

2021–2022 | 122nd Season

# The Philadelphia Orchestra

Saturday, November 6, at 8:00

**Yannick Nézet-Séguin** Conductor  
**Davóne Tines** Speaker and Bass-baritone

**Various** *Sermon*

Excerpt from *The Fire Next Time*, by James Baldwin

I. "Shake the Heavens," from *El Niño* (A Nativity Oratorio), by John Adams

"Hope," by Langston Hughes

II. "Vigil," by Igee Dieudonné and Davóne Tines (arranged by Matthew Aucoin)

"We Saw Beyond Our Seeming," by Maya Angelou

III. "You Want the Truth, but You Don't Want to Know," from *X: The Life and Times of Malcolm X*, by Anthony Davis

**Simon** *Fate Now Conquers*

**Beethoven** Symphony No. 7 in A major, Op. 92

I. Poco sostenuto—Vivace

II. Allegretto

III. Presto—Assai meno presto—Presto

IV. Allegro con brio

This program runs approximately 1 hour, 15 minutes, and will be performed without an intermission.

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](http://www.wrti.org) to listen live or for more details.



# Forward

2021–22 Season

## **Mozart Thanksgiving Weekend**

November 27–28

## **Marsalis Tuba Concerto**

December 9, 10, 12

## **New Year's Celebration**

## **Beethoven Symphony No. 9**

December 31, January 2

## **Bugs Bunny @ the Symphony**

January 7–9



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**The  
Philadelphia  
Orchestra**

**Yannick Nézet-Séguin** Music Director

Photos: Jessica Griffin, Clay McBride, Rob Shanahan



## The Philadelphia Orchestra

The Philadelphia Orchestra is one of the world's preeminent orchestras. It 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 educational initiatives, and an ongoing commitment to the communities that it serves, the ensemble is on a path to create an expansive future for classical music, and to further the place of the arts in an open and democratic society.

Yannick Nézet-Séguin is now in his 10th season as the eighth 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, from Verizon Hall to community centers, the Mann Center to Penn's Landing, classrooms to hospitals, and over the airwaves and online.*

In March 2020, in response to the cancellation of concerts due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Orchestra launched the Virtual Philadelphia Orchestra, a portal hosting video and audio of performances, free, on its website and social media platforms. In September 2020 the Orchestra announced *Our World NOW*, its reimaged season of concerts filmed without audiences and presented on its Digital Stage. The Orchestra also inaugurated free offerings:

HearTOGETHER, a series on racial and social justice; educational activities; and *Our City, Your Orchestra*, small ensemble performances from locations throughout the Philadelphia region.

The Philadelphia Orchestra's award-winning educational 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, Free Neighborhood Concerts, 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. It performs annually at Carnegie Hall, 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.

The Orchestra also makes live recordings available on popular digital music services and as part of the Listen On Demand section of its website. Under Yannick's leadership, the Orchestra returned to recording, with 10 celebrated releases on the prestigious Deutsche Grammophon label. The Orchestra also reaches thousands of radio listeners with weekly broadcasts on WRTI-FM and SiriusXM. For more information, please visit [www.philorch.org](http://www.philorch.org).

# Music Director

George Etheredge



**Yannick Nézet-Séguin** is currently in his 10th 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 10 releases on that label. 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; *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 Virginia Parker Prize; 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](http://philorch.org/conductor).

# Soloist

Bowie Verschuren



American bass-baritone **Davone Tines** made his Philadelphia Orchestra debut on the Digital Stage in May 2021 and his Orchestra public and subscription debuts yesterday. His work encompasses a diverse repertoire and explores the social issues of today. As a Black, gay, classically trained performer at the intersection of many histories, cultures, and aesthetics, his work blends opera, art song, contemporary classical, spirituals, gospel, and songs of protest to tell a deeply personal story of

perseverance that connects to all of humanity.

