

2023–2024 | 124th Season

The Philadelphia Orchestra

Thursday, March 21, at 7:30

Friday, March 22, at 2:00

Saturday, March 23, at 8:00

Paavo Järvi Conductor

Christian Schmitt Organ

Debussy *Prelude to the Afternoon of a Faun*

Connesson *Concerto da Requiem*, Concerto for Organ and Orchestra

I. Kyrie

II. Dies irae

III. Dona nobis pacem

United States premiere

Intermission

Prokofiev Symphony No. 5 in B-flat major, Op. 100

I. Andante

II. Allegro marcato

III. Adagio

IV. Allegro giocoso

This program runs approximately 1 hour, 50 minutes.

These concerts are sponsored by **David Haas and Lisa Clark**.

These concerts are part of the Fred J. Cooper Memorial Organ Experience, supported through a generous grant from the **Wyncote Foundation**.

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

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 and inclusive 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 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

Concerts; sensory-friendly concerts; open rehearsals; the School Partnership Program and School Ensemble Program; All City Orchestra Fellowships; and residency work in Philadelphia and abroad. The Orchestra's free online video series, Our City, Your Orchestra (OCYO), uncovers and amplifies the voices, stories, and causes championed by unique Philadelphia organizations and businesses. Joining OCYO in connecting with the community is HearTOGETHER, a free monthly podcast featuring artists and activists who discuss music, social justice, and the lived experiences that inform the drive to create a more equitable and inclusive future for the arts.

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.

Conductor

Kaupo Kikkas



GRAMMY Award–winning Estonian conductor **Paavo Järvi** is one of today's most eminent conductors, enjoying close partnerships with the finest orchestras around the world. He serves as chief conductor of Zurich's Tonhalle Orchestra, the long-standing artistic director of the Deutsche Kammerphilharmonie Bremen, and as both the founder and artistic director of the Estonian Festival Orchestra. He opened his fifth season with the Tonhalle Orchestra

with a continuation of his Bruckner cycle, including three performances of the Symphony No. 9 at the Grosse Tonhalle and a recording release of the Symphony No. 8 on Alpha Classics. Additional highlights in 2023–24 include the beginning of a Mahler cycle and a major tour to South Korea and Japan.

In 2024 Mr. Järvi celebrates his 20th anniversary as artistic director of the Deutsche Kammerphilharmonie Bremen, the ensemble with which he has performed and recorded benchmark interpretations of the complete orchestral works by Beethoven, Schumann, and Brahms. With their most recent project dedicated to Haydn's "London" symphonies, they play in residency at the Vienna Konzerthaus and on tour in Cologne, Hamburg, and Dublin before embarking on a new in-depth focus of Schubert's symphonies. Each season concludes with a week of performances and conducting master classes at the Pärnu Music Festival in Estonia, which Mr. Järvi founded in 2011. The success of both the Festival and its resident ensemble, the Estonian Festival Orchestra, has led to a string of high-profile invitations. This season Mr. Järvi and the Estonian Festival Orchestra reunite for their third European tour, with concerts in Tallinn, Dortmund, Stuttgart, Zurich, Vienna, and Munich. Alpha Classics recently released their fourth album, *KRATT*, featuring works by Tubin, Lutoslawski, and Bacewicz.

Mr. Järvi, who made his Philadelphia Orchestra debut in 1998, is in demand as a guest conductor, regularly appearing with the Berlin and New York philharmonics, the Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra, and London's Philharmonia. This season, in addition to these current performances, he also conducts the Chicago Symphony, the Orchestra dell'Accademia Nazionale di Santa Cecilia, the Budapest Festival Orchestra, and the London, Munich, and Hong Kong philharmonics. He also continues to enjoy close relationships with many of the orchestras of which he was previously music director, including the Orchestre de Paris, the Frankfurt Radio Symphony, and the NHK Symphony in Tokyo. He was named Conductor of the Year by Germany's *Opus Klassik* in 2019. As a dedicated supporter of Estonian culture, he was awarded the Order of the White Star by the President of Estonia in 2013.

