The Philadelphia Orchestra

Friday, May 6, at 2:00
Saturday, May 7, at 8:00

Fabio Luisi Conductor
Jeffrey Khaner Flute

Nielsen Helios Overture, Op. 17
First Philadelphia Orchestra performances

Nielsen Flute Concerto
   I. Allegro moderato
   II. Allegretto

Intermission

Tchaikovsky Symphony No. 5 in E minor, Op. 64
   I. Andante—Allegro con anima
   II. Andante cantabile, con alcuna licenza
   III. Valse: Allegro moderato
   IV. Finale: Andante maestoso—Allegro vivace

This program runs approximately 1 hour, 40 minutes.

Philadelphia Orchestra concerts are broadcast on WRTI 90.1 FM on Sunday afternoons at 1 PM, and are repeated on Monday evenings at 7 PM on WRTI HD 2. Visit www.wrti.org to listen live or for more details.
The Philadelphia Orchestra 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 reimagined 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. Under Yannick’s leadership, the Orchestra returned to recording, with 10 celebrated releases on the prestigious 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.

Mr. Luisi made his Philadelphia Orchestra debut in 2011. He has guest conducted the Cleveland Orchestra, the San Francisco Symphony, the Munich Philharmonic, the Filarmonica della Scala, the London Symphony, the Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra, the Saito Kinen Orchestra, and in all the major opera houses worldwide. He has also conducted Richard Strauss’s Die Liebe der Danae and Die ägyptische Helena for the Salzburg Festival. His work for the Zurich Opera has included new productions of three Bellini operas along with Verdi’s Rigoletto, Beethoven’s Fidelio, Berg’s Wozzeck, and Verdi’s Requiem. He is also music director of the Festival della Valle d’Itria in Martina Franca, Italy.

Mr. Luisi received a GRAMMY Award for his conducting of the last two operas of Wagner’s Ring Cycle when Deutsche Grammophon’s DVD release, recorded live at the Met, was named Best Opera Recording of 2012. His extensive discography also features operas by Verdi, Salieri, and Bellini; all of Schumann’s and Honegger’s symphonies; the symphonies and the oratorio The Book with Seven Seals by Schmidt; and various symphonic poems by Strauss. An acclaimed performance of Bruckner’s Ninth Symphony with the Staatskapelle Dresden was awarded the 2009 ECHO-Klassik award. In 2013 he won Italy’s coveted Premio Franco Abbiati critics’ award. In 2015 the Philharmonia Zurich launched its Philharmonia Records label with his recordings of works by Berlioz, Wagner, Verdi, and Rachmaninoff. A native of Genoa, Mr. Luisi was awarded the Grifo d’Oro for his contributions to the city’s cultural legacy. In his time off the podium, he is a passionate maker of perfumes.
Canadian-born Jeffrey Khaner (Paul and Barbara Henkels Chair) has been principal flute of The Philadelphia Orchestra since 1990. From 1982 to 1990 he was principal flute of the Cleveland Orchestra, and he has also served as principal of the New York Mostly Mozart Festival and the Atlantic Symphony in Halifax, and as co-principal of the Pittsburgh Symphony. A noted soloist, he has performed concertos with orchestras throughout the United States, Canada, and Asia, collaborating with conductors including Riccardo Chailly, Christoph von Dohnányi, Christoph Eschenbach, Hans Werner Henze, Vladimir Jurowski, Erich Leinsdorf, Kurt Masur, Yannick Nézet-Séguin, Wolfgang Sawallisch, Gerard Schwarz, Robert Spano, Franz Welser-Möst, and David Zinman. His concerto repertoire is extensive, and he has premiered many works, including concertos by Ned Rorem, Behzad Ranjbaran, Jonathan Leshnoff, Eric Sessler, David Chesky, and Samuel Jones, all written for him. As a recitalist, Mr. Khaner has appeared on four continents with pianists Charles Abramovic, Mr. Eschenbach, Lowell Liebermann, Mr. Sawallisch, Hugh Sung, and many others. He is a founding member of the Syrinx Trio (with violist Roberto Díaz and Philadelphia Orchestra Principal Harp Elizabeth Hainen), which made its Carnegie Hall debut in 2001. A graduate of the Juilliard School, Mr. Khaner was named to the faculty in 2004, holding the position formerly occupied by his mentor, Julius Baker. Since 1985 he has been a faculty member of the Curtis Institute of Music; he is also flute professor at Lynn University in Boca Raton. He has participated as a performer and teacher at many festivals and seminars, including the Solti Orchestral Project at Carnegie Hall, the New World Symphony, the Pacific Music and Hamamatsu festivals in Japan, the Sarasota and Grand Teton festivals, and the Lake Placid Institute. In 1995 he was selected by Georg Solti to be principal flute of the World Orchestra for Peace, celebrating the 50th anniversary of the United Nations; the orchestra regularly reconvenes throughout the world. He is also principal flute of the Mainly Mozart Festival in San Diego.

