



The
Philadelphia
Orchestra

Yannick Nézet-Séguin Music Director

On Tour
in Berlin

January 11, 2023

2022-23
SEASON

The Philadelphia Orchestra

Wednesday, January 11, at 8:00
On the Digital Stage

Yannick Nézet-Séguin Conductor
Lisa Batiashvili Violin

Dvořák *Carnival*, concert overture, Op. 92

Szymanowski Violin Concerto No. 1, Op. 35
(in one movement)

Price Symphony No. 1 in E minor
I. Allegro ma non troppo
II. Largo, maestoso
III. Juba Dance: Allegro
IV. Finale: Presto

This program runs approximately 1 hour, 20 minutes.

Philadelphia Orchestra concerts are broadcast on WRTI 90.1 FM on Sunday afternoons at 1 PM, and are repeated on Monday evenings at 7 PM on WRTI HD 2. Visit www.wrti.org to listen live or for more details.

The Philadelphia Orchestra

Yannick Nézet-Séguin

Music Director

Walter and Leonore Annenberg Chair

Nathalie Stutzmann

Principal Guest Conductor

Ralph and Beth Johnston Muller Chair

Gabriela Lena Frank

Composer-in-Residence

Austin Chanu

Conducting Fellow

Tristan Rais-Sherman

Conducting Fellow

Charlotte Blake Alston

Storyteller, Narrator, and Host

Osage and Losenge Imasoge Chair

Frederick R. Haas

Artistic Advisor

Fred J. Cooper Memorial Organ Experience

First Violins

David Kim, Concertmaster

Dr. Benjamin Rush Chair

Juliette Kang, First Associate

Concertmaster

Joseph and Marie Field Chair

Christine Lim, Associate Concertmaster

Marc Rovetti, Assistant Concertmaster

Barbara Govatos

Robert E. Mortensen Chair

Jonathan Beiler

Hirono Oka

Richard Amoroso

Robert and Lynne Pollack Chair

Yayoi Numazawa

Jason DePue

Larry A. Grika Chair

Jennifer Haas

Miyo Curnow

Elina Kalendarova

Daniel Han

Julia Li

William Polk

Mei Ching Huang

Second Violins

Kimberly Fisher, Principal

Peter A. Benoliel Chair

Paul Roby, Associate Principal

Sandra and David Marshall Chair

Dara Morales, Assistant Principal

Anne M. Buxton Chair

Philip Kates

Davy Booth

Paul Arnold

Joseph Brodo Chair, given by Peter A. Benoliel

Boris Balter

Amy Oshiro-Morales

Yu-Ting Chen

Jeoung-Yin Kim

Violas

Choong-Jin Chang, Principal

Ruth and A. Morris Williams, Jr., Chair

Kirsten Johnson, Associate Principal

Kerri Ryan, Assistant Principal

Judy Geist

Renard Edwards

Anna Marie Ahn Petersen

Piasecki Family Chair

David Nicaastro

Burchard Tang

Che-Hung Chen

Rachel Ku

Marvin Moon

Meng Wang

Cellos

Hai-Ye Ni, Principal

Priscilla Lee, Associate Principal

Yumi Kendall, Assistant Principal

Elaine Woo Camarda and A. Morris Williams, Jr., Chair

Richard Harlow

Orton P. and Noël S. Jackson Chair

Kathryn Picht Read

Robert Cafaro

Volunteer Committees Chair

Ohad Bar-David

John Koen

Derek Barnes

Alex Veltman

Basses

Gabriel Polinsky, Acting Principal

Carole and Emilio Grauagno Chair

Joseph Conyers, Acting Associate Principal

Tobey and Mark Dichter Chair

Nathaniel West, Acting Assistant Principal

David Fay

Duane Rosengard

Michael Franz

Christian Gray

Some members of the string sections voluntarily rotate seating on a periodic basis.

