

# Season 2015-2016

**Thursday, April 14, at 8:00**

**Friday, April 15, at 2:00**

**Saturday, April 16, at 8:00**

## The Philadelphia Orchestra

**Yannick Nézet-Séguin** Conductor

**Don S. Liuzzi** Timpani

**Ricardo Morales** Clarinet

**Bernstein** Three Dance Variations from *Fancy Free*

I. Gallop

II. Waltz

III. Danzón

**Wright** *Resounding Drums*, for timpani and orchestra

I. Leviathan

II. The Siege of Vienna

III. Singing Drums

*World premiere—Commissioned by The Philadelphia Orchestra*

### Intermission

**Leshnoff** Clarinet Concerto ("Nekudim")

I. Slow

II. ♩: Chesed, Fast

III. Slow

*World premiere—Commissioned by The Philadelphia Orchestra and the Santa Barbara Symphony*

**Prokofiev** Symphony No. 7 in C-sharp minor, Op. 131

I. Moderato

II. Allegretto—Allegro

III. Andante espressivo

IV. Vivace

This program runs approximately 1 hour, 55 minutes.

These performances are made possible in part by the **Presser Foundation**.

The April 14 concert is sponsored by

**Dr. and Mrs. John Glick.**

The April 16 concert is dedicated to the memory of

**Raymond H. Welsh.**

Philadelphia Orchestra concerts are broadcast on WRTI 90.1 FM on Sunday afternoons at 1 PM. Visit [WRTI.org](http://WRTI.org) to listen live or for more details.

# The Philadelphia Orchestra

Jessica Griffin



The Philadelphia Orchestra is one of the preeminent orchestras in the world, renowned for its distinctive sound, desired for its keen ability to capture the hearts and imaginations of audiences, and admired for a legacy of imagination and innovation on and off the concert stage. The Orchestra is transforming its rich tradition of achievement, sustaining the highest level of artistic quality, but also challenging—and exceeding—that level by creating powerful musical experiences for audiences at home and around the world.

Music Director Yannick Nézet-Séguin's highly collaborative style, deeply-rooted musical curiosity, and boundless enthusiasm, paired with a fresh approach to orchestral programming, have been heralded by critics and audiences alike since his inaugural season in 2012. Under his leadership the Orchestra returned to recording, with two celebrated CDs on the prestigious Deutsche Grammophon label, continuing its history of recording success. The

Orchestra also reaches thousands of listeners on the radio with weekly Sunday afternoon broadcasts on WRTI-FM.

Philadelphia is home and the Orchestra nurtures an important relationship with patrons who support the main season at the Kimmel Center, and also with those who enjoy the Orchestra's area performances at the Mann Center, Penn's Landing, and other cultural, civic, and learning venues. The Orchestra maintains a strong commitment to collaborations with cultural and community organizations on a regional and national level.

Through concerts, tours, residencies, presentations, and recordings, the Orchestra is a global ambassador for Philadelphia and for the United States. Having been the first American orchestra to perform in China, in 1973 at the request of President Nixon, The Philadelphia Orchestra today boasts a new partnership with the National Centre for the Performing Arts in Beijing. The ensemble annually performs at

Carnegie Hall and the Kennedy Center while also enjoying summer residencies in Saratoga Springs, New York, and Vail, Colorado.

The Philadelphia Orchestra serves as a catalyst for cultural activity across Philadelphia's many communities, as it builds an offstage presence as strong as its onstage one. The Orchestra's award-winning Collaborative Learning initiatives engage over 50,000 students, families, and community members through programs such as PlayINs, side-by-sides, PopUp concerts, free Neighborhood Concerts, School Concerts, and residency work in Philadelphia and abroad. The Orchestra's musicians, in their own dedicated roles as teachers, coaches, and mentors, serve a key role in growing young musician talent and a love of classical music, nurturing and celebrating the wealth of musicianship in the Philadelphia region. For more information on The Philadelphia Orchestra, please visit [www.philorch.org](http://www.philorch.org).

# Music Director

Chris Lee



Music Director **Yannick Nézet-Séguin**, who holds the Walter and Leonore Annenberg Chair, is an inspired leader of The Philadelphia Orchestra, and he has renewed his commitment to the ensemble through the 2021-22 season. His highly collaborative style, deeply rooted musical curiosity, and boundless enthusiasm, paired with a fresh approach to orchestral programming, have been heralded by critics and audiences alike. The *New York Times* has called him "phenomenal," adding that under his baton, "the ensemble, famous for its glowing strings and homogenous richness, has never sounded better." Highlights of his fourth season include a year-long exploration of works that exemplify the famous Philadelphia Sound, including Mahler's Symphony No. 8 and other pieces premiered by the Orchestra; a Music of Vienna Festival; and the continuation of a commissioning project for principal players.