During the 2021–22 season Mr. Tines will be artist-in-residence at Michigan Opera Theatre, culminating in his performance in the title role of the company's new production of Pulitzer Prize-winning composer Anthony Davis's *X: The Life and Times of Malcolm X*, directed by Robert O'Hara. He has also been named the Philharmonia Baroque Orchestra & Chorale's first-ever creative partner, a role that will see him closely involved in developing new programs and ideas for the organization throughout the season. His ongoing projects include Recital No. 1: MASS, a program exploring the Mass woven through Western European, African-American, and 21st-century traditions, with performances this season at the Ravinia Festival; in Washington, D.C., presented by Washington Performing Arts; and at the Barbican in London. He also performs *Sermon* with the BBC Symphony. Other engagements include concerts with the Dover Quartet presented by the Philadelphia Chamber Music Society and Toronto's Royal Conservatory of Music and the 2022 Ojai Music Festival, where he performs and—as a founding, core member of the American Modern Opera Company—collaborates in the company's music directorship of the 2022 Festival.

Mr. Tines is co-creator of *The Black Clown*, a music-theater experience inspired by Langston Hughes's poem of the same name, commissioned and premiered by the American Repertory Theater and presented at Lincoln Center. He has premiered works by today's leading composers, including Mr. Adams, Terence Blanchard, and Matthew Aucoin, and his concert appearances include performances of works ranging from Beethoven's Ninth Symphony with the San Francisco Symphony to Kaija Saariaho's *True Fire* with the Orchestre National de France. He is a winner of the 2020 Sphinx Medal of Excellence, recognizing extraordinary classical musicians of color, and the recipient of the 2018 Emerging Artists Award from Lincoln Center. In addition, he was just named *Musical America's* 2022 Vocalist of the Year. He is a graduate of the Juilliard School and Harvard University, where he also serves as guest lecturer.

# Framing the Program

## Parallel Events

1811

**Beethoven**

Symphony  
No. 7

**Music**

Meyerbeer  
*Gott und die  
Natur*

**Literature**

Austen  
*Sense and  
Sensibility*

**Art**

Ingres  
*Jupiter and  
Thetis*

**History**

Venezuela  
declares  
independence

Tonight's concert begins with a group of readings and musical selections that the bass-baritone singer and activist Davóne Tines has fashioned into an exegetic sermon. The words of James Baldwin, Langston Hughes, and Maya Angelou alternate with three vocal numbers, beginning with the fiery aria "Shake the Heavens" from John Adams's "Nativity Oratorio" *El Niño*. "Vigil" is a meditative reflection that Tines wrote with his friend Igee Dieudonné and is dedicated to the memory of Breonna Taylor, who was murdered by Louisville police in her apartment last year. Finally, we hear the aria "You Want the Truth, but You Don't Want to Know" from Anthony Davis's *X: The Life and Times of Malcolm X*, which concludes the opera's first act as Malcolm X is interrogated by the police.

This concert continues The Philadelphia Orchestra's cycle of Beethoven's nine symphonies programmed in conversation with newly commissioned works. The young American composer Carlos Simon was inspired by Beethoven for his *Fate Now Conquers*, which he explains uses "musical gestures that are representative of the unpredictable ways of fate: jolting stabs along with frenzied arpeggios in the strings that morph into an ambiguous cloud of free-flowing running passages depicting the uncertainty of life that hovers over us."

Beethoven premiered his Seventh Symphony in 1813 at the height of his popular fame and success. By then he was generally recognized as Europe's greatest composer and in this work, unveiled as victory in the Napoleonic wars was close at hand, he brilliantly captured the celebratory spirit of the time. During Beethoven's life it was his most successful symphony, especially the miraculous second movement that one critic called "the crown of instrumental music."

