

Season 2016-2017

Thursday, March 2, at 8:00

Friday, March 3, at 8:00


Saturday, March 4, at 8:00

The Philadelphia Orchestra

Yannick Nézet-Séguin Conductor

John Relyea Bass (Bluebeard)

Michelle DeYoung Mezzo-soprano (Judith)

Tchaikovsky Selections from *Swan Lake*, Op. 20 

Act II:

1. Scene

Act III:

2. Scene—Arrival of the Guests and Waltz

3. Spanish Dance

4. Neapolitan Dance

5. Russian Dance

6. Scene

Act IV:

7. Dance of the Little Swans


8. Scene

9. Final Scene

Intermission

Bartók *Bluebeard's Castle*, Op. 11 

This program runs approximately 2 hours, 10 minutes.

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The March 3 concert is sponsored by the Louis Cassett N. Foundation.

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The Philadelphia Orchestra

Yannick Nézet-Séguin Music Director



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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 inspiring the future and 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 connection to the Orchestra's musicians has been praised by both concertgoers and critics 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 continues to discover new and inventive ways to nurture its relationship with its loyal patrons at its home in 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, all of which create greater access and engagement with classical music as an art form.

The Philadelphia Orchestra serves as a catalyst for cultural activity across Philadelphia's many communities, building an offstage presence as strong as its onstage one. With Nézet-Séguin, a dedicated body of musicians, and one of the nation's richest arts ecosystems, the Orchestra has launched its **HEAR** initiative, a portfolio of integrated initiatives that promotes **Health**, champions music **Education**, eliminates barriers to **Accessing** the orchestra, and maximizes

impact through **Research**. The Orchestra's award-winning Collaborative Learning programs engage over 50,000 students, families, and community members through programs such as Play!Ns, side-by-sides, PopUP concerts, free Neighborhood Concerts, School Concerts, and residency work in Philadelphia and abroad.

Through concerts, tours, residencies, presentations, and recordings, The Philadelphia Orchestra is a global ambassador for Philadelphia and for the US. Having been the first American orchestra to perform in China, in 1973 at the request of President Nixon, the ensemble today boasts a new partnership with Beijing's National Centre for the Performing Arts and the Shanghai Oriental Art Centre, and in 2017 will be the first-ever Western orchestra to appear in Mongolia. The Orchestra annually performs at Carnegie Hall while also enjoying summer residencies in Saratoga Springs, NY, and Vail, CO. For more information on The Philadelphia Orchestra, please visit www.philorch.org.

Music Director

Chris Lee



Music Director **Yannick Nézet-Séguin** is now confirmed to lead The Philadelphia Orchestra through the 2025-26 season, an extraordinary and significant long-term commitment. Additionally, he becomes music director of the Metropolitan Opera beginning with the 2021-22 season. Yannick, who holds the Walter and Leonore Annenberg Chair, is an inspired leader of the Orchestra. His intensely collaborative style, deeply rooted musical curiosity, and boundless enthusiasm 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 fifth season include an exploration of American Sounds, with works by Leonard Bernstein, Christopher Rouse, Mason Bates, and Christopher Theofanidis; a Music of Paris Festival; and the continuation of a focus on opera and sacred vocal works, with Bartók’s *Bluebeard’s Castle* and Mozart’s C-minor Mass.

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 was also principal guest conductor of the London Philharmonic from 2008 to 2014. He has made wildly successful appearances with the world’s most revered ensembles and 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. He continues fruitful recording relationships with the Rotterdam Philharmonic on DG, EMI Classics, and BIS Records; the London Philharmonic for the LPO label; and the Orchestre Métropolitain for ATMA Classique. In Yannick’s inaugural season The Philadelphia Orchestra returned to the radio airwaves, with weekly Sunday afternoon broadcasts on WRTI-FM.

A native of Montreal, Yannick studied piano, conducting, composition, and chamber music at Montreal’s Conservatory of Music and continued his studies with renowned conductor Carlo Maria Giulini; he also studied choral conducting with Joseph Flummerfelt at Westminster Choir College. Among Yannick’s honors are an appointment as Companion of the Order of Canada, *Musical America’s* 2016 Artist of the Year, Canada’s National Arts Centre Award, the Prix Denise-Pelletier, and honorary doctorates from the University of Quebec in Montreal, the Curtis Institute of Music in Philadelphia, and Westminster Choir College of Rider University in Princeton, NJ.