Yannick has established himself as a musical leader of the highest caliber and one of the most thrilling talents of his generation. He has been music director of the Rotterdam Philharmonic since 2008 and artistic director and principal conductor of Montreal's Orchestre Métropolitain since 2000. He also continues to enjoy a close relationship with the London Philharmonic, of which he was principal guest conductor. He has made wildly successful appearances with the world's most revered ensembles, and he has conducted critically acclaimed performances at many of the leading opera houses.

Yannick Nézet-Séguin and Deutsche Grammophon (DG) enjoy a long-term collaboration. Under his leadership The Philadelphia Orchestra returned to recording with two CDs on that label; the second, Rachmaninoff's Rhapsody on a Theme of Paganini with pianist Daniil Trifonov, was released in August 2015. He continues fruitful recording relationships with the Rotterdam Philharmonic on DG, EMI Classics, and BIS Records; the London Philharmonic and Choir for the LPO label; and the Orchestre Métropolitain for ATMA Classique.

A native of Montreal, Yannick studied at that city's Conservatory of Music and continued lessons with renowned conductor Carlo Maria Giulini and with Joseph Flummerfelt at Westminster Choir College. Among Yannick's honors are appointments as Companion of the Order of Canada and Officer of the National Order of Quebec, a Royal Philharmonic Society Award, Canada's National Arts Centre Award, the Prix Denise-Pelletier, Musical America's 2016 Artist of the Year, and honorary doctorates from the University of Quebec, the Curtis Institute of Music, and Westminster Choir College.

To read Yannick's full bio, please visit [www.philorch.org/conductor](http://www.philorch.org/conductor).

# Soloist

Jessica Griffin



Principal Timpani **Don Liuzzi**, who holds the Dwight V. Dowley Chair, was born and raised in Weymouth, MA, and completed high school in Philadelphia at the Franklin Learning Center. He earned his Bachelor's of Music degree from the University of Michigan and his Master's of Music from Temple University. Before joining The Philadelphia Orchestra in 1989, he was a member of the Pittsburgh Symphony. He made his Philadelphia solo debut at the Mann Center in 1996 and his subscription solo debut in 1998.

Mr. Liuzzi can be heard on several Decca releases with the Saito Kinen Festival Orchestra, with which he has been a guest timpanist for five seasons. A former percussionist with the Network for New Music, he has recorded chamber works for the CRI, Crystal, and Albany labels. His percussion solo and chamber release, *Movement in Time* (Equilibrium), is volume I of the Philadelphia Percussion Project. Volume II, *Zones*, features Jennifer Higdon's *Zones* and his own work, *Seoul Spirit*. A participating musician in the documentary film *Music from the Inside Out*, he also served as coordinating producer and was integral in developing the accompanying middle school teaching curriculum. The film, which features The Philadelphia Orchestra, was re-released digitally on iTunes and is also available on Netflix. His other electronic media activity (under his company Beat the Drum Entertainment) has included two CDs with the DePue Brothers Band: *Weapons of Grass Construction* and *When It's Christmas Time*.

Mr. Liuzzi has given master classes throughout the world and has been a percussion and timpani coach at the National Orchestral Institute, the New World Symphony, the Pacific Music Festival, the Canton International Summer Music Academy, and the National Youth Orchestra USA, among others. He joined the Curtis Institute faculty in 1994 and has held faculty positions at Rowan University and guest faculty status at Indiana University of Pennsylvania and the Manhattan School of Music. He just completed 10 years as music director of the Philadelphia All City High School Orchestra, and is founding conductor of Curtis's 20-21 New Music Ensemble. Having consulted with Yamaha for over 15 years, he is now a Yamaha performing artist.

# Soloist



**Ricardo Morales** is one of the most sought after clarinetists of today. He joined The Philadelphia Orchestra as principal clarinet in 2003 and holds the Leslie Miller and Richard Worley Chair. Prior to his Philadelphia appointment he was principal clarinet of the Metropolitan Opera Orchestra, a position he assumed at the age of 21. He has performed as guest principal clarinet several times with the New York Philharmonic and the Chicago Symphony, and at the invitation of Simon Rattle performed as guest principal clarinet with the Berlin Philharmonic. He also performs as principal clarinet with the Saito Kinen Festival Orchestra, at the invitation of Seiji Ozawa.