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

## Sermon

### **"Shake the Heavens," from *El Niño* (A Nativity Oratorio)**

**John Adams**

Born in Worcester, Massachusetts, February 15, 1947

Now living in Berkeley, California

### **"Vigil" (arranged by Matthew Aucoin)**

**Igee Dieudonné**

Born in Utrecht, the Netherlands, May 24, 1991

Now living in Amsterdam

**Davóne Tines**

Born in Portsmouth, Virginia, December 20, 1986

Now living in Raleigh, North Carolina

### **"You Want the Truth, but You Don't Want to Know," from *X: The Life and Times of Malcolm X***

**Anthony Davis**

Born in Paterson, New Jersey, February 20, 1951

Now living in San Diego, California

The readings and music that make up *Sermon* offer socially relevant calls to action in the face of horrific violence against marginalized peoples. The bass-baritone singer and activist Davóne Tines lifts his voice, both physical and spiritual, to fashion this experience in the form of an exegetic sermon. He traces the story of a person moving into humanity, then expressing emotion (here hope), and finally presents an interrogation, challenging the audience to think about why someone would in the first place even need to defend their humanity, here expressed through the example of Malcolm X. *Sermon* consists of three vocal pieces juxtaposed with three readings, beginning with a passage from James Baldwin's *The Fire Next Time* about how Blacks are not seen as fully human.

#### **John Adams's "Shake the Heavens"**

The first musical offering is by John Adams, one of the leading composers of our time. He has enjoyed particular success with his operas exploring modern events, including *Nixon in China* (1987), *The Death of Klinghoffer* (1991), and *Doctor Atomic*



(2005). We hear an aria from his "Nativity Oratorio" *El Niño*, which premiered in Paris in 2000 and has since been presented both in fully staged and concert performances. Conceived with director Peter Sellars, his long-time collaborator, it uses texts from the Old and New Testaments, the Apocrypha, and other sources, notably poems by prominent Latin-American women. The fiery aria "Shake the Heavens" looks back to Handel's setting of the same prophetic words from the Old

Testament Book of Haggai in *Messiah* (1742), Adams's acknowledged model. As in Handel's accompanied recitative, Adams's thrilling aria features coloratura passages requiring great vocal virtuosity amid an intense orchestral accompaniment that projects enormous rhythmic drive interspersed with dramatic silences.



### **"Vigil," Dedicated to the Memory of Breonna Taylor**

After a reading of Langston Hughes's very short poem "Hope," the musical pace slows down for the meditative "Vigil" for Breonna Taylor, which Tines created with Igee Dieudonné and that we hear in an arrangement by Matthew Aucoin. This song grew out of a joint improvisation session during which, as Tines recalls, he started to sing over a simple chord progression "and what happened was kind of unique in that the song came out fully formed in the first try." The Louisville Orchestra, the city where Breonna Taylor was killed in her apartment by police in March 2020, gave the first performance of the orchestral arrangement of "Vigil" in a concert dedicated to her memory. This musical selection, which Tines calls "an exercise in empathy," might be likened to a calm slow movement in a symphony or concerto. Accompanied by strings and piano, Tines repeats three times the words

"where there is darkness, we'll bring light," eventually raising his voice to the very highest note, softly singing "Hallelujah."



### **Anthony Davis's "You Want the Truth, but You Don't Want to Know"**

Maya Angelou's poem "We Saw Beyond Our Seeming" precedes an aria from Anthony Davis's opera *X: The Life and Times of Malcolm X*. After graduating from Yale University, Davis first came to prominence as a virtuoso pianist and improviser. He has taught at Harvard, Cornell, and Yale, and for the past quarter century at the University of California at San Diego. His

music masterfully encompasses an eclectic range of traditions and styles. Like Adams, he has been drawn to contemporary topics for his acclaimed operas. This began with his first one from which we hear an excerpt today and continued with, among others, *Under the Double Moon* (1989), a science-fiction adaptation of the Undine tale; *Tania* (1992), based on the kidnapping of heiress Patty Hearst; *Amistad* (1997), about events in 1839 aboard the slave ship of the same name; and *The Central Park Five* (2019), a retelling of the Central Park jogger case, for which he won a Pulitzer Prize.