In addition to his orchestral recordings, Mr. Khaner has extensively recorded solo flute repertoire. He has released seven critically acclaimed solo CDs on the Avie label. His recording of Mr. Chesky’s Flute Concerto appears on Chesky Records, and his recording of Mr. Rorem’s Concerto is on Naxos. Mr. Khaner’s editions of repertoire, including the Brahms sonatas, are published by the Theodore Presser Company. He is a Yamaha performing artist and clinician. For more information, please visit www.iflute.com.
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History
Sesquicentennial Exposition in Philadelphia

The first half of the concert today features two works by the eminent Danish composer Carl Nielsen. In February 1903 he left the cold, dark Scandinavian north to visit his wife, a sculptor, who was working at the time in Athens. Upon his arrival Nielsen was dazzled by the sun-drenched city with its magnificent temples and quickly started to compose his Helios Overture, named after the Greek god of the sun. Nearly 20 years later he wrote his two-movement Flute Concerto for Holger Gilbert-Jespersen, a colleague he greatly admired.

By the late 1880s, when Tchaikovsky composed his Fifth Symphony, he had not tackled the genre in nearly 10 years. The piece proved an immediate success with audiences, although the composer himself wavered in his affection for the Symphony, which carried deep autobiographical associations. He returned to a subject already sounded in his Fourth Symphony: Fate. Yet while the earlier work was angry and defiant, the mood in the Fifth is more at peace. This is music that often seems to dance with Fate.
Beethoven’s Symphony No. 9
June 3–5

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In February 1903 the Danish composer Carl Nielsen left wintry Copenhagen and traveled to Athens by way of Berlin and Brindisi. He undertook this trip in order to join his wife, sculptor Anne Marie Carl-Nielsen (née Brodersen), who was working at the Acropolis Museum. The journey was a revelation for Nielsen, as the cloudy skies of Scandinavia receded and sunshine progressively illuminated the passing landscapes. When he arrived in Athens on February 20, he was immediately dazzled by the city, which was bathed in brilliant Mediterranean light. Writing to his friend Svend Godske-Nielsen, he exclaimed that the Athenian temples "surpassed my great expectations." In a letter on March 10 Nielsen described the beauties of the landscape at Colonus: "Weather unsettled; hence the most captivating light effects over the mountains … the sun shone through a cloud so that it resembled a great pile of wheat, transparent, golden."

**Tracing the Journey of the Sun** Earlier that same day, Nielsen wrote in his diary about the start of a new orchestral piece: "Morning from 8.30 till 11 at the conservatoire and began the overture Helios." The Athens Conservatoire had generously put a studio with a piano at his disposal. He was able to work on the score between excursions to historical locales and attending lectures by the German archeologist Wilhelm Dörpfeld. Nielsen wrote Godske-Nielsen that "Now it is sensationally warm here, Helios burns all day and I am writing freely in my new solar system; a long introduction with sunrise and morning song are finished and I have begun the Allegro." Sustained by the heat of his creative vision, Nielsen completed his *Helios Overture* by the end of April. Writing to another friend, he revealed that the music traces the journey of "the sun from its ascent over the dark mountains here in the east until it crackles and shines in its fullest brilliance at midday and finally sinks slowly back behind the beautiful Aegean gulf and the darkening blue mountains in the west and evening and silence fall." Musicologist Daniel M. Grimley has observed, "It was evidently from this Homeric vision of a classical spring landscape, haunted by the ghosts of Greek tragedy, that the structure and shape of *Helios* began to grow."