A native of San Juan, Puerto Rico, Mr. Morales began lessons at the Escuela Libre de Musica along with his five siblings, who are all distinguished musicians. He continued his studies at the Cincinnati Conservatory of Music and Indiana University, where he received his Artist Diploma. He has been a featured soloist with the Metropolitan Opera Orchestra; the Chicago, Cincinnati, Indianapolis, and Flemish Radio symphonies; and the Seoul Philharmonic, among others. He made his solo debut with The Philadelphia Orchestra in 2004 and has since performed as soloist on numerous occasions. An active chamber musician, he has performed in the MET Chamber Ensemble series at Carnegie Hall's Weill Recital Hall; at the Santa Fe Chamber Music Festival, the Philadelphia Chamber Music Society, the Seattle Chamber Music Summer Festival, and the Saratoga Chamber Music Festival; on NBC's *The Today Show*; and with the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center. Mr. Morales is highly sought after for his recitals and master classes, which have taken him throughout North America and Europe. In addition he currently serves on the faculty of Temple University.

Mr. Morales's debut solo recording, *French Portraits*, is available on Boston Records. His recent recordings include performances with the Kalichstein-Laredo-Robinson Trio and with the Pacifica Quartet, which was nominated for a Latin Grammy Award. He has joined forces with master acoustician and instrument maker Morrie Backun to create MoBa, a company of top-of-the line clarinets and clarinet accessories, including mouthpieces, bells, and barrels.

# Framing the Program

## Parallel Events

**1944**

**Bernstein**

*Fancy Free*

**Music**

Barber

Symphony No. 2

**Literature**

Camus

*Caligula*

**Art**

Rivera

*The Rug Weaver*

**History**

D-Day landings  
in Normandy

**1952**

**Prokofiev**

Symphony  
No. 7

**Music**

Boulez

*Le Marteau sans  
maître*

**Literature**

Beckett

*Waiting for  
Godot*

**Art**

Pollock

*Number 12*

**History**

Elizabeth  
becomes queen

The high spirits of the ballet *Fancy Free*, which Leonard Bernstein composed at age 25 for choreographer and dancer Jerome Robbins, kicks off the concert today. The Three Dance Variations depict the contrasting characters of a trio of sailors on shore-leave in New York City and a dance contest in which each attempts to impress the local beauties. First comes a breathless gallop, next a sultry waltz, and finally a lively danzón.

Two world premieres are at the center of the program today, both Philadelphia Orchestra commissions for two of the ensemble's principal players. Timpanist Don Liuzzi inaugurates *Resounding Drums* by Maurice Wright, professor at Temple University's Boyer College of Music and Dance, complete with a recreation in sound of the 1529 Siege of Vienna by the Turks. After intermission clarinetist Ricardo Morales introduces a new Clarinet Concerto by Jonathan Leshnoff subtitled "Nekudim" (literally "points"), referring to markings underneath the vowels in the Hebrew language that indicate how consonants should sound. The composer explains "In a metaphysical context, the letters are lifeless 'bodies' that are animated with the 'soul' of a vowel. To me, a woodwind instrument—and the clarinet in particular—is a musical example of this concept."

The concert concludes with Sergei Prokofiev's Seventh Symphony, his last major work. Eugene Ormandy and The Philadelphians gave the American premiere of the Symphony in April 1953, a month after the composer's death.

# The Music

## Three Dance Variations from *Fancy Free*



Eileen Dunne

**Leonard Bernstein**  
**Born in Lawrence,**  
**Massachusetts, August 25,**  
**1918**  
**Died in New York City,**  
**October 14, 1990**

A decade before Leonard Bernstein's vibrant score to *On the Waterfront* broke new ground in film music, his *Fancy Free* had at least as much impact on modern ballet, and launched the young composer's career. In the fall of 1943 a 25-year-old dancer and choreographer by the name of Jerome Robbins approached Bernstein, his exact contemporary, to write a work that would capture the feel of New York City in wartime. The commission came from the city's Ballet Theatre (now the American Ballet Theatre), and the 30-minute piece was completed in early 1944. Bernstein described the scenario as follows:

From the moment the action begins, with the sound of a juke-box wailing behind the curtain, the ballet is strictly young wartime America, 1944. The curtain rises on a street corner, with a lamp-post, a side-street bar, and New York skyscrapers pricked out with a crazy pattern of lights, making a dizzying backdrop. Three sailors explode onto the stage; they are on twenty-four-hour leave in the city and on the prowl for girls. The tale of how they meet first one, then a second girl, and how they fight over them, lose them, and in the end take off after still a third, is the story of the ballet.