Soloist

Uwe Arens



Organist **Christian Schmitt** makes his Philadelphia Orchestra debut with these performances. Other highlights of the current season include an appearance with the Warsaw National Philharmonic and a re-invitation to Walt Disney Hall in Los Angeles. Since his debut with the Berlin Philharmonic under the baton of Simon Rattle at the Salzburg Festival with mezzo-soprano Magdalena Kožená, he has been one of the most sought-after organists internationally. In the

2022–23 season he made his debuts at Carnegie Hall under Dennis Russell Davies, with the Dallas Symphony, and with the Gothenburg Symphony under Christoph Eschenbach. In 2021–22 he was "Artist in Focus" at Zurich's Tonhalle Orchestra, curating "International Organ Days" and inaugurating a new instrument under the direction of Paavo Järvi. Since 2014 he has been principal organist of the Bamberg Symphony, for which he curates the organ series for the Bamberg Concert Hall. Other highlights include performances with the Staatskapelle Berlin conducted by Daniel Barenboim, the Japanese premiere of Toshio Hosokawa's *Embrace—Light and Shadow* with the Tokyo Metropolitan Symphony at Suntory Hall, and the release of his most recent recording, Hindemith's *Kammermusik No. 7* with Mr. Eschenbach.

Mr. Schmitt's discography currently includes some 40 recordings. For Deutsche Grammophon he recorded two CDs for the project "Bach 333—Die neue Gesamtausgabe." Equally noteworthy is the album *Prayer* with Ms. Kožená, released by Deutsche Grammophon in 2014. In 2013 he was awarded an ECHO Klassik for his recording of Widor's organ symphonies, Opp. 42, 3, and 69. A passionate educator, he is a guest lecturer at universities worldwide. Since the winter semester of 2021 he has taught at Codarts in Rotterdam as organ professor and successor to Ben van Oostens. Mr. Schmitt studied organ with Daniel Roth (Paris), Leo Krämer (Saarbrücken), and James David Christie (Boston).

Mr. Schmitt is an expert consultant for organ renovations and new construction of organs in Berlin, Nuremberg, Zurich, Lucerne, and Brno. His latest project is a digitally sampled version of the organ of the Philharmonie Essen for concerts with orchestras. The digital version of the famous organ, created in cooperation with a Dutch acoustics company, is transportable and easily adaptable to hall size and needs. Mr. Schmitt has been a member of numerous international music competition juries and is involved in the music education project *Rhapsody in School*, founded in 2005 by classical musicians with the aim of reaching more young people with music.

Framing the Program

Parallel Events

1894

Debussy

Prelude to the Afternoon of a Faun

Music

Dvořák

Cello Concerto

Literature

Kipling

The Jungle Book

Art

Munch

Vampire

History

Bureau of

Immigration

created

1944

Prokofiev

Symphony

No. 5

Music

Barber

Symphony

No. 2

Literature

Camus

Caligula

Art

Rivera

The Rug Weaver

History

D-Day landings

in Normandy

Claude Debussy's *Prelude to the Afternoon of a Faun* is a sensuous early example of musical Impressionism. Based on a Symbolist poem by Stéphane Mallarmé, it evokes a mythic faun (satyr in ancient Greek mythology), a woodland spirit, part man and part goat, who plays his panpipes, chases nymphs, and sweetly dreams amidst a warm afternoon.

The Philadelphians in recent years have performed several pieces by the contemporary French composer Guillaume Connesson and on this concert give the American premiere of his *Concerto da Requiem*. Its three movements are drawn from sections of the Mass for the Dead: the Kyrie, then the terrifying Dies irae, and finally the consoling Dona nobis pacem. The work offers the perfect showcase for Verizon Hall's magnificent Fred J. Cooper Memorial Organ.