To read Yannick’s full bio, please visit www.philorch.org/conductor.

The Philadelphia Orchestra

Yannick Nézet-Séguin Music Director



The Iconic Itzhak Perlman

Mar. 15 & 16

Itzhak Perlman Conductor and Violin

Bach Violin Concerto No. 1

Mozart Symphony No. 35 ("Haffner")

Dvořák Symphony No. 8

A cultural icon, the irrepressible Itzhak Perlman returns to Verizon Hall to conduct and solo with The Philadelphia Orchestra.

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photo: Lisa-Marie Mazzucco

Soloist



Shirley Saez

Canadian bass **John Relyea** has appeared in many of the world's most celebrated opera houses, including the Metropolitan Opera, San Francisco Opera (where he is an alumnus of the Merola Opera Program and a former Adler Fellow), the Lyric Opera of Chicago, Seattle Opera, the Canadian Opera Company, the Royal Opera House Covent Garden, Paris Opera, the Teatro alla Scala, the Bayerische Staatsoper, the Vienna State Opera, the Theater an der Wien, and the Mariinsky Theater. This season he returned to the Met for Rossini's *William Tell*, and debuted at Rome Opera in Wagner's *Tristan and Isolde*. He has performed the title roles in Verdi's *Attila*, Mozart's *The Marriage of Figaro*, and Bartók's *Bluebeard's Castle*; Zaccaria in Verdi's *Nabucco*; Bertram in Meyerbeer's *Robert le Diable*; Pagano in Verdi's *I Lombardi*; Raimondo in Donizetti's *Lucia di Lammermoor*; Colline in Puccini's *La bohème*; Don Alfonso in Donizetti's *Lucrezia Borgia*; Don Basilio in Rossini's *The Barber of Seville*; and Alidoro in Rossini's *La Cenerentola*.

Mr. Relyea made his Philadelphia Orchestra debut in 1998. This season he appears in concert with the New York Philharmonic and the Dallas, St. Louis, and NDR symphonies. He performs regularly with orchestras including the Boston, Chicago, Pittsburgh, Atlanta, and Swedish Radio symphonies; the Cleveland, Philharmonia, and Scottish Chamber orchestras; and the Berlin Philharmonic. He has also appeared at the Tanglewood, Ravinia, Salzburg, Edinburgh, Lucerne, and Mostly Mozart festivals, and at the BBC Proms. In recital he has been presented at Weill Recital Hall and the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York, Wigmore Hall in London, the University Musical Society in Ann Arbor, and on the University of Chicago Presents series.

Mr. Relyea's recordings include Verdi's Requiem (LSO Live); Mozart's *Idomeneo* with Charles Mackerras and the Scottish Chamber Orchestra (EMI); Mahler's Symphony No. 8 with Simon Rattle and the City of Birmingham Symphony (EMI); and the Metropolitan Opera's DVD presentations of Mozart's *Don Giovanni*, Bellini's *I Puritani*, Wagner's *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg* (Deutsche Grammophon), and Verdi's *Macbeth* (Metropolitan Opera HD Live Series). He is the winner of the 2009 Beverly Sills Award and the 2003 Richard Tucker Award.

Soloist



Karin Hoebermann

Mezzo-soprano **Michelle DeYoung** made her Philadelphia Orchestra debut in 2012. She has appeared with many of the world's leading ensembles, including the New York, Vienna, Los Angeles, and Royal philharmonics; the Boston, Chicago, Pittsburgh, San Francisco, BBC, and São Paulo symphonies; the Cleveland, Minnesota, Royal Concertgebouw, Metropolitan Opera, and Bavarian State Opera orchestras; the Met Chamber Ensemble; London's Philharmonia; the Orchestre de Paris; and the Staatskapelle Berlin. She has also appeared at the prestigious festivals of Ravinia, Tanglewood, Aspen, Cincinnati, Saito Kinen, Edinburgh, Salzburg, and Lucerne.