Nielsen’s score is not program music of the sort one might expect given its title. Unlike, say, Saint-Saëns’s symphonic poem *Phaéton* (1873), which was inspired...
by the myth of Phaethon’s disastrous attempt to drive his father Apollo’s solar chariot across the sky, Nielsen’s Helios Overture does not engage with mythology. His music springs from his sensuous wonder at the sun-drenched Grecian landscape and his keen appreciation of the architectural proportions of the classical Athenian temples. (Dörpfeld clearly found a receptive listener in Nielsen.) In his 1907 lecture on Greek music, Nielsen affirmed his sturdy Hellenistic aesthetic: “To explain in words a musical work’s sounding content for an audience so that they ‘hear something’ for themselves is—as I said—impossible. The art of music occupies in many respects a privileged position. It resembles architecture in that it creates something from nothing, but distinguishes itself from that art because it does not unfold in space but freely in time.”

**A Closer Look** The Helios Overture evinces a characteristic balance between tradition and innovation. As an enthusiastic scholar of Renaissance polyphony, Nielsen was intimately familiar with modal music from the 15th and 16th centuries. He also grew up singing and playing Danish folk melodies, which are often modal as well. It is therefore unsurprising that the opening passage of this Overture is cast in the Mixolydian mode. Helios is, however, far from an exercise in musical antiquarianism. After the introduction, the central allegro that follows is an ingenious variant of sonata form. A masterly transition leads to a subdued return of the opening material as the sunlight dissipates into darkness. All of the thematic material in the piece is derived from a few terse motifs, notably the stirring upward octave leap heard in the French horns near the beginning.

Nielsen was also an expert orchestrator, which can be heard immediately in the way that the low strings create a primordial sonority from which the hymn to the dawn played by the horns gradually arises. Having spent 16 years as a second violinist in the Royal Danish Orchestra, Nielsen knew the orchestra from the inside. Unsurprisingly, then, the violin parts of the Helios Overture are scintillating yet treacherous, rather like the Mediterranean Sea itself.

—Byron Adams

**Nielsen composed the Helios Overture in 1903.**

**These are the first Philadelphia Orchestra performances of the piece.**

**The work is scored for three flutes (III doubling piccolo), two oboes, two clarinets, two bassoons, four horns, three trumpets, three trombones, tuba, timpani, and strings.**

**Performance time is approximately 12 minutes.**
The Music

Flute Concerto

Carl Nielsen

Like his “northern” contemporaries Edvard Grieg and Jean Sibelius, Carl Nielsen was a master of musical characterization. The Norwegian Grieg found an outlet for his lyric gifts in programmatic music for the stage as well as in smaller-scale works for piano; Sibelius of Finland composed huge descriptive orchestral tone poems based on tales from Nordic legends. The Danish Nielsen’s sense of characterization was similarly fanciful and expansive, and spilled over into non-programmatic music composed with specific musicians in mind. Each of his three concertos, for example, was written for the specific talents and character of a particular soloist, and we can learn much not only about Nielsen but about the virtuosos themselves by listening to these works.

When he composed his Wind Quintet, Op. 43, in 1922, it was only natural that Nielsen should try to fashion each of the five parts for the individual musicians for whom the work was intended—the members of the Copenhagen Wind Quintet, all of whom were well known to him. He was so captivated by their performance of the work that he determined to compose a concerto for each of his five friends; only two were completed, those for flute and clarinet, but they are both among his subtlest and most splendidly crafted compositions.

Inspired by Italy The Flute Concerto was sketched during the summer of 1926, on the heels of Nielsen’s brooding and heavy Sixth Symphony; there is almost nothing of the Symphony’s somber weight in this delightful work. The flutist was Holger Gilbert-Jespersen, whose lithe tone and supple weight reflected both French conservatory training and his Danish rigor. Nielsen completed most of the work during travels in Italy through the summer and early fall—inspired by Florentine art and the splendors of the Tuscan countryside around San Gimignano. On October 1 he was able to write: “The Flute Concerto has worked out well. It will be long and difficult, and thus a good challenge for Gilbert.”

The composer kept the poor soloist on edge for the entire summer, sending him the solo part in bits and pieces; the case was urgent, for the premiere had been set for October 21. Nielsen arrived in Paris on the 16th and managed to put the concert together with his somewhat agitated soloist. Nevertheless the
work was received warmly by the audience at the Salle Gaveau that evening. The composer Arthur Honegger, who was also a critic at the time, wrote a review declaring the piece "piquant, fluid, and not lacking in humor." Nielsen later admitted he had completed the work somewhat hurriedly, and after the Paris premiere he rewrote the ending. The new version was performed in 1927 at the Musikforeningen in Copenhagen and has become the concert standard.