Flutes

Jeffrey Khaner, Principal

Paul and Barbara Henkels Chair

Patrick Williams, Associate Principal

Rachelle and Ronald Kaiserman Chair

Olivia Staton

Erica Peel, Piccolo

Oboes

Philippe Tondre, Principal

Samuel S. Fels Chair

Peter Smith, Associate Principal

Jonathan Blumenfeld

Edwin Tuttle Chair

Elizabeth Starr Masoudnia,

English Horn

Joanne T. Greenspun Chair

Clarinets

Ricardo Morales, Principal

Leslie Miller and Richard Worley Chair

Samuel Caviezel, Associate Principal

Sarah and Frank Coulson Chair

Socrates Villegas

Paul R. Demers, Bass Clarinet

*Peter M. Joseph and Susan Rittenhouse
Joseph Chair*

Bassoons

Daniel Matsukawa, Principal

Richard M. Klein Chair

Mark Gigliotti, Co-Principal

Angela Anderson Smith

Holly Blake, Contrabassoon

Horns

Jennifer Montone, Principal

Gray Charitable Trust Chair

Jeffrey Lang, Associate Principal

Hannah L. and J. Welles Henderson Chair

Christopher Dwyer

Chelsea McFarland

Ernesto Tovar Torres

Shelley Showers

Trumpets

(position vacant), Principal

Marguerite and Gerry Lenfest Chair

Jeffrey Curnow, Associate Principal

Gary and Ruthanne Schlarbaum Chair

Anthony Prisk

Trombones

Nitzan Haroz, Principal

Neubauer Family Foundation Chair

Matthew Vaughn, Co-Principal

Blair Bollinger, Bass Trombone

Drs. Bong and Mi Wha Lee Chair

Tuba

Carol Jantsch, Principal

Lyn and George M. Ross Chair

Timpani

Don S. Liuzzi, Principal

Dwight V. Dowley Chair

Angela Zator Nelson, Associate Principal

Percussion

Christopher Deviney, Principal

Angela Zator Nelson

Piano and Celesta

Kiyoko Takeuti

Keyboards

Davyd Booth

Harp

Elizabeth Hainen, Principal

Librarians

Nicole Jordan, Principal

Stage Personnel

Dennis Moore, Jr., Manager

Francis "Chip" O'Shea III

Aaron Wilson



Jessica Griffin

The world-renowned Philadelphia Orchestra strives to share the transformative power of music with the widest possible audience, and to create joy, connection, and excitement through music in the Philadelphia region, across the country, and around the world. Through innovative programming, robust education initiatives, a commitment to its diverse communities, and the embrace of digital outreach, the ensemble is creating an expansive future for classical music, and furthering the place of the arts in an open and democratic society. In June 2021 the Orchestra and its home, the Kimmel Center, united to form The Philadelphia Orchestra and Kimmel Center, Inc., reimagining the power of the arts to bring joy, create community, and effect change.

Yannick Nézet-Séguin is now in his 11th season as music director of The Philadelphia Orchestra. His connection to the ensemble's musicians has been praised by both concertgoers and critics, and he is embraced by the musicians of the Orchestra, audiences, and the community.

Your Philadelphia Orchestra takes great pride in its hometown, performing for the people of Philadelphia year-round, in Verizon Hall and community centers, in classrooms and hospitals, and

over the airwaves and online. In response to the cancellation of concerts due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Orchestra launched the Digital Stage, providing access to high-quality online performances, keeping music alive at a time when it was needed most. It also inaugurated free offerings: HearTOGETHER, a podcast on racial and social justice, and creative equity and inclusion, through the lens of the world of orchestral music, and Our City, Your Orchestra, a series of digital performances that connects the Orchestra with communities through music and dialog while celebrating the diversity and vibrancy of the Philadelphia region.

The Philadelphia Orchestra's award-winning education and community initiatives engage over 50,000 students, families, and community members of all ages through programs such as PlayINs; side-by-sides; PopUP concerts; Our City, Your Orchestra Live; School Concerts; the School Partnership Program and School Ensemble Program; and All City Orchestra Fellowships.