The Russian composer Sergei Prokofiev emigrated to the West in 1917 but surprisingly decided to return in 1936. He composed his epic Fifth Symphony during the summer of 1944, as the Soviet Union's fortunes were finally beginning to turn in what had been devastating years during the Second World War. The composer led the premiere in January of the following year, the last time he conducted before health issues curtailed his activities. The stirring Symphony registers a wide range of emotions reflective of its time and earned the composer international accolades.

The Music

Prelude to the Afternoon of a Faun

Claude Debussy

Born in Saint-Germain-en-Laye, France, August 22, 1862

Died in Paris, March 25, 1918



Artists, writers, and composers are rarely pleased with, let alone embrace, the handy labels applied to their creations and times. Such terms tend to be ones of convenience, often applied retrospectively, and initially as an insult. "Baroque" first denoted a misshapen pearl and was not meant as a compliment in descriptions of art. Nor was "atonal," which Arnold Schoenberg rejected in favor of "pantonal." The familiar fin-de-siècle French label "Impressionism" was associated with a painting by

Claude Monet called *Impression: Sunrise*, first exhibited in 1872. It was later used to describe the music of Claude Debussy, who called it "a convenient term of abuse."

Yet history, as the German philosopher Hegel declared, has its cunning.

Baroque captures well decorative excesses that are at odds with the preceding Renaissance and later Classical styles. After centuries of music centered around a tonal center, "atonal" seems a fair enough shorthand for the innovations of Schoenberg & Co. Few pieces so exemplify the mood of "Impressionism" as well as Debussy's *Prélude à l'après-midi d'un faune* (*Prelude to the Afternoon of a Faun*).

From Poem to Music Debussy's masterpiece, long considered a key work heralding musical Modernism, drew from innovations in contemporary literature. It is a "Prelude" to a famous Symbolist poem by Stéphane Mallarmé (1842–98). Debussy became friends with the poet, 20 years his senior, and regularly attended the legendary Tuesday evening salons he hosted at which many prominent artistic figures gathered.

Debussy had already set other poems by Mallarmé and the Symbolists when he turned to *The Afternoon of a Faun* around 1892. The 10-minute *Prelude* was apparently originally intended as part of a larger work that might be staged together with the poem, including interludes and ending with a final "paraphrase." Although this was not realized, the *Prelude* was later used as the basis for famous ballets, including by Vaslav Nijinsky and Jerome Robbins. After the piece's premiere in 1894 Mallarmé wrote to the composer: "I have just come from the concert, deeply moved: what a marvel! Your illustration of *The Afternoon of a Faun*—not in the slightest discord with my text, except that it goes further, truly, in nostalgia and light, so delicate, disquieting, and rich. I grasp your hands with great admiration."

Debussy provided his own explanation of the dreamy plot of his piece about a mythical faun—an ancient woodland creature from Roman mythology (satyr in Greek), part man and part goat, with horns, pointed ears, hooves, and a short tail—who plays his pipes during a lovely afternoon but, failing to lure frolicking nymphs, falls asleep to sweet dreams of them: “The music of this *Prelude* is a very free illustration of Mallarmé’s beautiful poem. By no means does it claim to be a synthesis of the poem. It consists rather of a series of backdrops through which pass the desires and dreams of the faun in the warmth of the afternoon. Then, tired of pursuing the fearful flight of the nymphs and naiads, he succumbs to intoxicating sleep, in which he can finally realize his dreams of possession in universal Nature.”

A Closer Look While Mallarmé’s poem is 110 lines and Debussy’s score 110 measures, it is not cast as a realistic depiction and the narrative does not line up—rather it creates a vivid impression of the poem. Most realistic is the prominence given to the flute, which opens the work and recurs throughout. The *Prelude* unfolds in a large-scale ABA arc. The solo flute begins the piece by playing a chromatic melody down a tritone—the dissonant interval called the “Devil in Music” during the Middle Ages—and then up again. Oboes, clarinets, horns, and harp enter and then there is complete silence. The opening flute melody returns, played several times in varied ways, even more improvisational. Over the course of the piece the opening melody is heard nine times, usually stated by the flute.