A Closer Look Each of Nielsen’s concertos is organized uniquely: the Violin Concerto is cast in two movements, each of which is two separate movements; the Clarinet Concerto is built in one continuous structure. The Flute Concerto is in two movements; the first (Allegro moderato) is an expansive sonata structure, built from a tonally elusive opening and a second theme squarely in F major. The solo part, virtuosic without being showy, integrates the "bright" flute perfectly into the texture of a “dark” orchestra without flutes or trumpets. The movement concludes with a cadenza in which the solo clarinet plays an important role; and the “rearrival” of the opening material comes as a bit of a jolt. The second movement (Allegretto), light and cheerful, casts the wind instruments in concertante-like textures, demonstrating perhaps the composer’s awareness of Neo-Classical trends going on around him during this period. A witty ending juxtaposes a “clodhopping” trombone, stumbling along in the “wrong key” with the flighty humor of the solo flute; but it is the trombone who finds his way to the right key first. The flute follows the lead.

—Paul J. Horsley

The Flute Concerto was composed in 1926.

The first Philadelphia Orchestra performance of the work took place on a Senior Student Concert in March 1971, with Janet Ketchum as soloist and William Smith conducting. James Galway played the subscription premiere 10 years later, in October 1981, with Eugene Ormandy. Most recently on subscription, it was played by Principal Flute Jeffrey Khaner in December 1995, with Riccardo Chailly on the podium.

The score calls for solo flute, two oboes, two clarinets, two bassoons, two horns, bass trombone, timpani, and strings.

The Concerto runs approximately 18 minutes in performance.
Tchaikovsky's orchestral works were not always as successful as his elevated position in today's concert-hall pantheon would suggest. While he may have been regarded as Russia's greatest symphonist and arguably its most talented composer during his lifetime, his ballet scores, overtures, and concertos often received responses ranging from pedestrian to outright disdain. Tchaikovsky endured periods of crushing self-doubt, exacerbated by the critical responses to his music. It was largely during the 20th century, after the composer's death, that his reputation as an audience favorite became firmly established.

When Tchaikovsky began composing his Symphony No. 5 in the summer of 1888, it was with a mixture of determination and paralyzing uncertainty. "I want so much to show not only to others, but to myself, that I still haven't expired," he wrote to his patron and friend Nadezhda von Meck. It had been 10 years since his Fourth Symphony and he was resolved to prove that his inspiration had not dried up. The initial sketches for this new work came to him only with difficulty, but he found some creative momentum as he was working on the instrumentation. When the new symphony was completed in August 1888, he exclaimed with some relief, "Thank God, it is no worse than my previous ones." The following week, he reiterated, "it has turned out well."

A Self-Proclaimed Failure At its premiere the following month, the audience and his close friends received the piece enthusiastically, but the critics were harsh at subsequent performances. Tchaikovsky unfortunately believed the critics rather than his friends and concluded after three performances that the work was a failure. "There is something repellant in it," he lamented, "some over-exaggerated color, some insincerity of fabrication." It was not until the following year, when Brahms heard a performance in Hamburg and expressed his admiration for the new work, that Tchaikovsky finally admitted this colorful, emotional, patchwork-quilt of a symphony had any merit. "I have started to love it again," he wrote to his nephew. "My earlier judgment was undeservedly harsh."

Tchaikovsky claimed that the Fifth Symphony was not programmatic, but his early sketches included comments about "fate," "providence," and "faith." Perhaps
he was thinking of Beethoven's famous “Fate” symphony—also a Fifth—and had planned a similar symphonic trajectory for this work. Those initial sketches were eventually rejected, though, and unlike a true programmatic symphony the piece holds together well without a specific narrative program when heard simply in terms of its musical discourse and development. And in that regard, it might resemble Beethoven’s Fifth even more closely.

A Closer Look  A single theme—perhaps a leitmotif of fate—appears in each of the four movements, suggesting a journey or gradual metamorphosis, culminating in a conclusion that can be heard as either triumphant or ominous. At the Symphony’s opening (Andante), this dotted-rhythm theme is presented in a slow introduction—a mournful funeral march. Then the clarinets and bassoon introduce the Allegro con anima section with a variant on the theme that, while lilting and more animated, even dance-like at times, still bears the emotional weight of the portentous introduction. If this is indeed a “Fate” theme, then the fatal narrative has already been set, and cannot be avoided. A less-troubled second idea only serves to intensify the storm of the contrapuntally dense development, where the dotted-rhythm figure relentlessly reemerges. After the main theme is reprised, the waltz-like second theme is brought back in E major, but the coda re-establishes the funeral-march connotations with a repeated lament bassline and a total dissipation of energy.