Tines concludes his spoken and sung sermon with the powerful aria "You Want the Truth, but You Don't Want to Know." *X: The Life and Times of Malcolm X* was developed at the American Music Theater Festival in Philadelphia in 1985 before a revised and expanded version officially premiered at the New York City Opera in September 1986. Set to a libretto by Thulani Davis, the composer's cousin, it treats "Malcolm X as a tragic hero who negotiates profound changes of identity from Malcolm Little to Malcolm X and El Hajj Malik el Shabazz." The aria we hear ends the opera's first act, when Malcolm Little is being interrogated by the police for robbery as he sits in a chair with a spotlight on him. As Davis explains, "There are no questions as he tells his story. ... [The aria] is an expression of rage against racism that is inescapable, recurring through generations." After an extended instrumental introduction, slow and somewhat mysterious, the speed quickens and becomes jazzy. The vocalist enters with the lines "I would not tell you what I know, you wouldn't hear my truth" and eventually builds to the climatic words that give the aria its title.

—Christopher H. Gibbs

*El Niño* was composed from 1999 to 2000; "Vigil" was composed in 2020; and *X: The Life and Times of Malcolm X* was composed in 1985.

The Philadelphia Orchestra first performed *Sermon on the Digital Stage* in May 2021.

"*Shake the Heavens*" is scored for two oboes, two clarinets, bassoon, contrabassoon, three horns, three trombones, chimes, harp, piano, sampler, strings, and solo baritone; "Vigil" in the arrangement by Matthew Aucoin is scored for piano, strings, and solo baritone; and "You Want the Truth, but You Don't Want to Know" is scored for two flutes, oboe, two clarinets, bassoon, two horns, trumpet, two trombones, timpani, percussion (drum set, marimba, vibraphone), piano, strings, and solo baritone.

Performance time of the Adams is approximately four minutes; the Dieudonné/Tines is approximately three minutes; and the Davis is approximately nine minutes.

# The Music

## Fate Now Conquers

Carlos Simon

Born in Atlanta, Georgia, April 13, 1986

Now living in Washington, D.C.



Writing of his 1823 visit to Beethoven, the London businessman Johann Reinhold Schultz noted, "He is a great admirer of the ancients. Homer, particularly his *Odyssey*, and Plutarch he prefers to all the rest; and, of the native poets, he studies Schiller and Goethe, in preference to any other." Indeed, alongside Goethe, inarguably the 19th century's greatest German poet, and Schiller, whose poem "An die Freude" Beethoven set in the transcendent finale of his Ninth Symphony, Homer occupied a place in

Beethoven's personal pantheon of great men of letters. He copied passages from the *Odyssey* and the *Iliad* into his diary, including this 1815 entry:

But Fate now conquers; I am hers; and yet not she shall share  
In my renown; that life is left to every noble spirit  
And that some great deed shall beget that all lives shall inherit.

—*Iliad*, Book XXII

**Strength and Resolve amid Adversity** The resonance of these words with the notoriously embattled Beethoven is not difficult to comprehend. They capture both the cosmic adversity he felt and the defiant spirit that would define his worldview, and characterize his art, at the dawn of the new century. "Your Beethoven is leading a very unhappy life," he confided to a friend upon recognizing the onset of deafness, "and is at variance with Nature and his Creator." Yet, at the nadir of despair, the composer declared, "I will seize Fate by the throat; it shall certainly not crush me completely."

Beethoven's spiritual resilience and artistic determination animate the American composer Carlos Simon's *Fate Now Conquers*, a tightly compressed paean to the indomitability of the human will. A composer active in both concert and film music, Simon injects a riveting cinematic energy into this five-minute orchestral score, rife with slashing melodic fragments and wild arpeggios, roiling atop a persistent, anxious rhythmic pulse.

*Fate Now Conquers* is among a series of works commissioned by The Philadelphia Orchestra from Composer-in-Residence Gabriela Lena Frank and alumni of her Creative Academy of Music (GLFCAM), to reflect on Beethoven's legacy as part of the Orchestra's celebration of the composer's 250th birthday. The work was to

have received its world premiere in March 2020, on a program with Beethoven's Fourth, Seventh, and Eighth symphonies, but those concerts were cancelled due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Its belated premiere was on a Digital Stage concert in October 2020.