Through concerts, tours, residencies, and recordings, the Orchestra is a global ambassador and one of our nation's greatest exports. It performs annually at Carnegie Hall, the Mann Center, the Saratoga Performing Arts Center, and the Bravo! Vail Music Festival. The Orchestra also has a rich touring history, having first performed outside Philadelphia in its earliest days. In 1973 it was the first American orchestra to perform in the People's Republic of China in 1973, launching a five-decade commitment of people-to-people exchange.

Under Yannick's leadership, the Orchestra returned to recording with 12 celebrated releases on the Deutsche Grammophon label, including the GRAMMY® Award-winning *Florence Price Symphonies Nos. 1 & 3*. The Orchestra also reaches thousands of radio listeners with weekly broadcasts on WRTI-FM and SiriusXM.

For more information, please visit www.philorch.org.



George Etheredge

Yannick Nézet-Séguin is currently in his 11th season as music director of The Philadelphia Orchestra. Additionally, he became the third music director of New York's Metropolitan Opera in 2018. Yannick, who holds the Walter and Leonore Annenberg Chair, is an inspired leader of The Philadelphia 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 "the ensemble, famous for its glowing strings and homogenous richness, has never sounded better."

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 artistic director and principal conductor of Montreal's Orchestre Métropolitain since 2000, and in 2017 he became an honorary member of the Chamber Orchestra of Europe. He was music director of the Rotterdam Philharmonic from 2008 to 2018 (he is now honorary conductor) and was 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 at many of the leading opera houses.

Yannick signed an exclusive recording contract with Deutsche Grammophon (DG) in 2018. Under his leadership The Philadelphia Orchestra returned to recording with 12 releases on that label, including *Florence Price Symphonies Nos. 1 & 3*, which won a GRAMMY Award for Best Orchestral Performance. His upcoming recordings will include projects with The Philadelphia Orchestra, the Metropolitan Opera, the Chamber Orchestra of Europe, and the Orchestre Métropolitain, with which he will also continue to record for ATMA Classique. Additionally, he has recorded with the Rotterdam Philharmonic on DG, EMI Classics, and BIS Records, and the London Philharmonic for the LPO label.

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; Companion to the Order of Arts and Letters of Quebec; an Officer of the Order of Quebec; an Officer of the Order of Montreal; an Officier de l'Ordre des Arts et des Lettres; *Musical America's* 2016 Artist of the Year; ECHO KLASSIK's 2014 Conductor of the Year; a Royal Philharmonic Society Award; Canada's National Arts Centre Award; the Prix Denise-Pelletier; the Oskar Morawetz Award; and honorary doctorates from the University of Quebec, the Curtis Institute of Music, Westminster Choir College of Rider University, McGill University, the University of Montreal, the University of Pennsylvania, and Laval University. To read Yannick's full bio, please visit philorch.org/conductor.





Sammy Hart
Deutsche Grammophon

Georgian-born German violinist **Lisa Batiashvili** is praised by audiences and fellow musicians for her virtuosity. An award-winning artist, she has developed long-standing relationships with the world's leading orchestras, conductors, and musicians. She made her Philadelphia Orchestra debut in 2005 and toured Europe with the ensemble and Yannick Nézet-Séguin in 2022. In 2021 she formed and continues to lead the Lisa Batiashvili Foundation, which serves her lifelong dream and commitment in supporting young, highly talented Georgian musicians to thrive in their musical careers. She is the artistic director of the Audi Summer Concerts music festival in Ingolstadt, Germany. For the 2022 festival she performed Shostakovich's Violin Concerto No. 1 with Santtu-Matias Rouvali and the Munich Philharmonic under the motto "Keep on Dancing."