**A Seminal Moment** *Fancy Free* was an enormous hit at its premiere at the old Metropolitan Opera House on April 18, 1944, when the composer conducted and Robbins danced. As the very first ballet by the legendary Robbins, it had the rigor of the dancer's recent classical training but the verve of vaudeville—in short, "perfect American character ballet," as the critic of the *New York Herald Tribune* declared at its premiere. And it has subsequently been seen as a seminal moment in American dance. "*Fancy Free* ... like all Robbins works, opened a door," wrote Anna Kisselgoff in the *New York Times* shortly after Robbins's death in July 1998, at the age of 79. "It let me know at a very young age that ballet had a wide horizon and was not limited to a single type of theatrical experience."

But it was Bernstein's music that completed the formula, with its brilliant orchestration and its frankly jazz-inspired idiom, which he would later use to great advantage in *On the Town*—a show that can be considered an expansion of

*Fancy Free* was composed between 1943 and 1944.

Alexander Hilsberg conducted the first Philadelphia Orchestra performances of the *Three Dance Variations* from *Fancy Free*, on a special Pops concert in January 1952. The complete ballet music was performed on subscription in November 1998, with David Zinman on the podium.

The *Three Dance Variations* are scored for piccolo, two flutes, two oboes, two clarinets, two bassoons, four horns, three trumpets, three trombones, tuba, timpani, percussion (bass drum, cymbals, maracas, snare drum, triangle, wood block), piano, and strings.

Performance time is approximately seven minutes.

*Fancy Free* for Broadway—and in his biggest hit of all, *West Side Story*. (Both were also collaborations with Robbins.) As Tchaikovsky, Stravinsky, Copland (to whom *Fancy Free* owes an enormous debt) had discovered earlier, orchestral suites extracted from full ballets can give stage music another life in the concert hall. Bernstein conducted the premiere of the seven-movement suite from *Fancy Free* in Pittsburgh in January 1945 and one year later extracted the three dances we hear today (movement six) for performances with the New York City Symphony Orchestra.

**A Closer Look** Bernstein indicated that the song “Big Stuff” (for which he wrote the music and lyrics and which Billie Holiday recorded seven times) should be heard playing on a juke-box before the curtain raises; it is interrupted by the splashy opening chords of the orchestra as the three sailors enter. The sound of the bar piano serves as a sort of connective thread throughout the ballet. In the sections leading up to the three dance variations, there is a reflective “Scene at the Bar,” as the lonely boys ponder the prospect of a night on shore leave without anyone to share it with. With “Enter Two Girls” the courtship rituals begin, turning into a smoky “Pas de deux” between the two lead dancers. The “Competition Scene” sets up a kind of dance contest, in which the three sailors jockey for favor.

Each of the boys is represented in the **Dance Variations** we hear today. The first is a madcap **Gallop**, loud, percussive, and exciting. By contrast the second sailor dances a slower **Waltz**, although hardly a Viennese one, that even if more graceful and refined, remains tinged with jazz elements. The concluding **Danzón**, exhibiting an Afro-Cuban flavor, is the longest of the three and combines the rhythmic energy of the first dance with the more lyrical character of the second. This is the variation Robbins himself danced and in its use of Latin musical styles points to his future collaboration with Bernstein on *West Side Story*.

—Paul J. Horsley/Christopher H. Gibbs



# The Music

## *Resounding Drums*



**Maurice Wright**  
**Born in Front Royal,**  
**Virginia, October 17, 1949**  
**Now living in Wyncote,**  
**Pennsylvania**

Although he ended up as a composer, Maurice Wright began his musical life as a percussionist when, as a small child, he performed a solo on toy glockenspiel in a one-room schoolhouse in Buckton, Virginia. At the same time he also began to experiment with electricity, wiring up a battery-powered telephone that ran from the basement of the family's house to an old maple tree outside. Piano studies followed soon after, but he stopped his lessons when he started composing at the age of 10. Wright then took up the trombone. After his family moved to Florida, the teenage Wright continued studying the instrument. Picking up on his earlier interest in electronics, he tinkered with tape recorders, and learned FORTRAN, an early computer programming language.