The contrasting middle section uses a fuller orchestration for a broad Romantic melody, which is pentatonic (five notes, and associated with Asian music that fascinated Debussy around this time). The dynamic level for much of the piece is soft, but here it briefly builds to a fortissimo climax. When the opening flute melody returns for the fifth time it has a new rhythm and longer note values, slowing the piece to a somewhat more leisurely pace. Debussy evokes marvelous colors throughout using a rather small orchestra, omitting brass except for four horns, and percussion except for magical moments with antique cymbals.

—Christopher H. Gibbs

The Prelude to the Afternoon of a Faun was composed from 1892 to 1894.

Fritz Scheel conducted the first Philadelphia Orchestra performances of the Prelude, in January 1907. Most recently on subscription concerts, it appeared in October 2017, with Stéphane Denève.

The Orchestra has recorded the piece six times: in 1924, 1927, and 1940 with Leopold Stokowski for RCA; in 1947 and 1959 with Eugene Ormandy for CBS; and in 1971 with Ormandy for RCA. The work can also be found in The Philadelphia Orchestra: The Centennial Collection (Historic Broadcasts and Recordings from 1917-1998), in a performance led by Bruno Walter from March 1947.

The score calls for three flutes, two oboes, English horn, two clarinets, two bassoons, four horns, antique cymbals, two harps, and strings.

The Prelude runs approximately 10 minutes in performance.

The Music

Concerto da Requiem

Guillaume Connesson

Born in Boulogne-Billancourt, France, May 5, 1970

Now living in Paris

Christophe Peus



Since the mid-19th century, the organ has held a central role in French musical life. During the Revolution, churches and cathedrals were desecrated and turned into “Temples of Reason,” but organs in those edifices were spared and put to secular purposes. After the 1814 Bourbon restoration, these organs were returned to sacred uses: accompanying choirs, being played at Mass, and occasional recitals by the church’s *organiste titulaire* (head organist). In the 1840s,

the organ builder Aristide Cavaillé-Coll began the innovations that led to the creation of the “symphonic organ,” elaborate instruments capable of emulating the color and dynamic range of the entire orchestra. A school of French organist-composers, such as Camille Saint-Saëns, César Franck, and Charles Widor, took full advantage of these magnificent instruments.

The French Love for Organs After 1870 the secular Third Republic embarked on an ambitious program of *utilité publique*—public utility—that deployed art and music to educate and edify working-class citizens. One of the ways that this was accomplished was through inexpensive concerts of art music. The least expensive of these were recitals played on such instruments as the grand organs that Cavaillé-Coll had installed in French churches and concert halls. By the 1880s, the organ was immensely popular in France, and it remains so to this day. Some composers, including Saint-Saëns and Widor, combined the organ with a symphony orchestra. The most famous example of this is Saint-Saëns’s Third Symphony (1886), a score that the composer designated *avec orgue* (with organ). In the 20th century, Francis Poulenc composed his Concerto in G minor for Organ, Strings, and Timpani (1938).

With his *Concerto da Requiem* for organ and orchestra, the contemporary composer Guillaume Connesson steps into the shoes of his illustrious French predecessors. Connesson studied at the Paris Conservatory, winning prizes in orchestration and electro-acoustic music. His compositions span a variety of genres, including scores for orchestra, solo piano, chorus, and chamber ensembles. His music is often tonal and, while inimitable, his style is informed by such well-known French masters as Couperin, Debussy, Maurice Ravel, Albert

Roussel, Poulenc, and Henri Dutilleux. It exhibits a wide range of expression and sensibility: Connesson has expressed admiration for the cinematic sweep of the American composer John Williams, and several of his scores have incorporated elements of disco. The *Concerto da Requiem*, composed in the dark plague year of 2020, reflects the serious side of his musical personality, a style comparable to the music of the 20th-century French organist-composers Jehan Alain and Maurice Duruflé.