Highlights of her 2022–23 season include returns with the New York Philharmonic, the Cleveland Orchestra, the Philharmonia Orchestra, the Czech Philharmonic, and her debut with the Oslo Philharmonic. She also embarks on tours with the Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra, the Chamber Orchestra of Europe, and the Orchestra dell'Accademia Nazionale di Santa Cecilia. She regularly appears on stage with orchestras including the Berlin Philharmonic, the London Symphony, the Vienna

Philharmonic, the Bavarian Radio Symphony, the Staatskapelle Dresden, and the Boston Symphony, among others.

Ms. Batiashvili is an exclusive recording artist for Deutsche Grammophon and her latest album, *Secret Love Letters*, was released in August 2022 with Yannick Nézet-Séguin and The Philadelphia Orchestra. Her 2020 *City Lights* project marked a musical journey that takes listeners around the world to 11 cities with an autobiographical connection with music ranging from Bach to Morricone, and Dvořák to Charlie Chaplin. A 12th city was added in 2022 with the release of her single *Desafinado*, celebrating Rio de Janeiro. At the internationally renowned Concert de Paris on Bastille Day in Paris in 2020 she performed the title track in an international broadcast. Her previous recording, *Visions of Prokofiev* with the Chamber Orchestra of Europe and Yannick, won an Opus Klassik Award and was shortlisted for the 2018 *Gramophone Awards*. She was named *Musical America's* Instrumentalist of the Year in 2015, was nominated as *Gramophone's* Artist of the Year in 2017, and was awarded an Honorary Doctorate from the Sibelius Academy in 2018. She lives in Munich and plays a Guarneri del Gesù violin from 1739, generously loaned by a private collector.

The Czech composer Antonín Dvořák's rise to international fame got enormous assistance from the passionate advocacy of Johannes Brahms, with whom he shared many basic aesthetic principles. Yet Dvořák, unlike Brahms, was also dedicated to composing operas as well as to writing programmatic pieces. In January 1892 he completed a cycle of three concert overtures—*In Nature's Realm*, *Carnival*, and *Othello*—that he initially called *Nature*, *Life*, and *Love*. Today we hear the second, the vibrant *Carnival*, which is truly a celebration of life.

Karol Szymanowski, born in Ukraine to Polish parents, became the leading composer of his generation in Poland, but has yet to gain the full recognition he deserves. In his lyrical First Violin Concerto he imaginatively merged elements of German Romanticism, French Impressionism, and Russian mysticism.

Florence Price's Symphony No. 1 was the first such work written by a Black woman to be performed by a leading American orchestra when the Chicago Symphony Orchestra premiered it 1933. Price, who had trained at the New England Conservatory of Music, wrote two more symphonies and hundreds of other pieces. Her works were largely forgotten after her death in 1953. The Philadelphians have been at the forefront of performing her symphonies, which they have recently recorded, and have won a GRAMMY Award for that of the First and Third.

The Philadelphia Orchestra is the only orchestra in the world with three weekly broadcasts on SiriusXM's *Symphony Hall*, Channel 76, on Mondays at 7 PM, Thursdays at 12 AM, and Saturdays at 4 PM.

**1891****Dvořák***Carnival***Music**

Mahler

Symphony No. 1

Literature

Hardy

*Tess of the D'Urbervilles***Art**

Gauguin

*We Hail Thee Mary***History**

Dubois discovers Java Man

**1916****Szymanowski**

Violin Concerto No. 1

Music

Korngold

*Violanta***Literature**

Dreiser

*The Genius***Art**

Matisse

*The Three Sisters***History**

Battle of Verdun

**1931****Price**

Symphony No. 1

Music

Varèse

*Ionisation***Literature**

Sackville-West

*All Passion Spent***Art**

Hopper

*Route 6, Eastham***History**

Veterans Compensation Act



Carnival Overture

Antonín Dvořák

Born in Nelahozeves, Bohemia, September 8, 1841

Died in Prague, May 1, 1904

Antonín Dvořák deftly negotiated competing profiles amid the contentious musical politics during the last quarter of the 19th century. He benefited from, but sought not to be limited by, his Czech heritage. He enjoyed a ready market for compositions like his Moravian Duets and Slavonic Dances that brought his initial fame. But Dvořák, something of a late bloomer compositionally, aspired to compete on an international scale, to have symphonies and concertos performed by the leading musicians in the preeminent European venues. He succeeded in this brilliantly over time. He was awarded an honorary doctorate from Cambridge University (he visited England often) and was recruited at great cost to come to New York City to be director of the National Conservatory of Music.

