's approach to phrasing, allowing him to quickly achieve the phrasing he wants by suggesting bowings to us." Dudamel: "He makes music-making fun and stylish, and effortlessly brings people along his musical journey because you want to be there alongside this guy."

Randall Butler, *Bass, 50th Anniversary*



BJORN BOLINDER

In his 50 years with the New York Philharmonic, Randall Butler has played in thousands of concerts and toured four continents. He has worked under six Music Directors, beginning with Pierre Boulez, who hired him. Yet for all that experience, his mind stays fixed on the work before him. "The most important concert," he says, "is the one I'm playing."

That habit of attention has shaped a musical life that has followed an unusual course. Unlike most orchestra players, Randall did not study at a major conservatory. He studied privately with David Perlman, former principal bass of The Cleveland Orchestra. He did not attend college. From ages 19 to 22, he was up at six in the morning and at his instrument within minutes, practicing six to eight hours every day.

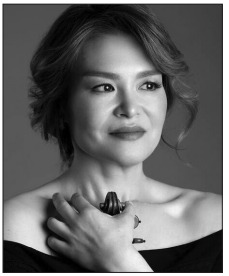
Music and philosophy have long run side by side in his life. Before he took his first music lessons, Randall was already asking the kinds of questions he would later recognize as being philosophical. As a teenager developing his bass technique, he was also reading Plato, Descartes, Spinoza, and Kant. When he moved to New York at 22 to join the Philharmonic, he made a commitment on his very first day: he would study philosophy formally, at a university. He later entered Columbia University's graduate program, hurrying to seminars between rehearsals and concerts, and eventually completed a PhD in philosophy of mind while playing full-time in the Philharmonic.

Randall speaks of both music and philosophy with wonder and modesty. "Philosophy is vast," he says. "It runs from logic to ethics to metaphysics. The world of music is also vast, from medieval chant to whatever was written last week. I work in a small but important part of it, and my knowledge of music is rather limited."

Over five decades, Randall has seen many changes in the Orchestra. The most important, in his view, has been that more women have joined the ensemble. "This has helped the Orchestra tremendously," he says. "It was always a great orchestra, but it has become even better. After all these years, I'm still deeply impressed by the artistry of the musicians around me."

Randall's view of himself has changed, too. "As a young man, I imagined my achievements were my own. That idea has worn away. What I am now, and what I was then, is a product of all my interactions with other human beings." He continues, "I have gratitude for my family, my teachers, and my philosophy professors." Above all else, he thinks with deep gratitude of his late wife, Deborah Martinsen, and their son, Rory.

Michelle Kim-Solman, *Assistant Concertmaster, The William Petschek Family Chair, 25th Anniversary*



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The whirlwind of Michelle Kim-Solman's 25 years with the New York Philharmonic — which, she marvels, "went by super quick" — mirrors how she arrived in the first place. She'd been fully settled in Southern California when she received a call from Sheryl Staples — Principal Associate Concertmaster, and Michelle's future stand partner — urging her to audition. "I've known Sheryl since I was 11, and trust everything she says. She's like my sister." There was just one complication: Michelle was due to get married in her native South Korea within a week of the audition. Not knowing even what to pack, she left sunny California for blizzardy New York, where she auditioned for then Music Director Kurt Masur in what she calls "the most hair-raising experience ever!" Despite it all, she handled herself with aplomb and was appointed Assistant Concertmaster — her first job with a major orchestra.

Though time has flown, Michelle's perspective has changed: "I'm more relaxed now. I try to keep things light and help incoming musicians feel as comfortable as possible." She's also gained a profound insight: growing up, she'd heard that certain orchestras were known for a particular sound or feel, but wondered how — given ever-changing rosters, different music directors — that could be. "Now I see that traditions and musical ideas are passed down from our colleagues. What you inherit stays with you."

As she fondly remembers the past 25 years, Michelle continues to embrace the present — including her solo concerto appearance this month — with a sense of gratitude: "This is a Ferrari of an orchestra, and I'm just grateful to be along for the ride — especially with the unwavering support of my husband, Al, and our children."

