

2021–2022 | 122nd Season

The Philadelphia Orchestra

Thursday, March 24, at 7:30

Friday, March 25, at 2:00

Saturday, March 26, at 8:00

Sunday, March 27, at 2:00

Yannick Nézet-Séguin Conductor

Sergio Tiempo Piano

Charlotte Blake Alston Speaker

Frank from *Leyendas: An Andean Walkabout*:

I. Toyos

III. Himno de Zampoñas—

IV. Chasqui

Chopin Piano Concerto No. 1 in E minor, Op. 11

I. Allegro maestoso

II. Romanze: Larghetto

III. Rondo: Vivace

Intermission

Shostakovich Symphony No. 5 in D minor, Op. 47

I. Moderato—Allegro non troppo

II. Allegretto

III. Largo

IV. Allegro non troppo

This program runs approximately 2 hours, 10 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

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.

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.

Soloist

Susanne Althburg



Pianist **Sergio Tiempo** is making his Philadelphia Orchestra debut with these performances. Born in Caracas, Venezuela, he began piano studies with his mother, Lyl Tiempo. He made his professional debut at the Amsterdam Concertgebouw at age 14. While at the International Piano Academy in Lake Como, Italy, he worked with pianists Dmitri Bashkirov, Fou Ts'ong, and Murray Perahia and baritone Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau.

Mr. Tiempo continues to receive frequent musical guidance and advice from pianist Martha Argerich and performs regularly with fellow countryman and friend Gustavo Dudamel.

Mr. Tiempo's recent performance highlights include return visits to the Los Angeles Philharmonic to perform Beethoven's Triple Concerto, Tchaikovsky's Concerto No. 1, Chopin's Concerto No. 1, and the world premiere of Esteban Benzecry's new piano concerto, *Universos Infinitos*, with Mr. Dudamel. The work was also performed at Lincoln Center in his debut with the New York Philharmonic. Further orchestral collaborations include the Orchestre Philharmonique de Radio France; the Brussels and Buenos Aires philharmonics; the Simón Bolívar, Singapore, St. Petersburg, Phoenix, Stavanger, BBC, and City of Birmingham symphonies; the Auckland Philharmonia; and the Zurich Chamber Orchestra. He has worked alongside such eminent conductors as Claudio Abbado, Myung-Whun Chung, and Thierry Fischer. Mr. Tiempo was artist-in-residence in 2018 with the Queensland Symphony. A committed recitalist, he has appeared at Queen Elizabeth Hall, the Vienna Konzerthaus, Wigmore Hall, the Berlin Philharmonie, the Edinburgh International Festival, the George Enescu Festival, the Martha Argerich Festival, the Oslo Chamber Music Festival, the Warsaw Chopin Festival, Brussels Chopin Days, Music Days in Lisbon, and on recital tours in China, Korea, Italy, and South America.

Mr. Tiempo has made a number of acclaimed recordings. On EMI Classics, he recorded Musorgsky's *Pictures from an Exhibition*, Ravel's *Gaspard de la nuit*, and Chopin nocturnes for the *Martha Argerich Presents* series. On Deutsche Grammophon he has several discs with cellist Mischa Maisky, including works by Rachmaninoff. Along with his sister Karin Lechner he recorded *Tango Rhapsody*, a new work for two pianos and orchestra by Argentinean composer Federico Jusid, commissioned for the duo and the RSI Lugano, also performed with the Queensland Symphony and Alondra de la Parra. Other recordings with Ms. Lechner include a disc of French music released on Avanti Classics, a label with which Mr. Tiempo recorded his latest disc, *Legacy*. Future plans include a duo recording with Ms. Argerich.

Speaker



Charlotte Blake Alston is an internationally acclaimed storyteller, narrator, and librettist. In July 2021 she was named The Philadelphia Orchestra's official storyteller, narrator, and host. She has appeared as host and narrator on the Orchestra's School and Family concerts since 1991 and is in her 28th season as host of Sound All Around, the Orchestra's preschool concert series. She has also appeared on each of the Orchestra's Martin Luther King, Jr., Tribute Concerts since 2003.

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

Ms. Alston has produced several commissioned works for orchestras and opera companies including original narrative texts for Saint-Saëns's *The Carnival of the Animals* and Rimsky-Korsakov's *Sheherazade*. Her honors include two honorary Ph.Ds, a Pew Fellowship in the Arts, and the Circle of Excellence Award from the National Storytelling Association. She is the recipient of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania's Artist of the Year Award and the Zora Neale Hurston Award, the highest award bestowed by the National Association of Black Storytellers.

