

2023–2024 | 124th Season

The Philadelphia Orchestra

Friday, January 5, at 2:00

Saturday, January 6, at 8:00

Sunday, January 7, at 2:00

Gil Shaham Leader and Violin

Charlotte Blake Alston Speaker

Mozart Violin Concerto No. 2 in D major, K. 211

I. Allegro moderato

II. Andante

III. Rondeau: Allegro

Mozart Adagio in E major, K. 261, for violin and orchestra

Mozart Rondo in C major, K. 373, for violin and orchestra

Intermission

Mozart Violin Concerto No. 5 in A major, K. 219

I. Allegro aperto

II. Adagio

III. Rondeau: Tempo di menuetto—Allegro

This program runs approximately 1 hour, 30 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.

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Philadelphia
Orchestra
Yannick Nézet-Séguin
Music and Artistic Director

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The Philadelphia Orchestra

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Yannick Nézet-Séguin is now in his 12th season with The Philadelphia Orchestra, serving as music and artistic director. 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 around the community, in classrooms and hospitals, and over the airwaves and online. The 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

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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, launching a five-decade commitment of people-to-people exchange.

Under Yannick's leadership, the Orchestra returned to recording with 13 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.

Leader and Soloist



Gil Shaham made his Philadelphia Orchestra debut in 1988 at the Mann Center and has performed regularly with the Philadelphians ever since. He is one of the foremost violinists of our time. His flawless technique, combined with his inimitable warmth and generosity of spirit, has solidified his renown as an American master. The GRAMMY Award winner and *Musical America* "Instrumentalist of the Year" is sought after throughout the world for concerto appearances

with leading orchestras and conductors. He regularly gives recitals and appears with ensembles on the world's great concert stages and at the most prestigious festivals. Highlights of recent years include the acclaimed recording and performances of J.S. Bach's complete sonatas and partitas for solo violin. In the coming seasons, in addition to championing these solo works, he will join his long-time duo partner, pianist Akira Eguchi, in recitals throughout North America, Europe, and Asia. Appearances with orchestra regularly include the Berlin, Israel, New York, and Los Angeles philharmonics; the Boston, Chicago, and San Francisco symphonies; the Orchestre de Paris; and multi-year residencies with the orchestras of Montreal, Stuttgart, and Singapore.

Mr. Shaham has recorded more than two dozen concerto and solo CDs, earning multiple GRAMMYS, a Grand Prix du Disque, the Diapason d'Or, and *Gramophone* Editor's Choice awards. Many of these recordings appear on Canary Classics, the label he founded in 2004. His recordings include *1930s Violin Concertos*, *Virtuoso Violin Works*, Elgar's Violin Concerto, *Hebrew Melodies*, *The Butterfly Lovers*, and many more. His *1930s Violin Concertos Vol. 2* was nominated for a GRAMMY Award. His latest recording of Beethoven and Brahms concertos with the Knights was released in 2021.

Born in Champaign-Urbana, Illinois, in 1971, Mr. Shaham moved with his parents to Israel, where he began violin studies at the age of seven, receiving annual scholarships from the America-Israel Cultural Foundation. In 1981 he made debuts with the Jerusalem Symphony and the Israel Philharmonic. In 1982, after taking first prize in Israel's Claremont Competition, he became a scholarship student at the Juilliard School. He also studied at Columbia University. He was awarded an Avery Fisher Career Grant in 1990 and in 2008 received the coveted Avery Fisher Prize. In 2012 he was named "Instrumentalist of the Year" by *Musical America*. He plays the 1699 "Countess Polignac" Stradivarius and also an Antonio Stradivari violin, Cremona c. 1719, with the assistance of Rare Violins in Consortium, Artists and Benefactors Collaborative. He lives in New York City with his wife, violinist Adele Anthony, and their three children.

Speaker



Charlotte Blake Alston is an internationally acclaimed storyteller, narrator, and librettist. In July 2021 she was named The Philadelphia Orchestra's Imasogie Storyteller, Narrator, and Host. She has appeared as host and narrator on the Orchestra's School and Family concerts since 1991 and has been the host of Sound All Around, the Orchestra's preschool concert series, since 1994. She has also appeared on each of the Orchestra's Martin Luther King, Jr., Tribute Concerts since 2003.