Simon is a 2017 GLFCAM Composer Fellow. He earned his doctorate at the University of Michigan, where he studied with Michael Daugherty and Evan Chambers, and also received degrees from Georgia State University and Morehouse College. Additionally, he studied in Baden, Austria, at the Hollywood Music Workshop, and at New York University's Film Scoring Summer Workshop. As part of the Sundance Institute, he was named a Sundance Institute and Time Warner Foundation Artist Fellow in 2018. His string quartet, *Elegy*, honoring the lives of Trayvon Martin, Michael Brown, and Eric Garner, was recently performed at the Kennedy Center for the Mason Bates JFK Jukebox Series. Other recent accolades include being a composer fellow at the Cabrillo Festival for Contemporary Music, winning the Underwood Emerging Composer Commission from the American Composers Orchestra, the Marvin Hamlisch Film Scoring Award, and the Presser Award from the Theodore Presser Foundation. Recent commissions have come from the New York and Los Angeles philharmonics, Washington National Opera, and Morehouse College in celebration of its 150th anniversary. A former member of the music faculty at Spelman College and Morehouse College, he now serves as assistant professor at Georgetown University.

**A Closer Look** *Fate Now Conquers* unfolds breathlessly as a single thrilling scene, as if capturing an intricate action sequence in one take. After the work's opening orchestral salvo—a fusillade of repeated notes in the violins and violas, pianissimo, agitato, punctuated by fist-shaking timpani strikes and muted trumpets—the woodwinds and cellos whisper a mysterious melodic fragment. This sequence of descending thirds, borrowed from the enigmatic introduction to Beethoven's Fourth Symphony, here achieves an ominous sonic effect, underpinned by the nervous *moto perpetuo* in the strings and brass.

Simon additionally invokes the Allegretto movement of Beethoven's Symphony No. 7, which we hear next on this concert. The composer explains: "Using the beautifully fluid harmonic structure of the second movement of Beethoven's Seventh Symphony, I have composed musical gestures that are representative of the unpredictable ways of fate."

Colossal brass chords power the music through the score's central march-like sequence. These grow increasingly dissonant; turbulent woodwind triplet figures, fortissimo and ferocious, further amplify the Beethovenian *Sturm und Drang*. A swirl of rising and falling scales set in high voices—flutes, clarinets, violins, absent the gravitational pull of cellos and basses—conjures leaves twisting helplessly in the wind. A plaintive cello solo sets the work on a path toward its inevitable final cadence.

—Patrick Castillo

*Fate Now Conquers* was composed in 2019.

*The Philadelphia Orchestra performed the world premiere of the piece in October 2020 on a Digital Stage concert with Yannick Nézet-Séguin.*

*The score calls for piccolo, flute, two oboes, two clarinets, two bassoons, two horns, two trumpets, timpani, and strings.*

*Performance time is approximately five minutes.*

# The Music

## Symphony No. 7

Ludwig van Beethoven

Born in Bonn, probably December 16, 1770

Died in Vienna, March 26, 1827



By the mid-1810s Beethoven was recognized far and wide as the preeminent living composer. That did not mean, however, that he was the most popular, widely published, or frequently performed. The great Italian composer Gioachino Rossini was emerging as a new force in the musical world, and his prominence extended far beyond the opera house; arrangements for every conceivable combination of instruments took his music into home, café, and concert hall. Beethoven's imposing

historical stature can obscure our appreciation of how in his own time he sought to juggle fame, popularity, and artistic innovations.

