

2023–2024 | 124th Season

The Philadelphia Orchestra

Friday, October 6, at 2:00

Saturday, October 7, at 8:00

Sunday, October 8, at 2:00

Yannick Nézet-Séguin Conductor

Daniil Trifonov Piano

Gershwin Piano Concerto in F

I. Allegro

II. Adagio—Andante con moto

III. Allegro agitato

Intermission

Clyne *This Moment*

Still Symphony No. 4 ("Autochthonous")

I. Moderately

II. Slowly

III. With a Graceful Lilt

IV. Slowly and Reverently

First Philadelphia Orchestra performances

This program runs approximately 1 hour, 50 minutes.

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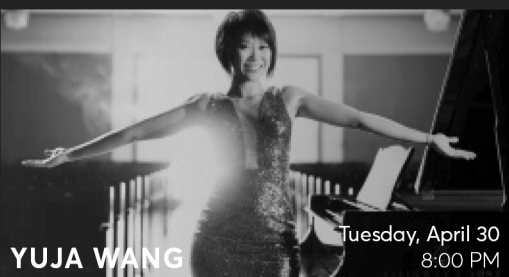
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The Philadelphia Orchestra

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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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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.

Soloist

Dario Acosta



GRAMMY Award–winning pianist **Daniil Trifonov** is a solo artist, champion of the concerto repertoire, chamber and vocal collaborator, and composer. Combining consummate technique with rare sensitivity and depth, his performances are a perpetual source of wonder. With *Transcendental*, the Liszt collection that marked his third title as an exclusive Deutsche Grammophon (DG) artist, he won the GRAMMY Award for Best Instrumental Solo Album of 2018. Named

Gramophone's 2016 Artist of the Year and *Musical America's* 2019 Artist of the Year, he was made a Chevalier de l'Ordre des Arts et des Lettres by the French government in 2021. He first appeared with The Philadelphia Orchestra at the Saratoga Performing Arts Center in 2013 and made his subscription debut in 2015, just weeks after DG released the GRAMMY-nominated recording *Rachmaninoff Variations* with him, Yannick Nézet-Séguin, and The Philadelphia Orchestra. With Nézet-Séguin and the Orchestra he has also recorded *Destination Rachmaninoff: Arrival* and *Destination Rachmaninoff: Departure* on DG.

In the 2023–24 season, Mr. Trifonov performs Mason Bates's Concerto—a work composed for him and co-commissioned by The Philadelphia Orchestra and the San Francisco Symphony—with the Chicago Symphony, the Orchestra dell'Accademia Nazionale di Santa Cecilia, and the Deutsches Symphonie-Orchester Berlin. He also returns to the Cleveland Orchestra; the New York, Los Angeles, and Israel philharmonics; and the Orchestre de Paris, and tours the United States and Europe with the Rotterdam Philharmonic and The Philadelphia Orchestra, respectively. In recital, he tours Europe with cellist Gautier Capuçon and embarks on a high-profile transatlantic tour with a new solo program of works by Rameau, Mozart, Mendelssohn, and Beethoven.

Mr. Trifonov's DG discography also includes a live recording of his Carnegie recital debut; *Chopin Evocations*; *Silver Age*, for which he received Opus Klassik's 2021 Instrumentalist of the Year/Piano award; and the bestselling, GRAMMY-nominated double album *Bach: The Art of Life*, featuring Bach's masterpiece *The Art of Fugue*, as completed by Trifonov himself. During the 2010–11 season he won Third Prize in Warsaw's Chopin Competition, First Prize in Tel Aviv's Rubinstein Competition, and both First Prize and the Grand Prix in Moscow's Tchaikovsky Competition. Born in Nizhny Novgorod in 1991, Mr. Trifonov began his musical training at the age of five and went on to attend Moscow's Gnessin School of Music as a student of Tatiana Zelikman, before pursuing his piano studies with Sergei Babayan at the Cleveland Institute of Music. For more, please visit daniiltrifonov.com.

Framing the Program

Parallel Events

1925

Gershwin

Piano

Concerto

in F

Music

Berg

Wozzeck

Literature

Dos Passos

Manhattan

Transfer

Art

Kokoschka

Tower Bridge

History

Scopes Trial

1947

Still

Symphony

No. 4

Music

Barber

Knoxville:

Summer of 1915

Literature

Mann

Doctor Faustus

Art

Giacometti

The Pointing

Man

History

India proclaims

independence

After winning fame in his early 20s with marvelous songs, hit Broadway shows, and the dazzling *Rhapsody in Blue*, George Gershwin was commissioned in 1924 to write a piano concerto for the New York Symphony Orchestra. He commented "Many persons had thought that the *Rhapsody* was only a happy accident. Well, I went out, for one thing, to show them that there was plenty more where that had come from." The glittering work immediately scored another great success for the young composer.