Ms. DeYoung has sung at many of the world's great opera houses, including the Metropolitan Opera, the Lyric Opera of Chicago, Houston Grand Opera, Seattle Opera, Opera Philadelphia, Glimmerglass Opera, La Scala, the Bayreuth Festival, the Berlin Staatsoper, Hamburg State Opera, the Opéra National de Paris, the Théâtre du Châtelet, Opéra de Nice, the Theater Basel, and Tokyo Opera. She was also named the 2015 Artist in Residence at Wolf Trap Opera. Her many roles include the title roles in Saint-Saëns's *Samson and Dalila* and Britten's *The Rape of Lucretia*; Fricka, Sieglinde, and Waltraute in Wagner's *Ring Cycle*; Kundry in Wagner's *Parsifal*; Venus in Wagner's *Tannhäuser*; Brangäne in Wagner's *Tristan and Isolde*; Eboli in Verdi's *Don Carlos*; Amneris in Verdi's *Aida*; Marguerite in Berlioz's *The Damnation of Faust*; Dido in Berlioz's *Les Troyens*; Gertrude in Thomas's *Hamlet*; and Jocasta in Stravinsky's *Oedipus Rex*. She also created the role of the Shaman in Tan Dun's *The First Emperor* at the Metropolitan Opera.

Ms. DeYoung's recording of Mahler's *Kindertotenlieder* and Symphony No. 3 with Michael Tilson Thomas and the San Francisco Symphony was awarded the 2003 Grammy Award for Best Classical Album. She also won 2001 Grammy awards for Best Classical Album and Best Opera Recording for *Les Troyens* with Colin Davis and the London Symphony. Her growing discography includes recordings of Mahler's Symphony No. 3 with the Chicago Symphony and Bernard Haitink. Her first solo disc was released on the EMI label.

Framing the Program

Parallel Events

1876

Tchaikovsky

Swan Lake

Music

Brahms

Symphony No. 1

Literature

James

Roderick

Hudson

Art

Renoir

Le Moulin de la

Galette

History

World Exhibition
in Philadelphia

1911

Bartók

Bluebeard's

Castle

Music

Stravinsky

Petrushka

Literature

Wharton

Ethan Frome

Art

Braque

Man with a

Guitar

History

Chinese

Republic

proclaimed

Despite centuries of marvelous music connected with dance before him, when Tchaikovsky wrote *Swan Lake*, his first full-scale ballet, he created a masterpiece that set new standards and led to his subsequent ballets *The Sleeping Beauty* and *The Nutcracker*. While Tchaikovsky looked to France for his models, later composers, such as Stravinsky, saw his accomplishment as opening new possibilities. Tonight we hear selections from *Swan Lake*, in which an evil sorcerer turns the Princess Odette into a swan, including a series of ethnic dances as part of a great ball.

Béla Bartók's searing one-act opera *Bluebeard's Castle* features just two singers—Bluebeard and his latest wife, Judith—in an intense psychodrama. The piece unfolds as the seven doors of Bluebeard's castle open to reveal a series of horrors and sorrows endured by his previous wives. Judith would be well advised not to open the last door, but ...

The Music

Selections from *Swan Lake*



Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky
Born in Kamsko-Votkinsk,
Russia, May 7, 1840
Died in St. Petersburg,
November 5, 1893

It is hardly surprising that Tchaikovsky emerged as the greatest 19th-century composer of ballet music. Despite the distinguished history of music connected to dance going back to ancient times, formal ballet played little or no role in the careers of Bach, Handel, Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven, or of many other masters. Ballet long held a special place in French culture, especially during the age of Louis XIV, and there was an explosion of major full-length scores during the 19th century. Perennial favorites were written by figures who are now otherwise generally forgotten, such as Adolphe Adam (*Giselle* from 1841) and his pupil Léo Delibes (*Coppélia* in 1870 and *Sylvia* in 1876).

These were composers Tchaikovsky greatly admired but would ultimately surpass. Russia was the remaining autocratic society, permeated with French culture and language, and ballet came to thrive there with Tchaikovsky providing a model that Stravinsky, Prokofiev, Shostakovich, and others would later emulate. Tonight we hear excerpts from his first major ballet score: *Swan Lake* (1875-76), which he followed with *The Sleeping Beauty* (1889) and *The Nutcracker* (1892). As with his revered Mozart, so much of Tchaikovsky's music is fundamentally connected to movement—his symphonies, suites, piano music, and operas are permeated with the spirit of dance.