Robert Langevin, *Principal Flute, The Lila Acheson Wallace Chair, 25th Anniversary*

CHRIS LEE

Robert Langevin grew up in Sherbrooke, Québec, then a city of around 100,000, the son of a high school music teacher, band director, and trumpet player. Robert was drawn to the saxophone, but his father pointed out that as there were no flute players in the area, he would have more opportunities to play in the local orchestra if he chose that instrument. Robert is happy with the decision: "Flute parts are usually pretty interesting; you get to play beautiful and interesting lines."

He started lessons at age 12, and joined an amateur orchestra at 14. He recalls his first program: "That was the first time I heard a Beethoven symphony. At home I listened to the recording while looking at the score my father brought me, and I thought, this is incredible!" Robert later attended the Montreal Conservatory of Music and won the Prix d'Europe, which led him to Freiburg's Staatliche Hochschule für Musik. After serving in the Montreal Symphony Orchestra he became principal flute of the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra. When the New York Philharmonic invited him to play as guest principal for a week, then Music Director Kurt Masur asked him to audition formally. That fall he was offered the seat he has held for 25 years.

Throughout his career Robert has also taught, these days at The Juilliard School, Manhattan School of Music, and Orford International Summer Festival. "My students are very motivated; they energize you," he says, but adds: "I would not want to teach full-time. That's what I did when we didn't play during the pandemic. I enjoy the playing — there's nothing like it."

Pascual Martínez Forteza, *Clarinet, The Honey M. Kurtz Family Chair, 25th Anniversary*

CHRIS LEE

When Pascual Martínez Forteza joined the New York Philharmonic, he was 28, the youngest member of the clarinet section, which was then led by the legendary Stanley Drucker, who taught him a lot during the eight years they overlapped. "Now," Pascual says, "I'm the oldest, and I'm the one telling the stories. It went so fast — I can't believe it."

"It's a very different orchestra now," he says. "More than half of the members from when I joined have retired. And the world has changed a lot." Pascual welcomes the Orchestra's "less tough, more inclusive environment."

Pascual calls this moment "an incredible time in the history of the Orchestra." He remembers vividly Gustavo Dudamel's Philharmonic debut: "He was only 26, or something, and I thought, 'Wow, this guy should be our Music Director.'" Pascual loves Gustavo's "it's all music" openness to other genres, and looks forward to playing new repertoire and venues. He also loves the new David Geffen Hall, which has "one of the best acoustics in the world." As for his section, "we have a lot of fun. I think we have a fantastic section, and will for many years."

What *hasn't* changed over Pascual's 25 years? "I feel so lucky to be in this orchestra," he says. "Coming from a small island in another country [Mallorca, Spain], it was a dream, and I'm still enjoying every second." And he can't wait for what's to come: "I think every musician in the Orchestra is super-excited about the future."

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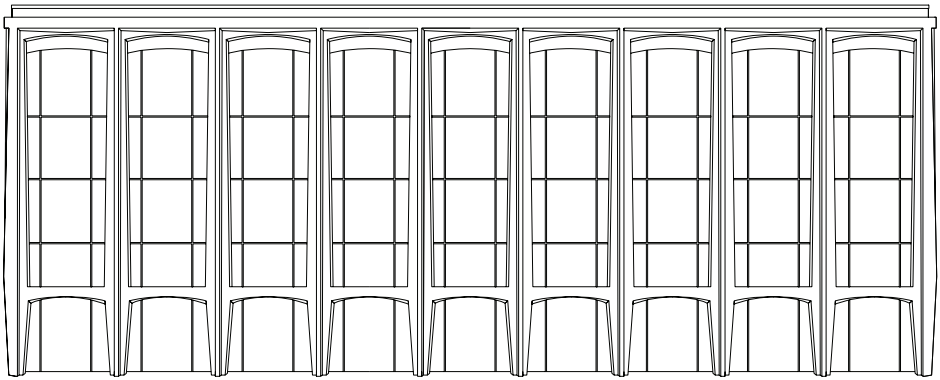

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