Committed to keeping alive African and African-American oral traditions, Ms. Alston has performed on national and regional stages including the Smithsonian Institution, the National Museum of Women in the Arts, and the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts. She has been a featured artist at the National Storytelling Festival, the National Festival of Black Storytelling, and festivals in Ireland, Switzerland, South Africa, and Brazil. She has performed at presidential inaugural festivities in Washington, D.C., and the Pennsylvania Gubernatorial Children's Inaugural Celebrations in Harrisburg. She was also one of two storytellers selected to present at the opening of the National Museum of African American History and Culture in Washington, D.C. She has been guest narrator for several orchestras including the Cleveland Orchestra, the Boston Symphony, and the Los Angeles Philharmonic. During a 20-year association with Carnegie Hall, she was the featured preconcert artist, host, and narrator on the Family, School, and Global Encounters concert series and represented the Hall in Miyazaki, Japan. She has also performed as a touring artist for Lincoln Center Institute.

Ms. Alston has produced several commissioned texts for orchestras and choirs including original narration for Saint-Saëns's *The Carnival of the Animals* and Rimsky-Korsakov's *Sheherazade*. Her honors include two honorary PhDs, a Pew Fellowship in the Arts, and the Circle of Excellence Award from the National Storytelling Association. She is the recipient of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania's Artist of the Year Award and the Zora Neale Hurston Award, the highest award bestowed by the National Association of Black Storytellers. In 2023 she received the Distinguished Artist Award at the New Jersey Governor's Awards for Excellence in the Arts in Education.

Framing the Program

Parallel Events

1775

Mozart

Violin

Concertos

Nos. 2 and 5

Music

Paisiello

Il gran Cid

Literature

Beaumarchais

The Barber of

Seville

Art

Chardin

Self-Portrait

History

Start of the

American

Revolution

1776

Mozart

Adagio in E

major

Music

Haydn

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Literature

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Fragonard

The

Washerwoman

History

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C major

Music

Boccherini

Stabat Mater

Literature

Sheridan

A Trip to

Scarborough

Art

David

Belisarius

Begging for

Alms

History

Uranus is

discovered

We tend to think of Mozart primarily as a great composer while also recognizing that he was also a celebrated keyboard virtuoso. His performing skills in fact extended further as he was one of the leading violinists of his time. His violin concertos—of which we hear two on this program—date from relatively early in his career.

The concert today offers a rare opportunity not only to experience GRAMMY Award-winning violinist Gil Shaham conduct and play concertos, but also to hear two much rarer pieces Mozart wrote for violin and orchestra. The Adagio in E major was an alternative middle movement for the Fifth Concerto, which concludes the concert. That Concerto is known as the "Turkish" because the final movement has a long middle section in the so-called Turkish style. Mozart composed the charming Rondo in C major some years later for a friend.

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HEAR
TOGETHER



The Music

Violin Concertos Nos. 2 and 5, Adagio in E major, and Rondo in C major

Wolfgang Amadè Mozart

Born in Salzburg, January 27, 1756

Died in Vienna, December 5, 1791



"You yourself do not know how well you play the violin; if you will only do yourself credit and play with energy, with your whole heart and mind, yes, just as if you were the first violinist in all Europe." This wise advice to the young Mozart came from a leading expert on the instrument, the author of one of the most celebrated instrumental how-to manuals ever written: *A Treatise on the Fundamentals of Violin Playing* (1756). The expert happened to be Mozart's father, the formidable Leopold.

We so much associate Mozart the performer with his astonishing powers as a pianist, widely hailed as one of the great virtuosos of his day, that it is easy to miss his further renown as a violinist. He was already astounding contemporaries with his fiddling skills at age seven, and by 14 he was the concertmaster of the Salzburg Court Orchestra. At 21 he reports to Leopold about playing one of the concertos that "went down a treat. Everyone praised my beautiful, pure tone."

Mozart frequently performed concertos, his own and those by others, and while on tour knew he could substitute a violin concerto if the available keyboard instrument proved unsatisfactory. Although he did not write nearly as many concertos for violin as he did for keyboard, nor did he retain much interest in the instrument in his later years, he nonetheless made a crucial contribution to the concerto repertoire.

Mozart's Violin Concertos There have long been confusions about the chronology, numbering, and authenticity of Mozart's violin concertos. In the standard counting five are acknowledged, all thought to have been written in a miraculous six-month period from June to December 1775. The first of them, however, the Concerto in B-flat, K. 207, has convincingly been re-dated to April 1773, which makes it the earliest of any of Mozart's original concertos. (His first piano concertos were arrangements of solo keyboard sonatas by various composers, including J.C. Bach, for which he provided orchestral accompaniments.)

The remaining four concertos (K. 211, 216, 218, 219) were indeed composed in the latter half of 1775, but Mozart also wrote what are in essence further three-movement violin concertos that he inserted within larger multi-movement serenades (for example, K. 185, 203, 204, 250). The issue of how many violin concertos he wrote in total is further complicated by incomplete, lost, and doubtful works, as well as by an outright forgery, the "Adelaide."