**Greatness and Popularity** Many of what are today considered Beethoven's most highly esteemed compositions, especially ones from late in his career, were initially received with a mixture of admiration, bewilderment, and resistance. But there were also works that were truly popular, or at least aimed to be so. These pieces tend to be much less familiar in our time, but were the favorites of his contemporaries: *Wellington's Victory*, the oratorio *Christ on the Mount of Olives*, the Septet, and his best-loved song, "Adelaide." Occasionally Beethoven wrote something that was recognized as both artistically monumental and hugely popular. An example is the second movement of his Seventh Symphony, a piece that was sometimes performed separately from the complete Symphony and that may have been Beethoven's most prized orchestral composition. It also exerted extraordinary influence on later composers, as the slow movements of Schubert's "Great" C-major Symphony and E-flat Piano Trio, Mendelssohn's "Italian" Symphony, Berlioz's *Harold in Italy*, and other works attest.

After its premiere in 1813, the Seventh Symphony was repeated in Vienna three times during the following 10 weeks; at one of the performances the "applause rose to the point of ecstasy," according to a newspaper account. The Leipzig *Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung* reported that "the new symphony (A major) was received with so much applause, again. The reception was as animated as at the first time; the Andante [sic] (A minor), the crown of modern instrumental music, as at the first performance, had to be repeated." The Symphony's appeal is not hard to understand. In scope and intensity, it is fully Beethovenian, and yet it does not

place quite as many demands on the listener as does the "Eroica." The ambition of the first movement, beauty of the second, the breathlessness of the scherzo, and relentless energy of the finale greatly impressed audiences. Beethoven himself called it "one of the happiest products of my poor talents."

**Celebrating Victory** Beethoven wrote the Seventh Symphony in 1811–12. He premiered it at one of his most successful concerts, given on December 8, 1813, to benefit soldiers wounded in the battle of Hanau six weeks earlier. Paired with it was the first performance of *Wellington's Victory*, also known as the "Battle Symphony." Enjoyment of the event was hardly surprising given what most members of the Viennese audience had been through during the preceding decade. Napoleon's occupations of Vienna in 1805 and 1809 had proven traumatic, but the tide had recently turned. In June the Duke of Wellington was triumphant against Joseph Bonaparte, Napoleon's younger brother, in the northern Spanish town of Vittoria, and within the year the Congress of Vienna was convened to reapportion Europe in the aftermath of France's defeat. After so much conflict and misery, impending victory could be honored and celebrated.

Later writers characterized the Seventh Symphony in various ways, but it is striking how many of the descriptions touch on its frenzy, approaching a bacchanal at times, and on its elements of dance. Richard Wagner's famous poetic account is representative:

All tumult, all yearning and storming of the heart, become here the blissful insolence of joy, which carries us away with bacchanalian power through the roomy space of nature, through all the streams and seas of life, shouting in glad self-consciousness as we sound throughout the universe the daring strains of this human sphere-dance. The Symphony is the Apotheosis of the Dance itself: it is Dance in its highest aspect, the loftiest deed of bodily motion, incorporated into an ideal mold of tone.

As biographer Maynard Solomon has keenly observed, the descriptions of Wagner and others seem to have a common theme:

The apparently diverse free-associational images of these critics—of masses of people, of powerful rhythmic energy discharged in action or in dance, of celebrations, weddings, and revelry—may well be variations on a single image: the carnival or festival, which from time immemorial has temporarily lifted the burden of perpetual subjugation to the prevailing social and natural order by periodically suspending all customary privileges, norms, and imperatives.

*Wellington's Victory* gave a realistic imitation of battle between the English (represented by the song "Rule Britannia") and the French ("Marlborough s'en va t'en guerre") and ends victoriously with variations on "God Save the King"—it is an effective but hardly subtle work. The Seventh apparently tapped into similar

celebratory emotions vivid at the moment, but on a much deeper level that has allowed the Symphony to retain its stature ever since.

**A Closer Look** The Symphony's dance elements, vitality, and sense of celebration are conveyed principally through rhythm. It is not so much the melodies that are striking and memorable as it is the general sense of forward movement. (At times there is no melody at all, but simply the repetition of a single pitch.) The first movement (**Poco sostenuto**) opens with the longest of Beethoven's introductions—indeed the longest yet in the history of the symphony, that leads (by way of repeating just one note) into the main body of the movement (**Vivace**). The famous A-minor **Allegretto** is framed by the same unstable chord to open and close the movement. The form is ABABA with the opening section using a theme that is once again more distinctive for its rhythmic profile than for its melody. The movement builds in intensity and includes a fugue near the end.