From Stage to Suite There is a prehistory to *Swan Lake* that preceded Tchaikovsky's commission from the Imperial Theaters in 1875 to write a full-length ballet. Some summers earlier, while visiting his sister at her country home, he had assembled a domestic ballet on the fairytale plot to amuse his two nieces. Tchaikovsky apparently later remembered some of this music, recasting as well portions of two unperformed operas, and wrote some completely new selections resulting in *Swan Lake*. When he began composing he was still licking his professional wounds from Nikolai Rubinstein's searing attack on his First Piano Concerto ("Only one or two pages are worth anything"), but the favorable public reception of his Third Symphony had given him fresh confidence.

Upon receiving the commission, Tchaikovsky threw himself into the project. As he said in a letter: "I have taken on

this task partly because of money, which I need, partly because I have wanted to try my hand at this kind of music for a long time." The work was completed by the spring of 1876 and was premiered the next year in March by the Bolshoi Ballet in Moscow. The performance, which included various cuts in the score and interpolations of music by other composers, was evidently poor and the event not well received. *Swan Lake* continued to be in the company's repertoire for several more seasons, still without much success (and with continued additions by other composers). It was not until Marius Petipa's revival in 1895 that the ballet decisively entered the international repertoire. Since then it has taken on a whole life of its own, becoming perhaps the central classical piece of most traditional ballet companies.

The initially poor reception led to various expressions of self-doubt from the composer, who wrote at one point to his patron, Madame Nadezhda von Meck, that "*Swan Lake* is not fit to hold a candle to *Sylvia*." Meck, for her part, enlisted her protégé, Claude Debussy, to arrange parts of the ballet for piano, which became the French composer's first publication. In 1882, in an effort to salvage some of the music, Tchaikovsky wrote to his publisher: "You know that the French composer Delibes wrote ballets. Since ballet is an ephemeral genre, he made concert suites from them. The other day I thought about my own *Swan Lake*, and I would like very much to save this music from oblivion since it contains some fine things. And so I decided to make a suite from it, as Delibes did." The publisher agreed, and sent the score to him to select from and adapt. The project went nowhere, and it was only a few years after Tchaikovsky's death that a six-movement suite was released as Op. 20a. It is not known who chose which sections to include; they come from various parts of the ballet and are not presented in their original narrative order. Tonight's selections come from the second, third, and fourth acts.

A Closer Look The story, based on a German fairy tale, involves a young prince, Siegfried, who has reached the age to choose a bride. Encountering the lovely Odette, he falls immediately in love. What he does not know is that the evil Baron von Rothbart has placed Odette under a spell, which dooms her to live as a swan during the day until she meets a man who loves her absolutely and faithfully. Clearly the Prince is that man, but during the celebrations at which the Prince is to choose his bride, Rothbart brings in as a candidate his own daughter, Odile,

Swan Lake was composed from 1875 to 1876.

The Ballets Russes were soloists in the first performance of any Swan Lake music by The Philadelphia Orchestra, in February 1938; Eugene Ormandy was on the podium. The most recent appearance of excerpts from the work on subscription concerts was in March 2012, with James Gaffigan.

The Philadelphia Orchestra has recorded the Suite from Swan Lake four times: in 1956 and 1961 for CBS with Ormandy; in 1972 for RCA with Ormandy; and in 1984 for EMI with Riccardo Muti. The ensemble also recorded the complete ballet in 1993 for EMI with Wolfgang Sawallisch.

The score for these excerpts calls for piccolo, two flutes, two oboes, two clarinets, two bassoons, four horns, two trumpets, two cornets, three trombones, tuba, timpani, percussion (bass drum, castanets, cymbals, snare drum, tambourine, tam-tam, triangle), harp, and strings.

Tonight's excerpts last approximately 40 minutes in performance.

who is Odette's double. Siegfried chooses the wrong girl, and is doomed to stick by his decision; by the time he discovers the deception, Odette has already drowned herself in utter despair. Siegfried, preferring to die rather than live without Odette, follows his beloved into the lake and drowns as well. His love and self-sacrifice destroy Rothbart and his evil empire, and in a final apotheosis Siegfried and Odette are seen floating into the sunrise in a luminous magic boat.