Anna Clyne's *This Moment*, which The Philadelphia Orchestra gave the world premiere of in July, is a "meditative reflection" inspired by the calligraphy of the Vietnamese Buddhist monk, Zen Master, and peace activist Thích Nhất Hạnh, who once said: "this moment is full of wonders." Clyne juxtaposes this Eastern inspiration with references to Mozart's Requiem.

In 1937 The Philadelphia Orchestra gave the world premiere of William Grant Still's Second Symphony. He later titled his Fourth Symphony, which we hear today, "Autochthonous," pointing to its roots in the soil of this country. While many of Still's compositions look to the history of Black people, he said that the Fourth celebrates all Americans and "speaks of the fusion of musical cultures in North America."

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.

The Music

Piano Concerto in F

George Gershwin

Born in Brooklyn, September 26, 1898

Died in Hollywood, July 11, 1937



George Gershwin's career is an American success story, tempered (as with Mozart and Schubert) by death in his 30s cutting it short. Born to Russian-Jewish immigrants in Brooklyn, he grew up in a poor household. As was the case for his slightly younger Brooklyn contemporary Aaron Copland, music offered opportunities. But while Copland went to study abroad as an American in Paris, Gershwin dropped out of high school and started working his way up as a "song-plugger," playing Tin Pan

Alley tunes for perspective customers at a music store. Soon he was writing his own songs (his first big hit was "Swanee" in 1919) and enjoying success on Broadway.

The signal event of his early career came at age 25, on Tuesday afternoon, February 12, 1924, at a concert in New York's Aeolian Hall given by Paul Whiteman and his Palais Royal Orchestra. Gershwin played his *Rhapsody in Blue*, composed in the space of just a few weeks and then quickly orchestrated by Whiteman's favored arranger, Ferde Grofé. The *Rhapsody* was an enormous success with a capacity audience, as well as with most of the critics. The following year Gershwin became the first composer featured on the cover of *Time* magazine. His fame and wealth continued to grow.

Another Immediate Success Immediately after attending the *Rhapsody* premiere, Walter Damrosch, conductor of the New York Symphony Orchestra (later the New York Philharmonic), contacted Gershwin with a commission to write and perform a larger-form piano concerto. While the *Rhapsody* had paved the way for a new genre of a "jazz concerto," Gershwin longed to write a big "serious" score that he could call his own. Since the *Rhapsody* had been orchestrated by Grofé, his sense of "ownership" was less than complete. He commented: "Many persons had thought that the *Rhapsody* was only a happy accident. Well, I went out, for one thing, to show them that there was plenty more where that had come from. I made up my mind to do a piece of absolute music. The *Rhapsody*, as its title implied, was a blues impression. The Concerto would be unrelated to any program." It was therefore with pride that he forged ahead with the Piano Concerto in F—using the working-title of *New York Concerto*—which he orchestrated himself.

Gershwin was overwhelmed at the time with theatrical projects but started sketching the new work in May 1925. Most of the composition took place that summer at the Chautauqua Institution, the celebrated educational, religious, and cultural oasis in Western New York. "Every day between 2:00 and 6:00 and evenings between 8:00 and 10:00 you will find me diligently writing notes," Gershwin wrote to his sweetheart, Pauline Heifetz, sister of violinist Jascha, in July, "playing piano or praying (you've got to pray in Chautauqua) to the God of Melody to please be kind to me and send me some hair-raising 'blues' for my second movement."

Gershwin completed the Concerto's orchestration by mid-November and, at his own expense, arranged for a reading with 55 musicians at the Globe Theater with William Daly conducting. Gershwin and Damrosch gave the premiere at Carnegie Hall on December 3. The piece ended the concert, which had opened with an overture by Gluck, followed by Alexander Glazunov's Fifth Symphony and a suite by Henri Rabaud. The work triumphed, with the *New Yorker* critic stating that "Gershwin's piano concerto is about the most important new work that has been aired in this hamlet of ours in many somethings, and when we say 'important' we're not using a nicenellie for 'dull.'" Gershwin went on to play the piece many times, including with The Philadelphia Orchestra under Alexander Smallens in January 1936.