Another challenge that Dvořák faced was whether to write “absolute” or “program” music. In the so-called War of the Romantics, the former was most associated with composers like Mendelssohn, Schumann, and Brahms who were pitted against the “New German School” exemplified by Berlioz, Liszt, and Wagner. Brahms was central to both of these challenges that Dvořák confronted. He was an ardent supporter of the younger composer and recommended him to his own German publisher, Fritz Simrock, which led to the release of the duets and dances. Dvořák was quick to point out that these works proved a “goldmine” for Simrock but that he wanted to move on to release bigger works that would be judged as part of the great tradition of Western music, not as a colorful, quaint, local phenomenon.

Absolute or Program Music

At first Dvořák in his orchestral music appeared to follow the Brahmsian position of absolute music, writing symphonies and concertos without explicit programs. But over time he became

drawn to extra-musical sources. After finishing his final symphony, "From the New World," in 1893, he turned to writing symphonic poems, a move that did not please the powerful critic Eduard Hanslick, who wrote:

I am afraid that with this detailed programmatic music Dvořák has stepped onto a slippery slope which, in the end, leads to—Richard Strauss. ... I just cannot accept that I must now put Dvořák ... on a level with Richard Strauss; he is a true musician who has proved a hundred times that he needs no program and no description to enchant us through the medium of pure, absolute music.

Just as Wagner, Liszt, and Strauss were primarily drawn to German literature, Dvořák often looked to Czech sources, such as supernatural tales by Karel Jaromír Erben, who inspired four symphonic poems in 1896: *The Water Sprite*, *The Noonday Witch*, *The Wood Dove*, and *The Golden Spinning Wheel*. A few years earlier he completed a cycle of three overtures: *In Nature's Realm*, *Carnival*, and *Othello*. His American adventure was about to begin with the first performances of the set taking place on opposite sides of the Atlantic. Dvořák conducted the world premiere in April 1892 at a farewell concert in Prague and led the United States premiere in October at a Carnegie Hall concert welcoming him to New York.

A Closer Look

Dvořák had initially conceived this "novelty," as he called it, as a trio of tone poems that together would depict "the creative forces of the universe: *Nature*, *Life*, and *Love*." In 1893 he wrote to Simrock, with the titles close to final, that he was uncertain about the last piece: "'Othello'? or 'Tragic'? or even 'Eroica'? Or should I leave them just 'Overtures'? No, because this is, to a certain extent, still program music."

The three overtures are interconnected musically as a shared "nature" theme appears in each of them. Altogether the works even suggest a sort of symphony, with a lyrical first movement, a boisterous scherzo, and concluding with a dramatic finale. *Carnival* begins with a joyous burst of energy for the full orchestra that returns several times before slowing down for a section in which woodwinds present the "nature" theme. The piece builds to an exuberant conclusion, truly a celebration of life.

—Christopher H. Gibbs

The Carnival Overture was composed in 1891.

Fritz Scheel was on the podium for the first Philadelphia Orchestra performances of Dvořák's Carnival, in January 1903. The work has appeared on subscription concerts a few times per decade since then, the most recent being in October 2003, with Yakov Kreizberg.

The Philadelphia Orchestra recorded Carnival in 1957 for CBS with Eugene Ormandy and in 1999 for Water Lily Acoustics with Wolfgang Sawallisch.

The score calls for piccolo, two flutes, two oboes, English horn, two clarinets, two bassoons, four horns, two trumpets, three trombones, tuba, timpani, percussion (cymbals, tambourine, triangle), harp, and strings.