One of Tchaikovsky's achievements in the complete ballet is the use of themes deployed somewhat in the manner of Wagnerian leitmotifs, some associated with specific characters or events. The **Scene** that begins the excerpts comes from the opening of Act II and features the haunting theme of the swan for a soaring solo oboe amidst a shimmering halo of strings. Next we hear a **Scene** near the opening of Act III as guests arrive at a castle ball and first dance a waltz. Three exotic and distinctive **Dances from Spain, Naples, and Russia** follow. A lively connecting **Scene** leads to the brief **Dance of the Little Swans**. The excerpts on this concert culminate with the end of the ballet, including the transfiguring **Final Scene** of the story in which the lovers are joined in death.

—Christopher H. Gibbs/Paul J. Horsley

The Music

Bluebeard's Castle



Béla Bartók
Born in Nagyszentmiklós,
Hungary (now Romania),
March 25, 1881
Died in New York City,
September 26, 1945

Those in the audience who do not understand a single word of Hungarian may find themselves registering just one in *Bluebeard's Castle*: "Judith," the name of Duke Bluebeard's new wife, a name he intones, entreats, and extols some 38 times over the course of Bartók's brilliant one-act opera. The story tells of Judith's attempt to redeem her doomed husband through the power of her love. She seeks to learn his secret past by opening the doors of his dark, dank, joyless castle, and thus symbolically unlock the inner state of his mind. For her efforts she shares the fate of his three previous wives and ultimately disappears in the castle's abyss.

To use a Wagnerian analogy, Judith begins the opera acting like Senta in *The Flying Dutchman*: The force of her love will liberate a tormented and damned man. But as she probes and questions Bluebeard, Judith comes more to resemble Elsa in *Lohengrin*. The ground rule for both marriages is that no questions should be asked, but these curious women press on, destroying themselves in the process. It is an old tale. Eve's curiosity caused trouble in the Garden of Eden and in Greek mythology Psyche sought to learn the identity of her lover Cupid by spying on him in his sleep, also with disastrous results. In any case, one wonders what message Bartók may have been sending his own new wife, to whom he dedicated *Bluebeard's Castle*. (Their troubled marriage ended in divorce.)

"Completely Old" and "Completely New" Bartók's fame is intimately connected with his native Hungary and with the folk music tradition there and elsewhere. But before he became so distinctly Hungarian or, rather, helped to define what we think of as Hungarian music, his compositions spoke with a pronounced German accent. He recalled that hearing a performance in Budapest of Richard Strauss's *Also sprach Zarathustra* in 1902 was like a "lightening stroke," and his music from the time reflects this admiration.

Bartók soon began to seek inspiration closer to home. Together with his colleague Zoltán Kodály, he collected thousands of folk melodies from all over central and Eastern Europe. Both composers were also interested in

the cutting edge developments in modern music and the other arts. They were among the organizers in 1911 of the New Hungarian Music Society and were actively involved in the thriving intellectual and cultural life of Budapest around the turn of the century. Aware of the latest trends, Bartók and like-minded artists sought to build on folk and classical traditions to make contemporary statements. Béla Balázs (1884-1949), the librettist for *Bluebeard's Castle*, succinctly stated their goal: "We believed that the completely new could be transplanted only from the completely old."

Yet foreign influences also played a crucial role in the creation of the opera, although in this case coming from France rather than from Germany. One of the most significant inspirations was Debussy's opera *Pelléas and Mélisande* (1893-1902). Kodály visited Paris in 1908 and brought back many French scores with him. Bartók remembered: "I became acquainted with Debussy's work, studied it thoroughly, and was greatly surprised to find in his work 'pentatonic phrases' similar in character to those contained in our peasant music." He noted that Stravinsky's music also showed these influences and concluded, "In our age, modern music has developed along similar lines in countries geographically far apart. It has become rejuvenated under the influence of a kind of peasant music that has remained untouched." Balázs was of the same mind when writing *Bluebeard*: "I wanted to depict the modern soul in the primary colors of folk song."

Genesis and Premiere Balázs wrote *Bluebeard's Castle*, his third play, in 1910 and dedicated it to Kodály and Bartók. The immediate source was Maurice Maeterlinck's symbolist drama *Ariadne and Bluebeard* (1899), which Paul Dukas crafted into an opera by that name (1907). (Debussy adapted another Maeterlinck play as the libretto for *Pelléas*.) The story of a wife-killing figure goes back much further, however, and became well known in Charles Perrault's *Histoires ou contes du temps passé* (Stories or Tales of Golden Times, 1697).