A Closer Look Connesson's *Concerto da Requiem* is cast in three movements, with each movement given a title drawn from the liturgy of the Requiem Mass. The first movement, entitled **Kyrie** (the first word of the Kyrie eleison, "Lord have mercy"), begins with a brooding theme whose supple contours are suggestive of plainsong that establishes a somber, even penitential, mood. Following a quiet episode for solo organ, the music gradually builds in power to an intense climax, as if the organ and orchestra were raising their hands together in supplication. After this powerful passage, there is a pause followed by a subdued coda of remarkably unsettled beauty. The second movement, **Dies irae** (Day of wrath), pointedly alludes to the sequence that was an integral part of Catholic funeral rites until the liturgical reforms of the Second Vatican Council. Connesson's music reflects the harshness of judgment found in the sequence. After a precipitous flourish played by the organ, a turbulent, almost nightmarish scherzo hurtles forward. This movement is predicated upon kaleidoscopic variants of the famous Dies irae plainchant, which is well known to audiences through its use in the finale of Berlioz's *Symphonie fantastique* (1830); in Saint-Saëns's *Danse macabre* (1874); and in Rachmaninoff's *The Isle of the Dead* (1908) and *Rhapsody on a Theme of Paganini* (1934).

After the terror of the Dies irae, the otherworldly calm of the concluding **Dona nobis pacem** (Give us peace) brings the light of hope and consolation. With this slow finale, the overall design becomes clear: The compositional arc moves from supplication through menace to a vision of "paradisi gloria." Throughout the Concerto, the organ part is sometimes overtly soloistic, but in other sections it is woven into the orchestral tapestry. Like many French composers before him, Connesson is a master of orchestration: His compelling themes and rich tonal harmony are clothed in luscious sonorities reminiscent of those found in the orchestral scores of Debussy, Ravel, and Dutilleux.

—Byron Adams

The Concerto da Requiem was composed in 2020.

These are the United States premiere performances of the work.

The score calls for solo organ, two flutes (II doubling piccolo), two oboes (II doubling English horn), two clarinets, two bassoons, four horns, three trumpets, two trombones, tuba, timpani, percussion (bass drum, chimes, cymbals, güiro, large tam-tam, ratchet, sheet metal plate, suspended cymbal, triangle, vibraphone, wood block, xylophone), harp, and strings.

Performance time is approximately 21 minutes.

The Music

Symphony No. 5

Sergei Prokofiev

Born in Sontsovka, Ukraine, April 23, 1891

Died in Moscow, March 5, 1953



One is hard pressed to identify positive things associated with the horrors of war. Yet composers, like other artists through the ages, have often used their creative gifts to deal with tragedy and their music has helped others to cope as well. The Second World War inspired an unusually large quantity of significant music, particularly symphonies. Some of them were written in the heat of war, others as the conflict was ending or after victory had been achieved. The emotions

exhibited in these works range from despair to hope, from the bitterness of defeat to the exultation of victory.

War Symphonies It is perhaps telling that while no German or Italian symphonies composed during the war are remembered today, many from other countries remain impressive monuments. Aaron Copland's Third, widely considered the "Great American Symphony," was premiered in October 1946, after the Allied victory. (The work incorporates his *Fanfare for the Common Man*, composed for the war effort four years earlier.) Igor Stravinsky's *Symphony in Three Movements*, Ralph Vaughan Williams's Fifth and Sixth symphonies, and a number of Bohuslav Martinů's are among other enduring works that either openly or in more subtle ways engaged with the perilous times.

Which brings us to the Soviet Union, where the relationship between the arts and politics was always complex and where the war extracted the largest number of casualties. The two leading Russian composers of the day both made important symphonic contributions: Dmitri Shostakovich with his Seventh Symphony, the "Leningrad" (1941), and Sergei Prokofiev with his Fifth Symphony (1944). These works were composed in dire times, received triumphant premieres, made the rounds internationally led by eminent conductors, and were enthusiastically greeted by appreciative audiences. Americans embraced both symphonies by their Soviet allies. Shostakovich was hailed on the cover of *Time* magazine in August 1942 and Prokofiev appeared on the cover three years later, after the premiere of the Fifth Symphony in January 1945.