The Concerto was a success everywhere. "Of all those writing music of today," wrote Samuel Chotzinoff of Gershwin in an oft-quoted review for the *New York World*, "he alone actually expresses us." The composer Morton Gould, a friend of Gershwin's who, 10 years later, would become the rehearsal pianist for the original production of *Porgy and Bess*, called the Concerto "a unique and highly original piece that bypassed all the fashions and trends."

A Closer Look Gershwin wrote his own program note for the three-movement Concerto, short and to the point:

The first movement [**Allegro**] employs the Charleston rhythm. It is quick and pulsating, representing the young, enthusiastic spirit of American life. It begins with a rhythmic motif given out by the kettledrums, supported by other percussion instruments, and with a Charleston motif. ... The principal theme is announced by the bassoon. Later, a second theme is introduced by the piano.

The second movement [**Andante con moto**] has a poetic nocturnal atmosphere which has come to be referred to as the American blues, but in a purer form than in which they are usually treated. The final movement [**Allegro agitato**] reverts to the style of the first. It is an orgy of rhythms, starting violently and keeping to the same pace throughout.

—Paul J. Horsley/Christopher H. Gibbs

The Piano Concerto in F was composed in 1925.

George Gershwin himself was the pianist in the first Philadelphia Orchestra performances of the work, in January 1936; Alexander Smallens was on the podium. The Concerto has been played on regular subscription concerts only five times before this week: in December 1966 with pianist Philippe Entremont and Eugene Ormandy; in September 1998 with Garrick Ohlsson and Wolfgang Sawallisch; in January 2003 with Jon Kimura Parker and Bobby McFerrin; in November 2012 with Kirill Gerstein and Giancarlo Guerrero; and in 2017 with Jon Kimura Parker and James Gaffigan, although it has often been performed on summer concerts at the Mann Center and in Saratoga.

The Orchestra recorded Gershwin's Piano Concerto for CBS in 1967 with Entremont and Ormandy.

The score calls for solo piano, piccolo, two flutes, two oboes, English horn, two clarinets, bass clarinet, two bassoons, four horns, three trumpets, three trombones, tuba, timpani, percussion (bass drum, cymbals, gong, orchestra bells, slapstick, snare drum, suspended cymbal, triangle, wood block, xylophone), and strings.

The work runs approximately 30 minutes in performance.

The Music

This Moment

Anna Clyne

Born in London, March 9, 1980

Now living in New Paltz, New York



Anna Clyne is one of the most performed composers working today, with commissions and performances from institutions including Carnegie Hall, the Kennedy Center, MoMA, the Barbican, the Philharmonie de Paris, the Edinburgh International Festival, and the Last Night of the Proms. Her music has been performed by the New York Philharmonic and the London Philharmonic, among many other orchestras, and she has been a prolific composer in residence, with stints

with the Helsinki Philharmonic, the Symphony Orchestra of Castilla y León, the Philharmonia Orchestra, the Trondheim Symphony, the Baltimore Symphony, the Chicago Symphony, and the Scottish Chamber Orchestra. Her collaborators span art forms and genres—including companies from LA Opera to San Francisco Ballet, and performers from Yo-Yo Ma to Björk.

Born in London, Clyne earned a Bachelor of Music degree with honors from Edinburgh University, where she studied with Marina Adamia, and then went on to receive a Master of Music from the Manhattan School of Music, where she studied with Julia Wolfe. Clyne has been awarded the Hindemith Prize, a Charles Ives Fellowship from the American Academy of Arts and Letters, and in 2015 was nominated for a GRAMMY Award for Best Contemporary Classical Composition.

Multi-inspirational Many of Clyne's works are inspired by other music, art, literature, and even found objects—her catalogue includes pieces based on Scottish fiddle tunes, paintings by Mark Rothko, the writings of Leo Tolstoy, and a thrift-store violin. *This Moment*, composed in 2022, takes inspiration from two sources widely separated by time and religious tradition: Wolfgang Amadè Mozart's Requiem (1791) and Thích Nhất Hạnh's book of Zen calligraphy, *This Moment Is Full of Wonders* (2015).

Thích Nhất Hạnh (1926–2022) is perhaps best known for his series of small books with titles like *How to Eat*, *How to Love*, *How to Sit*, and *How to See*. He popularized the concept of mindfulness in the West, and applied Buddhist philosophy to both small personal problems and major geopolitical crises. Exiled from his native Vietnam, he founded the Plum Village Monastery in southwestern France, which continues to champion a socially engaged school of Buddhism.