Framing the Program

Parallel Events

1830

Chopin

Piano

Concerto

No. 1

Music

Berlioz

Symphonie

fantastique

Literature

Tennyson

Poems, Chiefly

Lyrical

Art

Delacroix

Liberty Guiding

the People

History

Indian Removal

Act signed into

law

1937

Shostakovich

Symphony

No. 5

Music

Orff

Carmina burana

Literature

Steinbeck

Of Mice and

Men

Art

Picasso

Guernica

History

Japan invades

China

Philadelphia Orchestra Composer-in-Residence Gabriela Lena Frank often draws from her multiracial upbringing as a “Peruvian-Chinese-Jewish-Lithuanian girl.” This background finds expression in *Leyendas: An Andean Walkabout*, a string quartet (which she later arranged for string orchestra) that grew out of travels to Peru (her mother’s homeland) where she connected with members of her extended family. She says the “Legends” in the work were inspired by “the idea of *mestizaje* as envisioned by the Peruvian writer José María Arguedas, where cultures can coexist without the subjugation of one by the other. As such, this piece mixes elements from the Western classical and Andean folk music traditions.”

Frédéric Chopin was born near Warsaw to a French father and Polish mother. His dazzling skills as pianist and composer captivated audiences in his homeland, where as a teenager he wrote both of his piano concertos. At age 21 he moved to Paris and spent the rest of his relatively short life there. The Concerto No. 1 in E minor became his musical calling card, first in his native land, then in Vienna, Germany, and finally in his new home.

Shostakovich’s Fifth Symphony was a key work in the composer’s career. During his 20s Shostakovich had rapidly emerged as the great genius of Soviet music, but in 1936 he was brutally attacked in the official Communist press, which put both his professional and private life in peril. He withheld the premiere of his Fourth Symphony for more than a quarter century and wrote the magnificent Fifth Symphony, which helped to restore his reputation at home while also achieving classic status internationally.

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

Selections from *Leyendas: An Andean Walkabout*

Gabriela Lena Frank

Born in Berkeley, California, September 26, 1972

Now living in Boonville, California



American composer Gabriela Lena Frank comes from a richly cosmopolitan background: her father was born in the United States from Lithuanian Jewish heritage and her mother is Peruvian, of Chinese and indigenous *indio* descent. Consequently, many of Frank's musical works explore multicultural intersections in new, unexpected, and vivid ways. In celebrating explicitly this *mestiza* quality, she describes it as her "mission ... something deeply American."

Frank studied composition at Rice University and earned her doctorate from the University of Michigan. She has received numerous commissions from leading ensembles including the Cleveland Orchestra, the King's Singers, the Kronos Quartet, and the Brentano Quartet, and has participated with cellist Yo-Yo Ma in his Silk Road Project. She was awarded a Guggenheim Fellowship in 2009, the same year she won a Latin GRAMMY Award. The following year she was named a United States Artist Fellow. Frank is currently composer-in-residence with The Philadelphia Orchestra, having previously served in that capacity with both the Detroit and Houston symphonies. In fall 2022 San Diego Opera is scheduled to premiere her first opera, *The Last Dream of Frida and Diego*.

A Juxtaposition of Cultures Regarding the influence of multiple cultural heritages on her compositions, Frank observes, "I think the music can be seen as a by-product of my always trying to figure out how Latina I am and how *gringa* I am." On another occasion she declared, "I firmly believe that only in the United States could a Peruvian-Chinese-Jewish-Lithuanian girl born with significant hearing loss in a hippie town [Berkeley, CA] successfully create a life writing string quartets and symphonies."

That philosophy is revealed lucidly in Frank's *Leyendas: An Andean Walkabout*, composed as a string quartet in 2001 and then arranged for string orchestra in 2003. The work emerged partly from an early first-hand experience with unexpected culture shock in South America. Frank started travelling to Peru (her mother's homeland) in 2000, connecting with members of her extended family there. With her multiracial upbringing, she expected to feel somewhat "at home." Instead (she later recalled wryly), she got sick, was disoriented, didn't know how things worked, and "felt rejected by the land." "Yet there were enough moments," she countered, "where I felt so connected and I was so happy that I kept going

back. And as I kept going back, I realized more through familiarity, but it also felt like remembering." That juxtaposition of cultures, and the process of becoming familiar with the occasionally surprising interactions between them, directly influenced Frank's approach to writing this work.

Leyendas (Legends) draws inspiration from the notion of a cultural *mestizaje*, as outlined by the Peruvian writer José María Arguedas, where Western and indigenous cultures can coexist without the conquest or subjugation of one by the other. "As such," Frank explains, "this piece mixes elements from the Western classical and Andean folk traditions" in a manner that would come to characterize her compositions in general.