Later, Wright studied at Duke University, graduating magna cum laude with distinction in music. He went on to receive his doctorate in 1988 from Columbia University, where he studied electronic music with Mario Davidovsky and Vladimir Ussachevsky, computer music with Charles Dodge, and instrumental composition with Chou Wen-Chung and Charles Wuorinen. Wright is currently the Laura H. Carnell Professor of Music Studies at Temple University's Boyer College of Music and Dance. He writes in all the major genres, including orchestral works, opera, and string-based chamber music. His compositions have been performed worldwide by the Boston Symphony, the Emerson String Quartet, the American Brass Quintet, and other renowned ensembles.

**Looking toward History** Ever since that first glockenspiel recital in grade school, percussion instruments have consistently figured in Wright's music. But when he was invited by The Philadelphia Orchestra's principal timpani, Don Liuzzi, to compose a timpani concerto, he felt he needed to better understand the history and musical potential of the modern timpani before embarking on the project. Though contemporary timpani concertos by William Kraft, Michael Daugherty, and Philip Glass (among others) have recently expanded the repertory, it remains an unusual concerto combination, with little in the way of precedent, expectation, or tradition. In the end, Wright's new concerto, *Resounding Drums*, draws in equal measure on the history

Wright composed *Resounding Drums* in 2015.

*These are the world premiere performances of the piece.*

*The score calls for solo timpani, piccolo, two flutes, two oboes, English horn, two clarinets, bass clarinet, two bassoons, contrabassoon, four horns, three trumpets, three trombones, tuba, percussion (anvil, bass drum, chimes [or bell plates], concert cymbals, field drum, flexatone, maracas, orchestra bells, ratchet, small bass drum, small cymbals, snare drum, suspended cymbal, tabor, tam-tam, tambourine, triangle, tubular bells, whip, xylophone), harp, and strings.*

*Performance time is approximately 21 minutes.*

of the timpani in Western orchestras and the ability of the modern pedal timpani to legitimately “sing” expressively.

Pitched drums were introduced into European music when Ottoman Janissary bands abandoned their instruments and supplies after the failed siege on Vienna in 1529. These tuned drums quickly made their way into European military bands, where they were used to reinforce the rhythms and underlying harmonies of trumpet parts. Timpani became a standard feature in Baroque ensembles, especially in works with a celebratory or military aspect to them. Wright honors this legacy with an epigraph to his score, quoting the opening lyrics from J.S. Bach’s *Cantata No. 214*—“Tönet, ihr Pauken! Erschallet, Trompeten! Klingende Saiten, erfüllet die Luft!” (Resound, ye drums! Ring out, ye trumpets! Resonant strings, fill the air!)—from which he also derived the concerto’s title.

**A Closer Look** The concerto’s first movement, **Leviathan**, functions as the slow movement, exploring the deep, quiet, melodic possibilities of the timpani. Inspired by the literary accounts of a great beast lurking in deep waters, it remains primarily in dark registers with restrained dynamics.

The second movement is a programmatic retelling, through musical quotation, of the Ottoman **Siege on Vienna**. It opens with the ringing of the Angelus, a traditional call to prayer and a symbol of good will. The chanting of the “De profundis,” a supplicatory psalm, suggests a crying out to God for deliverance as other percussion instruments mimic the sounds of cannonball fire. The attacking Turkish army is symbolized through the “Ceddin Deden,” a famous signature tune from the Turkish band tradition. Wright then quotes from a work by Arnold von Bruck, *Kapellmeister* to Emperor Ferdinand I in Vienna during the siege of 1529. Bruck’s four-part song, “Es ging ein Landsknecht über Feld,” represents here the swagger of the *Landsknechte*, the German mercenaries who helped defeat the Ottomans at Vienna. The two melodies, from opposing sides of the conflict, then struggle against each other until the siege is over.

The third movement (**Singing Drums**) is all about dance and play. Though the harmonies are structured through a serial rotation of all 12 chromatic pitches, the drum part is primarily a vehicle for the virtuosic display of its tuneful potential, including an extended solo cadenza before a final push to the powerful conclusion.