A Closer Look *This Moment* was commissioned by the League of American Orchestras with the generous support of the Virginia B. Toulmin Foundation and was premiered by The Philadelphia Orchestra and Yannick Nézet-Séguin at the Bravo! Vail Music Festival in Colorado this past July. Covering the premiere for *I Care If You Listen* (an independent publication of the American Composers Forum), Esteban Meneses wrote:

Solemn and wrenching, *This Moment* emerges from glacial strings, with a lightly brushed ominous gong and a bowed vibraphone. A long, anguished theme starts taking shape in the strings, with languid responses from the woodwinds. Suddenly, the music gets much louder, with tuba and trombones blasting sustained tones; when the theme for strings returns, it is transmogrified, its character changed and shaken up by loud gong crashes.

In her own note about the piece, Clyne writes:

This Moment is inspired by the calligraphy of Vietnamese Buddhist monk, Zen Master, and peace activist Thích Nhất Hạnh, who passed away in January 2022 at the age of 95. It is a meditation on his words "this moment is full of wonders."

This Moment is also a response to our collective grief and loss in recent years, and borrows two moments from Mozart's Requiem.

"The meditation on death is a very important meditation. When you meditate on death, you love life more, you cherish life more. We can learn many lessons from it."—Thích Nhất Hạnh

The first moment borrowed from Mozart's Requiem is an ascending chromatic line in the sopranos, and the fugal subject in the basses, from Kyrie. The second borrowed moment is the instrumental introduction to Lacrimosa from *Sequentia*. The first line of the text, which translates as "Full of tears will be that day," reminds me of Thích Nhất Hạnh's words that "the tears I shed yesterday have become rain."

—Benjamin Pesetsky

Clyne's *This Moment* was composed in 2022.

Yannick Nézet-Séguin and The Philadelphia Orchestra gave the world premiere of the piece at the Bravo! Vail Music Festival in July 2023.

The composer scored the work for piccolo, two flutes, two oboes, English horn, two clarinets, bass clarinet, two bassoons, contrabassoon, four horns, three trumpets, three trombones, tuba, timpani, percussion (tam-tam, vibraphone [with bow]), and strings.

Performance time is approximately six minutes.

The Music

Symphony No. 4 (“Autochthonous”)

William Grant Still

Born in Woodville, Mississippi, May 11, 1895

Died in Los Angeles, December 3, 1978



William Grant Still's orchestral music is as varied and wide-ranging as 20th-century American music itself. His early compositions such as *Darker America* (1924) were written partly under the influence of Edgard Varèse, with whom he studied for two years after moving to New York. (*Musical America* praised its “powerful emotional urge and convincing sincerity.”) These works explored the adventurous tonal language of the day, while adhering to a bluesy style that embodied the

other realm in which Still thrived: as an arranger for jazz vocalists, swing bands, and Broadway musicals. He would later adopt a more straightforwardly tonal language, continuing to embrace a Modernist outlook but also assimilating popular styles in music that, over the next half-century, showed an increasingly sophisticated approach to structure and a gift for gorgeous orchestration.

Still was indeed influenced by the explosive jazz culture that emerged from the Harlem Renaissance, but this was not necessarily his first love. During his childhood in Little Rock, Arkansas, the intellectually precocious youngster had studied orchestral scores and listened to early operatic and symphonic recordings that were gaining popularity. When he enrolled at Wilberforce College at age 16, he was already composing original music and organizing fellow students to present concerts of his works. Later he sought advanced studies with George Whitfield Andrews at Oberlin College and with George Chadwick, longtime dean of the New England Conservatory.

A Master of the Symphonic Idiom Among Still's output (as many as 200 works) are eight operas, vocal works, and chamber music. The largest portion is for orchestra, and these works make it clear that Still was one of the 20th century's masters of the symphonic idiom. There are tone poems, suites, ballet scores, vocal works with orchestra, and five symphonies. Many of these speak to the Black experience, highlighting aspects of history that many Americans had chosen to overlook. *And They Lynched Him on a Tree* (1940), performed by Artur Rodziński and the New York Philharmonic in front of an audience that included Eleanor Roosevelt, carried a jarring message: “Cut him down from the gallows tree! Cut him down for the world to see,” the text reads. *In Memoriam: The Colored Soldiers Who Died for Democracy*

(1943) was written with the hope, as Still said, of making “the democracy for which they fought greater and broader than it has ever been before.”