In any event, Mozart composed all the authentic violin concertos before his 21st birthday and for the rest of his life concentrated on concertos for piano, wind, or brass instruments, as well as writing the marvelous Sinfonia concertante for Violin and Viola (K. 364). We know almost nothing of him playing the violin in later years, as once he left Salzburg and settled in Vienna he seems to have preferred the viola when given the chance. He occasionally participated in string quartet readings with composers Joseph Haydn and Johann Baptist Vanhal as the violinists and Carl Ditters von Dittersdorf as cellist.

Violin Concerto No. 2

It is unclear what prompted Mozart to write the four violin concertos in 1775 or for whom they were initially intended. He played them himself, as did his Salzburg colleague, the virtuoso Antonio Brunetti. The Second Concerto, completed on June 14, 1775, carried the title *Concerto facile* (Easy Concerto) when it was first published in 1802, a misleading label that reflects the growing cult of the virtuoso that Beethoven and others would exploit to the fullest in their concertos. As with so much of Mozart's music, it is sensitivity to balance, phrasing, and style that challenges the soloist more than fast and flashy pyrotechnics.

The first movement (**Allegro moderato**) opens with a bold orchestral statement that the soloist soon takes up. The violin part in particular makes use of frequent trills, a feature some commentators suggest Mozart may have adopted from earlier Italian composer and violinist Giuseppe Tartini. The **Andante** projects the lyrical, almost vocal, charm so often found in the composer's operas and in slow movements of concertos. The soloist and orchestra state the theme of the final **Rondeau: Allegro**, a movement in which the violin predominates. Indeed, although Mozart would continue to use an intimate orchestration of just oboes, horns, and strings in the concertos he wrote over the next few months, the role of the orchestra is unusually restrained in the D-major Concerto.

Mozart composed his Second Violin Concerto in 1775.

Vladimir Spivakov was the soloist in the first Philadelphia Orchestra performances of the Concerto, in April 1990; Christoph Eschenbach conducted. Since then it has appeared on the 2002 Opening Night Concert with Gil Shaham and Wolfgang Sawallisch and in 2008 in Saratoga with Shaham and Marin Alsop.

Mozart scored the piece for an orchestra of solo violin, two oboes, two horns, and strings.

The Second Concerto runs approximately 22 minutes in performance.

Violin Concerto No. 5

The concert today concludes with the last of Mozart's violin concertos, dated December 20, 1775. It is the longest and most elaborate, the finale of which provides its unofficial nickname: "Turkish." Why was Mozart fascinated with "exotic" music, and what exactly did he, Beethoven, and other composers really know of it? Nearly 50 years ago the Hungarian musicologist Bence Szabolcsi made a compelling case that what they knew was actually Hungarian and "gypsy" (Romani) music, some of which was itself inflected by music from the Ottoman Empire. When Mozart said he wrote something *alla turca* (in the Turkish manner), he was saying something similar to Hungarian peasants who used the term *Törökös*. As musicologist Neal Zaslaw puts it, what Mozart creates is "a parody of a parody. Although this music is in a completely Western manner, it evokes something foreign that is simultaneously the subject of admiration, fear, and ridicule."

Zaslaw speculates that Mozart might have heard some of this music on his early travels to Hungary or, more likely, from composer Michael Haydn (younger brother of Joseph), who had spent years there before becoming Mozart's superior in Salzburg. Mozart had used one of the final movement's melodies three years earlier in a ballet entitled *Le gelosie del serraglio* (Jealousy in the Seraglio). "Turkish" music usually makes prominent use of brass instruments and percussion (as Beethoven shows in his Ninth Symphony); Mozart produces something of the same percussive effect by having the lower string instrumentalists bounce the wood of their bows on the strings.

The opening movement (**Allegro aperto**) offers a wealth of melodic material including an unusual entrance for the soloist: Rather than presenting a version of the orchestral introduction, the pace slows for the violinist to play a new theme. After a lyrical **Adagio** (which Mozart later replaced with another we heard earlier on the concert today), the rondeau finale (**Tempo di menuetto**) alternates a polite minuet theme with contrasting sections. In this case the form is quite extended (ABACADABA) with the long D section in the middle the "Turkish" part.

Mozart's A-major Violin Concerto was composed in 1775.

Alexander Petschnikoff was the soloist in the first Philadelphia Orchestra performances of the Fifth Violin Concerto, in December 1906 with Fritz Scheel on the podium. The most recent subscription performances were in November 2013, with Christian Tetzlaff as the soloist and Manfred Honeck.