—Luke Howard

# The Music

## Clarinet Concerto (“Nekudim”)

Erica Adler Photography



**Jonathan Leshnoff**  
**Born in New Brunswick,**  
**New Jersey, September 8,**  
**1973**  
**Now living in Baltimore**

Jonathan Leshnoff's music combines arching lyricism with transparent textures, rhythmic dynamism, and sophisticated structural design. In recent years he has consistently been listed among the most frequently performed living composers in America: His works have been performed by more than 50 orchestras worldwide. The *Washington Post* has called Leshnoff, who is professor of music at Towson University in Baltimore, one of the “gifted young composers” of our time.

**An Affinity for Concertos** Leshnoff's catalog includes more than 50 works, including three symphonies, 10 concertos, four string quartets, and three oratorios. He has composed on commission from Carnegie Hall and from the orchestras of Philadelphia, Baltimore, Atlanta, Nashville, and Kansas City. Among the soloists he has written for are violinist Gil Shaham, guitarist Manuel Barrueco, pianist Orly Shaham, and Philadelphia Principal Flute Jeffrey Khaner. Naxos has released three discs of his works on its *American Classics* label, including recordings of his Violin Concerto (with Charles Wetherbee and the Baltimore Chamber Orchestra), the Symphony No. 1 (with Michael Stern and the IRIS Chamber Orchestra), and several chamber works.

In his many concertos Leshnoff has shown a special affinity for the medium of solo instrument with orchestra. “When I write a concerto,” he says, “I have to become the instrument. It's a double refraction: It has to go through me and then through the solo instrument.” He was thrilled to be able to write for the Philadelphia Orchestra's Principal Clarinet Ricardo Morales, whose lyricism he has long admired.

**A Closer Look** The Clarinet Concerto was commissioned by Yannick Nézet-Séguin and The Philadelphia Orchestra and co-commissioned by the Santa Barbara Symphony (Nir Kabaretti, music director). It is cast in three movements, with lush, pensive outer ones (both marked **Slow**) flanking a large central statement (**Chesed, Fast**) that is the heart and soul of the piece. At the outset of the opening movement, the soloist presents a yearning lyrical central theme that is to form a building-block for the piece, and which is reprised in the brief final

*Leshnoff's Clarinet Concerto was composed in 2015.*

*These are the world premiere performances of the work.*

*The piece is scored for solo clarinet, three flutes (III doubling piccolo), three oboes (III doubling English horn), three clarinets (III doubling bass clarinet, three bassoons (III doubling contrabassoon), four horns, three trumpets, three trombones, tuba, timpani, percussion (wood block), harp, piano, and strings.*

*The Concerto runs approximately 20 minutes in performance.*

movement. The second movement features passages of great rhythmic vitality juxtaposed with witty, jazz-like interpolations; it concludes with a free cadenza of virtuosic roulades that leads directly into the brief third movement. The finale (**Slow**) reprises the beginning of the opening movement, complete with a gentle series of restatements of the arching central theme. The composer has written the following about the Concerto:

This Concerto is subtitled "Nekudim" (literally "points"), a term that refers to the vowels in the Hebrew language, notated by lines and dots underneath the letter. The majority of the Hebrew letters are consonants, such as the letter "b." It is only the vowels that give the "b" vocal direction, such as "bee" or "bah," etc. In a metaphysical context, the letters are lifeless "bodies" that are animated with the "soul" of a vowel.

To me, a woodwind instrument—and the clarinet in particular—is a musical example of this concept. A string instrument is held outside the body of the player and the violinist uses his exterior limbs (hands) to make the instrument sound. But the clarinet is attached to the player's mouth—Ricardo is literally breathing life into the notes that I wrote. This is the concept of *Nekudim* illustrated in music. Knowing what a phenomenally sensitive musician Ricardo is, I trusted the long legato lines of the first and last movement, that require so much shaping and phrasing of each note, to his innate musicality. I am confident of him breathing in the "living soul" to the music.

Movement 2 is associated with the sixth letter of the Hebrew alphabet, ו, "vav," which refers to the attribute of *Chesed* in Jewish mystical thought. *Chesed* is associated with uninhibited giving, without regard to the merits of the recipient. The second movement is approximately 10 minutes of unrelenting motion. As I was writing, each time I contemplated a complete cadence, I found another way to continue. To me, this "continual continuation" represents the uninhibited giving of *Chesed*. The movement is fun and spirited, with a rhythmic dance of sorts in which woodblock and clarinet punctuate the end of each subsection.