Prokofiev's Path to the Fifth For all its success, Prokofiev's path to his Fifth was an arduous one—personally, professionally, and most specifically with regard to how

to write a substantive work in a genre that kept causing him some difficulty. After enjoying a privileged childhood, molded by parents eager to cultivate his obvious musical gifts, Prokofiev went on to study at the St. Petersburg Conservatory with leading Russian composers of the day, including Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov and Reinhold Glière. He won early fame with challenging Modernist scores that were unlike what most composers were writing in Russia during the 1910s.

Then came the October Revolution of 1917. Like other prominent figures from similarly comfortable family backgrounds, including Stravinsky and Rachmaninoff, Prokofiev left Russia. He made a long journey through Siberia, stopped off in Tokyo, and finally arrived in New York City in early September 1918. He would live in America, Paris, and other Western cities for nearly 20 years. In 1927 he returned for a visit to the Soviet Union and began to spend an increasing amount of time in his transformed native country. In the summer of 1936, with timing that boggles the mind today, he moved back permanently with his wife and their two young sons. He spent the rest of his life there, riding a roller coaster of official favor and stinging condemnation. He died on March 5, 1953, the same day as Joseph Stalin.

Prokofiev had composed his First Symphony, the "Classical," in the summer of 1917, before leaving Russia. This brief work, which charmingly looks back to Haydn, remains a popular repertory item but hardly represented a bold new symphonic statement. His next symphony was disappointingly received at its Paris premiere in 1925 under Serge Koussevitzky. For his symphonies No. 3 (1928) and No. 4 (1930) Prokofiev recycled music he had previously written for opera and ballet scores and still seemed to be struggling with the genre, which may explain a comment he made about the Fifth: "I consider my work on this symphony very significant both because of the musical material put into it and because I returned to the symphonic form after a 16-year interval. The Fifth Symphony completes, as it were, a long period of my works."

A Triumphant Premiere Prokofiev wrote some of his most compelling music during the Second World War, including the opera *War and Peace*, the ballet *Cinderella*, the Second String Quartet, and three impressive piano sonatas. Given the grim circumstances in the Soviet Union, the Fifth Symphony was born under relatively comfortable conditions during the summer of 1944, which Prokofiev spent in an artists' colony set up by the Union of Composers at Ivanovo, some 160 miles from Moscow. (Shostakovich, Glière, Kabalevsky, and other prominent figures were also there.) After absolutely devastating years for the Soviet Union in their struggle against the Germans, things were beginning to look more hopeful with the news from Normandy and Poland. By the time Prokofiev conducted the premiere at the Great Hall of the Moscow Conservatory on January 13 there was real good news: The day before the Soviet Army had surged forward. The work was unveiled after intermission and as *Time* reported:

It was exactly 9:30 p.m. A woman announcer in a black dress stepped to

the platform. Said she: "In the name of the fatherland there will be a salute to the gallant warriors of the First Ukrainian front who have broken the defenses of the Germans—20 volleys of artillery from 224 guns." The dark days of Stalingrad were over; the Polish offensive of January 1945 had begun. As she spoke, the first distant volley shook the hall.

That evening was a complete triumph for Prokofiev, but also an ending of sorts. The concert proved to be the last time he conducted as just a few days later he had a serious fall, perhaps due to untreated high blood pressure, and was ill, although productive, for the remaining eight years of his life.

A Closer Look Prokofiev excelled in many genres, producing chamber, choral, and keyboard music, impressive concertos, as well a distinguished quantity of dramatic music: operas, ballets, and film scores. As mentioned earlier, symphonies proved a challenge for him and may be one reason he recycled music he had written earlier for stage projects. The Fifth Symphony does not do so to nearly the extent of his previous two essays in the genre, but it does have moments that may remind listeners of *War and Peace* and uses some musical ideas originally conceived for his ballet *Romeo and Juliet*.