Mozart scored the work for two oboes, two horns, strings, and solo violin.

The Concerto runs approximately 30 minutes in performance.



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Yannick Nézet-Séguin Music Director

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Photo: Jeff Fusco

Two Small Gems

Mozart also composed three separate movements for his Salzburg colleague Antonio Brunetti, of which we hear two today performed between the concertos. The **Adagio in E major** (K. 261) was originally written at Brunetti's request as a substitute slow movement for the Fifth Concerto. Mozart dated the autograph in 1776 and we have some information from a letter of Leopold's that refers to "the Adagio you wrote for Brunetti, because he found the other one too artificial." It is not clear what he meant by "artificial" (or "studied"), but the substitute movement is considerably shorter if not necessarily simpler. The concert today offers the best of both worlds with the unusual opportunity to hear the two of them together. Mozart seems to have liked K. 261 as he apparently retooled it some years later for one of several works he wrote for "musical clocks," or what we would call music boxes.

The **Rondo in C major** (K. 373) dates from some years after all of Mozart's other concerted violin pieces. In 1781 he, Brunetti, and Francesco Ceccarelli, a castrato singer, were part of a contingent from Salzburg that accompanied the archbishop to Vienna where he gave a concert at the palace of Prince Rudolf Colloredo, father of the archbishop. Mozart informed his father about an event there on April 8: "Today (for I am writing at 11PM) we had a concert, where three of my compositions were performed—the new ones, of course; a concerto-rondo for Brunetti [K. 373]; a sonata for myself with violin accompaniment [K. 379], which I composed last night between 11 and 12 (but in order to be able to finish it, I wrote only the part for Brunetti and retained my own part in my head); and then a rondo [K. 374] for Ceccarelli, which he had to repeat." The Rondo in C major (*Allegretto grazioso*) is similar to the finales of Mozart's concertos, if somewhat briefer. It presents a simple tune, charming and memorable, with an accompaniment of strings and pairs of horns and oboes.

The Adagio in E major was composed in 1776 and the Rondo in C major in 1781.

The Philadelphia Orchestra's first performances of the Adagio were in February 1967, with Isaac Stern and Eugene Ormandy. Most recently it appeared in December 1986, with Associate Concertmaster David Arben and Gilbert Levine. The Orchestra's first performance of the Rondo was in December 1959, with David Oistrakh as soloist and Ormandy on the podium. The work's most recent appearance was on subscription programs in October 1974, with Pinchas Zukerman and Claudio Abbado conducting.

The score of the Adagio calls for solo violin, two flutes, two horns, and strings, while the score for the Rondo calls for solo violin, two oboes, two horns, and strings.

Performance time of the Adagio is approximately five minutes and of the Rondo is approximately four minutes.

—Note by Christopher H. Gibbs

The Philadelphia Orchestra
Yannick Nézet-Séguin Music Director



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Lead support for APPLE is generously given by Dr. Richard M. Klein. The APPLE program is funded in part by the Nancy and William A. Loeb Student Education Fund.

Musical Terms

GENERAL TERMS

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

Chord: The simultaneous sounding of three or more tones

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

Concertante: A work featuring one or more solo instruments

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

K.: Abbreviation for Köchel, the chronological list of all the works of Mozart made by Ludwig von Köchel

Legato: Smooth, even, without any break between notes

Meter: The symmetrical grouping of musical rhythms

Minuet: A dance in triple time commonly used up to the beginning of the 19th century as the lightest movement of a symphony

Rondo (or Rondeau): 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.).

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

Serenade: An instrumental composition written for a small ensemble and having characteristics of the suite and the sonata

Sonata: An instrumental composition in three or four extended movements contrasted in theme, tempo, and mood, usually for a solo instrument

Suite: During the Baroque period, an instrumental genre consisting of several movements in the same key, some or all of which were based on the forms and styles of dance music. Later, a group of pieces extracted from a larger work, especially an opera or ballet.

Tonic: The keynote of a scale

Trill: A type of embellishment that consists, in a more or less rapid alternation, of the main note with the one a tone or half tone above it

THE SPEED OF MUSIC (Tempo)

Adagio: Leisurely, slow

Allegretto: A tempo between walking speed and fast

Allegro: Bright, fast

Allegro aperto: A definite allegro tempo

Andante: Walking speed

Grazioso: Graceful and easy

Moderato: A moderate tempo, neither fast nor slow

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Yannick Nézet-Séguin
Music and Artistic Director

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