The **Presto** scherzo brings out the dance aspect even more. As in some of his other instrumental works, Beethoven includes two trio sections. The **Allegro con brio** finale offers a tour-de-force of energy and excitement. As throughout the Symphony, part of the distinctive sound comes from Beethoven's use of the horns. The work is in A major, which gives a brightness not found in the composer's earlier symphonies.

—Christopher H. Gibbs

*Beethoven composed his Seventh Symphony from 1811 to 1812.*

*Fritz Scheel conducted the first Philadelphia Orchestra performances of the Symphony, in March 1903. The most recent subscription performances were in May 2018, with Yannick Nézet-Séguin on the podium.*

*The Orchestra has recorded the work five times: in 1927 for RCA with Leopold Stokowski; in 1944 and 1964 for CBS with Eugene Ormandy; and in 1978 and 1988 for EMI with Riccardo Muti. A live recording from 2006 with Christoph Eschenbach is also available as a digital download.*

*The Symphony is scored for two flutes, two oboes, two clarinets, two bassoons, two horns, two trumpets, timpani, and strings.*

*Performance time is approximately 35 minutes.*

# Musical Terms

## GENERAL TERMS

**Aria:** An accompanied solo song (often in ternary form), usually in an opera or oratorio

**Arpeggio:** A broken chord (with notes played in succession instead of together)

**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

**Coloratura:** Florid figuration or ornamentation, particularly in vocal music

**Dissonance:** A combination of two or more tones requiring resolution

**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

**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

**Moto perpetuo:** A musical device in which rapid figuration is persistently maintained

**Op.:** Abbreviation for opus, a term used to indicate the chronological position of a composition within a composer's output

**Oratorio:** Large-scale dramatic composition originating in the 16th century with text usually based on religious subjects. Oratorios are performed by choruses and solo voices with an instrumental accompaniment, and are similar to operas but without costumes, scenery, and actions.

**Recitative:** Declamatory singing, free in tempo and rhythm. Recitative has

also sometimes been used to refer to parts of purely instrumental works that resemble vocal recitatives.

**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.

**Sturm und Drang:** Literally, storm and stress. A movement throughout the arts that reached its highpoint in the 1770s, whose aims were to frighten, stun, or overcome with emotion.

**Ternary:** A musical form in three sections, ABA, in which the middle section is different than the outer sections

**Tonic:** The keynote of a scale

**Trio:** See scherzo

## THE SPEED OF MUSIC (Tempo)

**Agitato:** Excited

**Allegretto:** Between walking speed and fast

**Allegro:** Bright, fast

**Andante:** Walking speed

**Con brio:** Vigorously, with fire

**Presto:** Very fast

**Sostenuto:** Sustained

**Vivace:** Lively

## TEMPO MODIFIERS

**Assai:** Much

**Meno:** Less

**Poco:** Little, a bit

## DYNAMIC MARKS

**Fortissimo (ff):** Very loud

**Pianissimo (pp):** Very soft

# Tickets & Patron Services

We want you to enjoy each and every concert experience you share with us. We would love to hear about your experience at the Orchestra and it would be our pleasure to answer any questions you may have.

Please don't hesitate to contact us via phone at 215.893.1999, in person in the lobby, or at [patronservices@philorch.org](mailto:patronservices@philorch.org).

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**PreConcert Conversations:** PreConcert Conversations are held prior to most Philadelphia Orchestra subscription concerts, beginning one hour before the performance. Conversations are free to ticket-holders, feature discussions of the season's music and music-makers, and are supported in part by the Hirschberg-Goodfriend Fund in memory of Adolf Hirschberg, established by Juliet J. Goodfriend.

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

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

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