The Carnival Overture runs approximately 9 minutes in performance.



Violin Concerto No. 1

Karol Szymanowski

Born in Tymoszkówka, Ukraine, October 3, 1882

Died in Lausanne, Switzerland, March 29, 1937

Karol Szymanowski was born in 1882, the same year as Igor Stravinsky and just one after Béla Bartók. Along with the older Leoš Janáček, these composers carved out a special space in early-20th-century music. All four came from outside the “center” of the European musical tradition, but they variously traveled to, and learned from, Germany and France, and were deeply influenced by compositional currents in those countries, be it Mahler or Richard Strauss, Debussy or Ravel. At the same time, they were often inspired by, and drew from, the musical traditions of their native lands, particularly from folk music. Of the four, Stravinsky went on to enjoy the most celebrated and international career, while Bartók is especially esteemed for the brilliant incorporation of his folk explorations into his own music. Janáček’s reputation has risen steadily in recent decades, spurred in part by the greatness of his operas. Szymanowski remains the least known and appreciated. Undoubtedly the leading Polish composer of his era—indeed, the preeminent figure between Chopin and Witold Lutosławski—he awaits appropriately broad rediscovery.

Born on his Polish family’s estate in Ukraine, Szymanowski received his earliest musical training at home before moving to Warsaw in his late teens for more formal study. In his mid-20s he went to Berlin in the hopes of expanding his horizons, and after some time back in Poland spent nearly two years in Vienna beginning in 1911, the year of Mahler’s death. Wagner and Strauss were his models at the time. The influences broaden as he developed an interest in the East and also traveled to North Africa. His musical allegiances turned from late German Romanticism to the French Impressionism of Debussy, the Modernism of Stravinsky, as well as the Russian mysticism of

Scriabin. This wide range of influences would later merge with his explorations of Polish folk music, especially from the region of the imposing Tatra Mountains, a feature evident in his Second Violin Concerto written some 18 years after the First Concerto we hear today.

Creating a Distinctive Musical Voice

Szymanowski's search for his own voice during the time of the First World War produced a sort of neo-Impressionist mysticism exhibited in the First Violin Concerto, as well as in his Third Symphony from the same time. He composed the Concerto unusually quickly, sketching it during the summer of 1916 and orchestrating it in the fall. His good friend, the violinist Paweł Kochański, to whom he dedicated the piece and who wrote the final cadenza so intimately connected to the one-movement whole, actively assisted him. Given that Szymanowski battled with serious depression, drinking, poor health, and financial insecurity during the latter part of his career, the enormous pleasure, confidence, and pride he took in this Concerto is striking: "I must say that I am very happy with the whole thing—again a new, different music, but at the same time a bit of a return to the old. The whole thing is terribly fantastic and unexpected."

Szymanowski intended for Kochański to perform the Concerto in February 1917 in St. Petersburg under the direction of Alexander Siloti, but the defeat of Russia by the Germans and the abdication of Czar Nicholas II thwarted those plans. Kochański had moved to America by November 1922, when the Warsaw Philharmonic premiered the work with its concertmaster, Józef Ozimiński, as soloist. Yet the composer kept his collaborator informed, telling him of the first performance: "The sound is so magical that people here were completely transfixed. And just imagine, Paweleczek, the violin comes out on top the whole time! There are perhaps three or four measures when the orchestra obscures it. It is my greatest triumph!" Kochański gave the American premiere of the Concerto with The Philadelphia Orchestra under Leopold Stokowski on November 28, 1924.

Closer Look

Beginning with some of the earliest critical studies of Szymanowski's music, including books and articles that the composer would have read and could have corrected (but did not), the Violin Concerto has been linked with the poem *May Night* by Tadeusz

Miciński, a work full of exoticism that merges Eastern and Western imagery. As biographer Jim Samson has observed: "It is unlikely that Szymanowski borrowed much more than the atmosphere of Miciński's *May Night*, but it is worth pointing out that the atmosphere does fuse a full-blooded ecstasy of expression with an other-worldly fantasy."