The seriousness of the four-movement Symphony is immediately apparent from the spare opening theme of the **Andante**, played by flutes and bassoon. This builds to a grand statement of epic scope, one that returns in the finale. There is throughout the work a profusion of thematic material and Prokofiev's prodigious lyrical gifts are fully evident—what sounds like a passionate love theme is followed by a nervous repeated note motif, all of which are seamlessly integrated. The first movement ends with a bold coda that pounds out the opening theme, now fully orchestrated and at full volume, suggestive of Prokofiev's comment that he "conceived it as a symphony of the greatness of the human spirit."

The following scherzo (**Allegro marcato**) has both light and more ominous elements, showing off the composer's deft balletic writing as well as his affinity for the grotesque. The following **Adagio** returns us to a lyrical, even elegiac, tone with soaring themes and a funereal middle section. Themes from the preceding movements are reviewed in the final **Allegro giocoso**, which begins with a slow introduction. The music has an inexorable quality of moving forward and reaches a marvelous coda. After all the epic grandeur heard to this point, the texture suddenly shifts to chamber music, with string soloists, percussion, piano, and harp taking frantic center stage before the thrilling final chord for the full orchestra.

—Christopher H. Gibbs

Prokofiev composed his Symphony No. 5 in 1944.

The first Philadelphia Orchestra performances of the Symphony took place in January 1947, with George Szell on the podium. The Philadelphians have performed the work many times, including on American and European tours. Its most recent appearance on a subscription series was in November 2019, with Susanna Malkki conducting.

The Orchestra recorded the Symphony three times: in 1957 for CBS with Eugene Ormandy, in 1975 for RCA with Ormandy, and in 1990 for Philips with Riccardo Muti. A live recording from 2008 with Christoph Eschenbach is also available by digital download.

Prokofiev's score calls for piccolo, two flutes, two oboes, English horn, two clarinets, E-flat clarinet, bass clarinet, two bassoons, contrabassoon, four horns, three trumpets, three trombones, tuba, timpani, percussion (bass drum, cymbals, snare drum, suspended cymbal, tam-tam, tambourine, triangle, woodblock), harp, piano, and strings.

Performance time is approximately 50 minutes.

Musical Terms

GENERAL TERMS

Atonality: Music that is not tonal, especially organized without reference to key or tonal center

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

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

Dissonance: A combination of two or more tones requiring resolution

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

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

Legato: Smooth, even, without any break between notes

Meter: The symmetrical grouping of musical rhythms

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

Monophony: Music for a single voice or part

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.

Plainsong or plainchant: The official monophonic unison chant (originally unaccompanied) of the Christian liturgies

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.

Timbre: Tone color or tone quality

Tritone: An interval made up of three consecutive whole tones (or whole steps)

Whole tone: An interval made up of two semitones (of half steps), i.e. C to D

THE SPEED OF MUSIC (Tempo)

Adagio: Leisurely, slow

Allegro: Bright, fast

Andante: Walking speed

Giocoso: Humorous

Marcato: Accented, stressed

DYNAMIC MARKS

Fortissimo (ff): Very loud

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Orchestra

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25 |
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Yuja Wang Returns • Beethoven's Ninth at the Academy of Music
Yannick Explores Mahler and Beethoven • Commissions by Julia Wolfe,
Gabriela Lena Frank, and Terence Blanchard



Photos: Yannick Nézet-Séguin. Photo by Landon Nordeman; violinist Davyd Booth at Tattooed Mom. Photo by Jessica Griffin; Principal Tuba Carol Jantsch at Philadelphia's Magic Gardens. Photo by Neal Santos; Principal Bass Joseph Conyers at Cherry Street Pier. Photo by Kriston Jae Bethel; Principal Harp Elizabeth Hainen on Broad Street. Photo by Neal Santos.

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