Three of Still's early orchestral milestones comprise a trilogy: the tender tone poem *Africa* (1930), the “Afro-American” Symphony (No. 1, also from 1930), and the Symphony No. 2 (“Song of a New Race,” 1937). The First Symphony, an adventurous, energetic work, became one of the most performed symphonies by an American. The Second received its premiere by The Philadelphia Orchestra and Leopold Stokowski—a conductor who, through his career, considered Still a major voice in American music.

While the First Symphony was “intended to describe the American Negro from the outset,” Still wrote, the Second embodied a vision of an integrated society, long before this had even begun to be a reality. The third work that Still called a symphony was the “Western Hemisphere,” which expanded on the idea of the Second Symphony by embracing an even wider range of humanity. It was composed in 1945 but set aside when Still composed the “Autochthonous” in 1947, which he called Symphony No. 4. In 1958, he would compose “Sunday Symphony,” which he renumbered No. 3 to fill the gap between the Second and Fourth; the “Western Hemisphere” thus became No. 5.

Still contrasted the First Symphony, with its evocation of the beginnings of Black history in America, with the Fourth, which celebrates all Americans and “speaks of the fusion of musical cultures in North America,” as he wrote. Judith Still, the composer's daughter, elaborated, writing that the Fourth honors “people who came ‘from the soil,’ abused and enslaved ... who had been so mightily put upon when they triumphed with honor over a difficult past. Out of the soil of oppression and forced degradation they rose up ... bringing along their unique songs, humor, and distinctive, vibrant culture.”

A Closer Look While the Fourth employs original themes, its melodic material is suggestive both of the blues and of Native-American (“autochthonous”) song. It received its premiere in March 1951 in Oklahoma City, with the Oklahoma City Orchestra led by Victor Alessandro.

An opening theme in the bass sets the mood for a bold, neatly structured opening movement (**Moderately**). The thematic material highlights the sort of open-interval melodies we often associate with Aaron Copland—though some have suggested that Still had explored this stylistic realm even earlier. The structure follows a loose sonata form, complete with brief development. Still said this movement “exemplifies the feeling of optimism and energy: The American ability to ‘get things done.’” The second movement (**Slowly**) opens with a blues melody, elaborated primarily in the strings, which after a quick middle section is reprised. The concise and humorous third movement (**With a Graceful Lilt**) is a scherzo-like cakewalk in duple meter, infused with jazz inflections fleshed out with dense brass textures.

Still remarked that the last movement (**Slowly and Reverently**) "depicts the warmth and the spiritual side of the American people—their love of mankind." This multi-sectional finale begins with a stately introduction that works its way through the strings, winds, and brass before giving way to a quicker section combining the processional theme with a reiteration of the first movement's main subject. A reflective passage reminds the listener of melodic material explored so far, which is worked out with an ingenuity and subtlety that underscores the extent to which Still belongs among America's leading symphonists.

—Paul J. Horsley

The Fourth Symphony was composed in 1947.

These are the first Philadelphia Orchestra performances of the work.

The score calls for three flutes (III doubling piccolo), two oboes, English horn, two clarinets, bass clarinet, two bassoons (II doubling contrabassoon), four horns, three trumpets, three trombones, tuba, timpani, percussion (bass drum, chimes, cymbals, military drum, resonator bell, snare drum, suspended cymbal, triangle), harp, celesta, and strings.

The Symphony runs approximately 30 minutes in performance.

Musical Terms

GENERAL TERMS

Absolute music: Instrumental music composed purely as music, and not intended to represent or illustrate something else

Cakewalk: A pre-Civil War dance originally performed by slaves, popularized and diffused through imitations of it in blackface minstrel shows and later, vaudeville and burlesque. Although no specific step patterns were associated with the dance, it was performed as a grand march in a paradelike fashion by couples strutting arm-in-arm, bowing and kicking, and saluting to the spectators. Originally known as the "prize walk"; the prize was an elaborately decorated cake.

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

Fantasy: A composition free in form and more or less fantastic in character

Fugue: A piece of music in which a short melody is stated by one voice and then imitated by the other voices in succession, reappearing throughout the entire piece in all the voices at different places

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

Rhapsody: Generally an instrumental fantasy on folksongs or on motifs taken from primitive national music

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

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.

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.

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

Tonic: The keynote of a scale

THE SPEED OF MUSIC (Tempo)

Adagio: Leisurely, slow

Agitato: Excited

Allegro: Bright, fast

Andante: Walking speed

Con moto: With motion

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