The idea of a continuous symphony, which merges multiple movements into one played without pause, was very much in the air at the time—Schoenberg and Sibelius come to mind—and may have inspired Szymanowski's innovative one movement structure for the Concerto, which in some ways enfolds the traditional three movements of the genre. The neo-Impressionism is immediately evident in the glittering opening (*Vivace assai*), material that will return at various points in the piece. The pace slows down some when the soloist enters, but the first section (or "movement") generally has a scherzo character. A more reflective *Andantino* comes next, filled with lush Romantic passages, followed by the third section (*Vivace assai*) that merges a scherzo-like vitality with dance. After the violin cadenza, there are brief references to the opening of the Concerto that provide a frame to end the work.

—Christopher H. Gibbs

Szymanowski composed his First Violin Concerto in 1916.

Paul Kochański, Leopold Stokowski, and The Philadelphia Orchestra gave the United States premiere of the Concerto in November 1924. The only other performances by the Orchestra were in October 1989 with Orchestra Associate Concertmaster David Arben and Christoph Eschenbach, in October 2005 with violinist Nikolaj Szeps-Znaider and Vladimir Jurowski, and in January 2022 with Lisa Batiashvili and Yannick Nézet-Séguin.

The score calls for solo violin, three flutes (III doubling piccolo), three oboes (III doubling English horn), three clarinets (III doubling E-flat clarinet), bass clarinet, three bassoons (III doubling contrabassoon), four horns, three trumpets, three trombones, tuba, timpani, percussion (bass drum, cymbals, glockenspiel, snare drum, tambourine, triangle), two harps, piano (doubling celesta), and strings.

The Concerto runs approximately 25 minutes in performance.



Symphony No. 1

Florence Price

Born in Little Rock, Arkansas, April 9, 1887

Died in Chicago, June 3, 1953

Composers require advocacy. Mozart needed Haydn to promote his string quartets. Mendelssohn revived Bach's St. Matthew Passion and Leonard Bernstein breathed new life into Mahler's symphonies. Sometimes history's vagaries forge new paths for an artist's legacy, such as the discovery of 10 water-logged master tapes of Bob Marley and the Wailers live concerts. The legacy of Florence Price, a composer of great talent, found itself at a crossroads in 2022 with the nation's spotlight on the injustices perpetrated on Blacks and the 2009 discovery of a treasure trove of her works at her summer home in St. Anne, Illinois—where scores were strewn on the floor after an apparent robbery. The home's new owners contacted the University of Arkansas and donated scores to Price's archive. An important step in the long march for social justice is to perform, record, teach, conduct, research, and respect the life and work of Florence Price.

Early Promise

Price was born in Little Rock, Arkansas, in 1887. Her father was a dentist and her mother a music teacher, and Price attended the same elementary school as the composer William Grant Still, although he was two years younger. She demonstrated precocity for school and music, graduating from high school as valedictorian at age 14. Her parents sent her to the New England Conservatory of Music to pursue organ and piano and she studied composition with George Chadwick, who had taken an interest in spirituals, including them in his own music. Upon graduation Price moved home to Arkansas for a brief time before taking a job at what is now Clark Atlanta University as head of the music department. She returned to Little Rock, where racial injustice

made it impossible for her to thrive. She left for Chicago in 1927 and became part of a community of exceptional musicians and intellectuals known as the Black Chicago Renaissance.

In 1932 the Chicago Defender announced a musical contest, “an event of paramount importance open to all musical composers of the Race,” cosponsored by NANM (National Association of Negro Musicians) and the Wanamaker’s department store. Margaret Bonds, a student and composer friend of Price’s, recalled, “We all prayed, and Florence won \$500 for a symphony [her First Symphony]. Our prayers were powerful because Florence also won \$250 for a piano sonata, and I won \$250 for an art song.” It was this symphony that Frederick Stock, conductor of the Chicago Symphony, would include in a 1933 concert, enshrining Price’s Symphony No. 1 as the first composition by a Black woman to be played by a major orchestra. The concert was part of the Chicago World’s Fair, whose theme was “A Century of Progress.” Contemporary writings about the event emphasized the Symphony as a symbol of uplift and community.