—Paul J. Horsley

# The Music

## Symphony No. 7



**Sergei Prokofiev**  
**Born in Sontsova,**  
**Ukraine, April 23, 1891**  
**Died in Moscow, March 5,**  
**1953**

Sergei Prokofiev's long and winding road to his last major work, the Seventh Symphony, was arduous personally and professionally, as well as compositionally. After enjoying a privileged upbringing, moulded by parents eager to cultivate the glowing gifts of their only child, Prokofiev studied at the St. Petersburg Conservatory with leading Russian composers of the day, including Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov. He won early fame with challenging Modernist scores unlike what others were writing in Russia during the 1910s.

Then came the 1917 October Revolution. Like other prominent figures from similarly comfortable backgrounds, notably Igor Stravinsky and Sergei Rachmaninoff, Prokofiev quit Russia. He travelled through Siberia, stopped off in Tokyo, landed in San Francisco, and was in New York City by early September 1918. He lived in America, Paris, and other Western cities for nearly 20 years. In 1927 he returned for a visit to the Soviet Union and slowly began to spend an increasing amount of time in his transformed homeland. In the summer of 1936, with timing that today boggles the mind, he moved back permanently, together with his Spanish-American wife and their two young sons. He spent the rest of his life there, experiencing a roller-coaster ride of official favor juxtaposed with stinging condemnation. He died on March 5, 1953, the same day as Joseph Stalin.

**So Many Talents** Prokofiev was not only a brilliant composer, but also a marvelous pianist, a talented writer (his extensive dairies are fascinating), and an accomplished chess player. His compositional gifts were broad and found expression in many genres. To an extent quite unusual for a 20th-century composer, he succeeded magnificently with works for the stage, not only operas (including *The Love for Three Oranges*, *War and Peace*), but also great ballets (notably *Romeo and Juliet*), film scores (*Alexander Nevsky*, *Lieutenant Kijé*), and theater pieces (*Peter and the Wolf*). His piano and violin concertos remain key repertory works for the instruments.

Symphonies—another major proving ground for composers—caused him somewhat more trouble. He wrote his first, the charming “Classical,” in the summer of 1917, just

before leaving Russia. This brief work, which looks back to Haydn, remains a popular favorite but hardly represented a bold new symphonic statement. His next symphony was disappointingly received at its Paris premiere in 1925 under his great advocate, conductor Serge Koussevitzky. For his symphonies No. 3 (1928) and No. 4 (1929-30) Prokofiev recycled music he had previously written for opera (*The Fiery Angel*) and ballet (*The Prodigal Son*). He seemed to be struggling with the genre, which made all the more welcome the great success heralding his Fifth Symphony, which was premiered in January 1945 just as victory was in sight at the end of the Second World War. The work won international acclaim, landing the composer on the cover of *Time* magazine (as Shostakovich's Seventh Symphony had a few years earlier).

Soon after the triumph of the Fifth Prokofiev suffered what was likely a mild stroke and his remaining eight years were plagued with health and other problems. The biggest other problem came in February 1948, a few months after the premiere of his Sixth Symphony, when the Soviet authorities starkly condemned his music, along with that of Shostakovich and some other leading composers. More than ever, artists knew they had to please the state. Prokofiev celebrated his 60th birthday in April 1951, but health prevented him from attending a concert in his honor. (He listened by telephone.) Later that year he started to compose his final symphony, which we hear today, completing it in July 1952. He originally conceived it as a "Children's Symphony," which may account for some of its simplicity, innocence, and nostalgia. Samuil Samosud conducted its successful premiere that year on October 11 in an all-Prokofiev program, the last concert of his music the composer attended.

**A Closer Look** A brooding theme initiated by the violins opens the first movement (**Moderato**), which is repeated several times and combined with a rapid moving accompaniment. Horns and bassoons introduce a second theme and a third, a more playful one, is given to woodwinds with assistance from the glockenspiel and xylophone. David Fanning has pointed to the supernatural associations of this passage, specifically its similarities to moments in operas by Prokofiev's teacher Rimsky. In its episodic presentation of dances, the second movement (**Allegretto—Allegro**) reminds us of Prokofiev the great ballet composer. For the third movement (**Andante espressivo**) he called upon incidental music he had written earlier for a production of Pushkin's *Eugene Onegin*,

*Prokofiev composed his Seventh Symphony from 1951 to 1952.*

*The Philadelphia Orchestra and Eugene Ormandy gave the United States premiere of the work, in April 1953. The most recent performances were also under Ormandy's baton, in February 1978.*

*Ormandy and the Orchestra recorded the Symphony in 1953 for CBS.*

*The score calls for piccolo, two flutes, two oboes, English horn, two clarinets, bass clarinet, four horns, three trumpets, three trombones, tuba, timpani, percussion (bass drum, cymbals, glockenspiel, snare drum, tambourine, triangle, woodblocks, xylophone), harp, piano, and strings.*

*The Symphony runs approximately 30 minutes in performance.*

here a theme associated with the heroine Tatyana's passion for Onegin. The finale (**Vivace**) has a lively opening theme, includes a march, and brings back ideas from the opening movement.