After Kodály decided not to set the play, Bartók took it up and wrote the one-hour opera at tremendous speed from February to September 1911. The following year he entered the work in a Hungarian competition for new one-act operas, but it did not win, nor were there any prospects for performance. Bartók made some small revisions, especially with the ending, and had the work translated into German in the hopes of securing foreign performances. Only after the successful premiere of his ballet *The Wooden Prince*, for which Balázs wrote the

scenario, was Bartók positioned to arrange its premiere in Hungary in May 1918. The critics generally responded favorably to the music, but apparently were less open to the psychological and literary complexities of the libretto.

The Tale Revealed, Door by Door After a spoken prologue, the curtain rises on a scene of a great gothic hall in Duke Bluebeard's castle. A steep staircase issues from a small iron door. Seven large black doors are dimly apparent, but nothing else is in the vast windowless expanse. To atmospheric music, beginning in the low strings and migrating to the woodwinds, Bluebeard and Judith descend the staircase. Judith has eloped with Bluebeard, against the wishes of her family, to bring happiness, warmth, light, and love to his life and his dismal abode. Judith wants to see and know everything and demands that the seven doors be opened. Bluebeard urges her to desist—she knows the rumors—but he agrees to give her two keys.

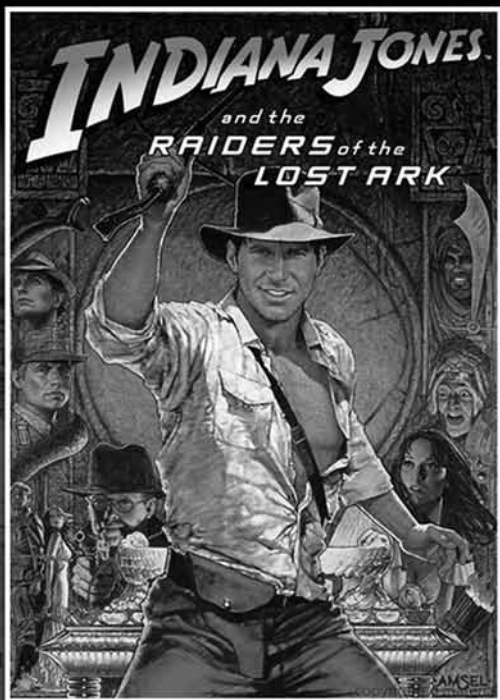
The doors open one by one. The dialogue and music reveal their contents; only colors of light emanate from within. Behind the first door is a torture chamber, the walls stained with blood, the light red. A recurring musical motif is associated with blood. Brass fanfares appropriately characterize the music for the second door, Bluebeard's bloody armory. Judith presses on, saying she wants to know all of his secrets and is given three more keys.

The metallic sound of harps and celesta and a golden light reveal the third door's many splendid treasures—jewels, coins, diamonds, and pearls, all drenched in blood. With the arrival at the fourth door Bluebeard begins to urge Judith on. Although he supposedly knows her fate from the beginning, and therefore admonished her to leave, he may now vainly begin to share her hope of redemption. Light streams in complementing the lush sound of the strings. Judith has never seen such beauty as the garden revealed before her, but notices that the flowers, too, are soaked with blood. Bluebeard delivers the same demand as Wagner's Lohengrin: Love me, but ask no questions.

The fifth door marks the central musical climax of the opera. As most of the dialogue is sung in a declamatory manner reflecting the accents of Hungarian poetry and folk song, Judith's piercing high C shines out as an astounding moment, complemented by the full orchestra and organ in all their C-major glory moving in rich blocks of chords. This is the vastness and grandeur of Bluebeard's terrible realm.

The Philadelphia Orchestra

Yannick Nézet-Séguin Music Director



Mar. 17-19

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Bluebeard's Castle was composed in 1911, and revised in 1912 and from 1917 to 1918.