Price composed over 300 pieces, 40 of which are large-scale works, 100 or so songs, chamber music, and settings of spirituals for piano and voice. Marian Anderson sang Price’s arrangement of “My Soul Is Anchored in the Lord” to conclude her 1939 concert at the Lincoln Memorial before 75,000 people. Together Price and Anderson advocated for equality through music’s unstoppable pulse.

A Closer Look

Price’s First Symphony is a panoply of gorgeous instrumental timbres expertly displayed within a traditional four-movement symphonic frame. The first movement, **Allegro ma non troppo**, is in sonata form. It opens with a syncopated bassoon solo, recalling Dvořák’s “New World” Symphony. Instruments swell and billow. A long contrasting middle section captures tranquility, as if Price is musically painting the great American pastime: sitting on the porch. Peace is disturbed with a return of the first theme and brass and percussive blasts end the movement. The second movement is marked **Largo, maestoso** and commences with a four-part brass hymn texture, which infuses the Symphony with transcendence. The movement is optimistic, and full of space, much like music by Copland, and like Debussy’s tone poems it rarely reaches an overwhelming forte, reverent in its subtle changes in dynamics.

Leading us out of church and into a party, the third movement, **Juba Dance: Allegro**, is in duple meter (4/8) with a catchy syncopated melody. Price intended that each of her symphonies have a juba, or stomping, dance, which some scholars see as the precursor to tap dancing. She demonstrates her gift for catchy melodies and introduces small and large African drums and a wind whistle into the work. The last movement, **Finale: Presto**, is a Haydnesque rondo in 6/8. The dance continues faster, as strings take over the orchestration, propelling the pleasing movement forward. Trumpets and flutes take on the rondo theme and the Symphony ends triumphantly with a triple *fff*.

—Aaron Beck

Florence Price composed her First Symphony from 1931 to 1932.

The first complete Philadelphia Orchestra performance of the Symphony was on the Digital Stage in November 2020 with Yannick Nézet-Séguin.

Nézet-Séguin and the Orchestra recorded the Symphony for Deutsche Grammophon.

The score calls for two piccolos, two flutes, two oboes, two clarinets, two bassoons, four horns, two trumpets, three trombones, tuba, timpani, percussion (African drums, bass drum, cymbals, cathedral chimes, snare drum, triangle, wind whistle), celesta, and strings.

Performance time is approximately 40 minutes.

GENERAL TERMS

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

Juba dance: An African-American style of dance that involves stomping as well as slapping and patting the arms, legs, chest, and cheeks

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.

Rondo: A form frequently used in symphonies and concertos for the final movement. It consists of a main section that alternates with a variety of contrasting sections (A-B-A-C-A etc.).

Scherzo: Literally "a joke." Usually the third movement of symphonies and quartets that was introduced by Beethoven to replace the minuet. The scherzo is followed by a gentler section called a trio, after which the scherzo is repeated. Its characteristics are a rapid tempo, vigorous rhythm, and humorous contrasts. Also an instrumental piece of a light, piquant, humorous character.

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.

Syncopation: A shift of rhythmic emphasis off the beat

Symphonic or Tone poem: A type of 19th-century symphonic piece in one movement, which is based upon an extramusical idea, either poetic or descriptive

THE SPEED OF MUSIC (Tempo)

Allegro: Bright, fast

Andantino: Slightly quicker than walking speed

Largo: Broad

Maestoso: Majestic

Presto: Very fast

Vivace: Lively

TEMPO MODIFIERS

Assai: Much

Ma non troppo: But not too much

DYNAMIC MARKS

Forte (f), fortississimo (fff): Loud, very loud