Out of the darkness of the low strings, the harmonies turn to D major in the Andante cantabile second movement, a nocturne whose ravishing horn melody was later adapted to the popular song “Moon Love.” This melody is dramatically interrupted by the Fate motif, but gradually regains its composure, reaching an almost-triumph before Fate cruelly silences it once more. The lyrical melody can then only limp to a defeated close. A short waltz (Allegro moderato), instead of the usual third-movement scherzo, transforms the horn melody into an oasis of untroubled delight before the Fate motif returns, again, to shroud the closing.

The finale opens (Andante maestoso) and proceeds much as the first movement did, with a dramatic dialog between Fate and Joy, except the Fate theme is now in E major. With repeated references to other motifs from the inner movements, the dramatic momentum arches toward a seemingly triumphant victory, the Fate motif now an exultant brass fanfare, hammered home with Beethovenian repetitions of tonic major harmony.

And yet the Symphony’s conclusion feels less victorious than it should. Is it Tchaikovsky’s wishful thinking—a forced victory paralleling the composer’s own fears and hopes for this work? As a commentator of the day remarked, if Beethoven’s Fifth Symphony was “Fate knocking at the door,” then Tchaikovsky’s Fifth might represent “Fate trying to get out.”

—Luke Howard
Tchaikovsky composed his Fifth Symphony in 1888.

The work has been performed by The Philadelphia Orchestra probably as often as any piece in the orchestral repertory. Fritz Scheel conducted the first Orchestra performance, in October 1906. From the 1930s it was a favorite of Eugene Ormandy, who led it on tours and at the Academy of Music. The most recent subscription performances were Stéphane Denève’s in May 2019.

The Orchestra has recorded the Fifth eight times: in 1934 for RCA with Leopold Stokowski; in 1941 for RCA with Ormandy; in 1950 and 1959 for CBS with Ormandy; in 1974, again for RCA, with Ormandy; in 1981 for Delos with Ormandy; in 1991 for EMI with Riccardo Muti; and in 2005 for Ondine with Christoph Eschenbach. The second movement alone was also recorded by Stokowski in 1923 for RCA.

The score calls for three flutes (III doubling piccolo), two oboes, two clarinets, two bassoons, four horns, two trumpets, three trombones, tuba, timpani, and strings.

Tchaikovsky’s Symphony No. 5 runs approximately 50 minutes in performance.
**GENERAL TERMS**

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

**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

**Concertante:** A work featuring one or more solo instruments

**Counterpoint:** The combination of simultaneously sounding musical lines

**Diatonic:** Melody or harmony drawn primarily from the tones of the major or minor scale

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

**Leitmotif:** Any striking musical motif characterizing or accompanying one of the actors, or some particular idea, emotion, or situation in a drama

**Mixolydian:** The fifth mode of the major scale as it is derived from the fifth note of the major scale

**Mode:** Any of certain fixed arrangements of the diatonic tones of an octave, as the major and minor scales of Western music

**Neo-Classicism:** A movement of style in the works of certain 20th-century composers who revived the balanced forms and clearly perceptible thematic processes of earlier styles

**Nocturne:** A piece of a dreamily romantic or sentimental character

**Octave:** The interval between any two notes that are seven diatonic (non-chromatic) scale degrees apart

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

**Polyphony:** A term used to designate music in more than one part and the style in which all or several of the musical parts move to some extent independently

**Scale:** The series of tones which form (a) any major or minor key or (b) the chromatic scale of successive semitonic 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.

**Sonata form:** The form in which the first movements 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.

**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

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**THE SPEED OF MUSIC (Tempo)**

**Allegretto:** A tempo between walking speed and fast

**Allegro:** Bright, fast

**Andante:** Walking speed

**Cantabile:** In a singing style, lyrical

**Con alcuna licenza:** With some freedom

**Con anima:** With feeling

**Maestoso:** Majestic

**Moderato:** A moderate tempo

**Vivace:** Lively
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