These are only the fourth set of performances of Bluebeard's Castle by The Philadelphia Orchestra. The first were in November 1960 with Eugene Ormandy conducting, Jerome Hines as Bluebeard, Rosalind Elias as Judith, and Vincent L. Lee as the Prologue narrator. The second set of performances were in January 1986, with Charles Dutoit on the podium, Aage Haugland as Bluebeard, and Sylvia Sass as Judith; the Prologue was omitted in these performances. The most recent were in November/December 2001 with Wolfgang Sawallisch, Kolos Kovács as Bluebeard, Petra Lang as Judith, and András Márton as the Prologue narrator.

Bartók's score calls for bass and mezzo-soprano soloists, narrator, four flutes (III and IV doubling piccolo), two oboes, English horn, three clarinets (I and II doubling E-flat clarinet and III doubling bass clarinet), four bassoons (IV doubling contrabassoon), four horns, four trumpets, four trombones, tuba, two timpani, percussion (bass drum, snare drum, cymbals, suspended cymbal, tam-tam, xylophone, triangle), two harps, celesta, organ, and strings.

Bluebeard's Castle runs approximately 60 minutes in performance.

Two more doors remain that must not be opened. Judith presses on, and the light and warmth she has brought now begin to recede. (Bartók uses his favored arch-like form in the opera, with the three central doors surrounded by darker outer ones.) Glissandos and scales in the orchestra accompany the sixth door, a lake of tears. Bluebeard urges one last time for her to abandon her quest, to kiss him, love him, and stop her inquiries. Judith asks whom he has loved before her, did he love the previous women in his life more than her. As the tension builds in the accelerating lower strings, Bluebeard's three former wives appear behind the seventh and final door. So the rumors were true!

An orchestral climax, loud and dissonant, leads to Judith joining the row of the previous wives. Bluebeard no longer calls her by name—the one word those of us without Hungarian can understand—and states that she is the fairest of them all. A final roar of the orchestra, the mightiest yet, cedes to the woodwind blood motif heard at the start of the work and brings the opera to a quiet conclusion.

—Christopher H. Gibbs

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Subscriptions: The Philadelphia Orchestra offers a variety of subscription options each season. These multi-concert packages feature the best available seats, ticket exchange privileges, discounts on individual tickets, and many other benefits. Learn more at philorch.org.

Ticket Turn-In: Subscribers who cannot use their tickets are invited to donate them and receive a tax-deductible acknowledgement by calling 215.893.1999. Twenty-four-hour notice is appreciated, allowing other patrons the opportunity to purchase these tickets and guarantee tax-deductible credit.

PreConcert Conversations:

PreConcert Conversations are held prior to most Philadelphia Orchestra subscription concert, beginning one hour before the performance. Conversations are free to ticket-holders, feature discussions of the season's music and music-makers,

and are supported in part by the Hirschberg-Goodfriend Fund established by Juliet J. Goodfriend.

Lost and Found: Please call 215.670.2321.

Late Seating: Late seating breaks usually occur after the first piece on the program or at intermission in order to minimize disturbances to other audience members who have already begun listening to the music. If you arrive after the concert begins, you will be seated only when appropriate breaks in the program allow.

Accessible Seating:

Accessible seating is available for every performance. Please call Patron Services at 215.893.1999 or visit philorch.org for more information.

Assistive Listening: With the deposit of a current ID, hearing enhancement devices are available at no cost from the House Management Office in Commonwealth Plaza. Hearing devices are available on a first-come, first-served basis.

Large-Print Programs:

Large-print programs for every subscription concert are available in the House Management Office in Commonwealth Plaza. Please ask an usher for assistance.

Fire Notice: The exit indicated by a red light nearest your seat is the shortest route to the street. In the event of fire or other emergency, please do not run. Walk to that exit.

No Smoking: All public space in the Kimmel Center is smoke-free.

Cameras and Recorders:

The taking of photographs or the recording of Philadelphia Orchestra concerts is strictly prohibited. By attending this Philadelphia Orchestra concert you consent to be photographed, filmed, and/or otherwise recorded. Your entry constitutes

your consent to such and to any use, in any and all media throughout the universe in perpetuity, of your appearance, voice, and name for any purpose whatsoever in connection with The Philadelphia Orchestra.

Phones and Paging Devices:

All electronic devices—including cellular telephones, pagers, and wristwatch alarms—should be turned off while in the concert hall. The exception would be our LiveNote™ performances. Please visit philorch.org/livenote for more information.

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