The turbulent circumstances of Prokofiev's life, tossed as it was by the political winds, resulted in a fascinating coda to his career: the literal coda of this final Symphony. The work originally ended (as we hear on the concert today) with a subdued recall of melancholy music from the first movement, including recourse to the "supernatural" glockenspiel and xylophone. Yet despite the work's successful premiere, it was made clear to Prokofiev that if he wished for the Symphony to be awarded the lucrative Stalin Prize it would be best if he gave it a more upbeat, life-affirming ending, which he reluctantly did by bringing back the jolly opening theme of the finale. Samasud conducted the revised version on November 6, 1952. Four months later Stalin and Prokofiev died and in 1957 the Symphony was awarded what had by that point been renamed the Lenin Prize.

—Christopher H. Gibbs

# Musical Terms

## GENERAL TERMS

**Cadence:** The conclusion to a phrase, movement, or piece based on a recognizable melodic formula, harmonic progression, or dissonance resolution

**Cadenza:** A passage or section in a style of brilliant improvisation, usually inserted near the end of a movement or composition

**Chord:** The simultaneous sounding of three or more tones

**Chromatic:** Relating to tones foreign to a given key (scale) or chord

**Coda:** A concluding section or passage added in order to confirm the impression of finality

**Counterpoint:** A term that describes the combination of simultaneously sounding musical lines

**Danzón:** The official musical genre and dance of Cuba

**Dissonance:** A combination of two or more tones requiring resolution

**Harmonic:** Pertaining to chords and to the theory and practice of harmony

**Harmony:** The combination of simultaneously sounded musical notes to produce chords and chord progressions

**Legato:** Smooth, even, without any break between notes

**Meter:** The symmetrical grouping of musical rhythms

**Modernism:** A consequence of the fundamental conviction among successive generations of composers since 1900 that the means of musical expression in the 20th century must be adequate to the unique and radical character of the age

**Op.:** Abbreviation for opus, a term used to indicate the chronological position of a composition within a composer's output. Opus numbers are not always reliable because they are often applied in the order of publication rather than composition.

**Oratorio:** Large-scale dramatic composition originating in the 16th century with text usually based on religious subjects. Oratorios are performed by choruses and solo voices with an instrumental accompaniment, and are similar to operas but without costumes, scenery, and actions.

**Polyphony:** A term used to designate music in more than one part and the style in which all or several of the musical parts move to some extent independently

**Rubato:** Taking a portion of the value of one note and giving it another note (usually) within the

same measure, without altering the duration of the measure as a whole

**Scale:** The series of tones which form (a) any major or minor key or (b) the chromatic scale of successive semi-tonic steps

**Sonata form:** The form in which the first movements (and sometimes others) of symphonies are usually cast. The sections are exposition, development, and recapitulation, the last sometimes followed by a coda. The exposition is the introduction of the musical ideas, which are then "developed." In the recapitulation, the exposition is repeated with modifications.

**Tonality:** The orientation of melodies and harmonies towards a specific pitch or pitches

**Tonic:** The keynote of a scale

## THE SPEED OF MUSIC (Tempo)

**Allegretto:** A tempo between walking speed and fast

**Allegro:** Bright, fast

**Andante:** Walking speed

**Espressivo:** With expression, with feeling

**Moderato:** A moderate tempo, neither fast nor slow

**Vivace:** Lively



# April/May

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**April 21 & 23** 8 PM

**April 22** 2 PM

**Cristian Măcelaru** Conductor

**Prokofiev** *Symphony No. 1 ("Classical")*

**Ginastera** *Variaciones concertantes*

**Stravinsky** *The Rite of Spring*

### Yo-Yo Ma

**April 28, 29, & 30** 8 PM

**May 1** 2 PM

**Stéphane Denève** Conductor

**Yo-Yo Ma** Cello

**Williams** *Tributes! For Seiji*

**Williams** Cello Concerto

**Debussy** "Clouds" and "Festivals," from *Nocturnes*

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