Several critics have noted similarities between these objectives and Béla Bartók's goal of incorporating folk idioms within Western contexts. Some have described *Leyendas* as sounding like "Bartók goes to Peru," although "quite attractively so." Frank doesn't mind the comparisons—Bartók and the Argentinian composer Alberto Ginastera have served as inspirational models throughout her career.

A Closer Look *Leyendas* is a six-movement work, of which three will be performed in this concert. The brief opening **Toyos** depicts the sounds of the *siku* or Andean panpipes. (*Siku* is the indigenous Aymaran name for the instrument.) One of the largest instruments in that family is the *toyo*, with bamboo pipes that can extend up to four feet in length. Typically played in parallel fourths, the *toyo* calls for extraordinary stamina and lung capacity, producing a breathy quality that Frank imitates with strings in this work.

The rondo-like third movement, **Himno de Zampoñas**, alludes to a particular type of Andean panpipe ensemble. (*Zampoña* is simply the Spanish name for the *siku*.) The melody is divided among the ensemble members using a technique known in Western medieval music as hocketing. One of the techniques of playing the *zampoña* involves overblowing, to produce more pronounced overtones—an effect mimicked in this movement with double-stopping.

The title of the fourth movement, **Chasqui**, refers to the *chasqui* runners of the Inca empire, agile and intelligent messenger-carriers who sprinted between towns separated by the high Andean peaks. Frank notes, "I take artistic license to imagine his choice of instruments to be the *charango*, a high-pitched cousin of the guitar, and the lightweight bamboo *quena* flute, both of which are featured in this movement."

—Luke Howard

Leyendas: An Andean Walkabout was originally composed for string quartet in 2001 and was arranged for string orchestra in 2003.

The first Philadelphia Orchestra performance of movements I, III, and IV were on a Digital Stage concert in October 2020, with Yannick Nézet-Séguin. These movements were also played at the Bravo! Vail Music Festival in July 2021 and at the Saratoga Performing Arts Center in August 2021, again with Nézet-Séguin. Movements II and VI were performed by the Orchestra on its Digital Stage preview performance in September 2020, with Kensho Watanabe conducting.

The score calls for strings only.

Performance time for these excerpts is approximately nine minutes.

The Music

Piano Concerto No. 1

Frédéric Chopin

Born in Żelazowa Wola (near Warsaw), March 1, 1810

Died in Paris, October 17, 1849



In what turned out to be a successful bid to boost his professional career in his native Poland, the teenage Chopin did what had worked for Mozart, Beethoven, and many others before him: He decided to write pieces for piano and orchestra that he could play at public concerts. In this way he would display his gifts as both instrumentalist and composer and prove that he was more than simply a pianist.

Chopin had already written dozens of solo keyboard pieces, but they were generally aimed for domestic consumption, not for concerts where audiences expected grander orchestral and vocal fare, usually presented in a pleasing mixed variety. In fact, at the premiere of the Concerto we hear today, an aria and chorus were performed in between the first and second of its three movements, a not uncommon practice at the time. In addition to the two concertos Chopin wrote in 1829–30, he produced other somewhat less familiar works for piano with orchestra, including Variations on Mozart's "Là ci darem la mano," a Grand Fantasy on Polish Airs, and *Krakowiak*. The Mozart Variations won Robert Schumann's enthusiastic support in a famous review that stated: "Hats off, Gentleman, a genius!"

Two Youthful Concertos Due to the order of their eventual publication, the chronology of Chopin's E-minor and F-minor concertos is actually reversed, although in any case both were written within the space of less than a year. (The numbering of Beethoven's first two piano concertos is similarly switched.) Chopin began composing the "Second" Concerto in F minor, Op. 21, in the fall of 1829, upon returning from triumphant appearances in Vienna, and gave its premiere at the National Theater in Warsaw on March 17, 1830. The immediate success the work enjoyed—as well as acclaim for Chopin's playing—led to a repeat performance five days later and prompted the composer to start writing the Concerto in E minor, Op. 11.

By the end of the summer the new concerto was finished and ready for its premiere at the same venue in October. The concert proved to be Chopin's farewell to his native Poland; he never played there again, although he had no way of knowing that at the time. He once more scored a great success, as he

described in a letter the next day: "I did not have the slightest trace of stage fright and I played as if I were alone. Everything went well. The hall was full. The first piece was the symphony by Görner. Then came yours truly with the Allegro in E minor [the first movement]; on the Streicher grand piano it seemed to play itself. Ear-splitting 'Bravos.'" After the aria with chorus came the last two movements of the Concerto.

Three weeks later Chopin left Poland on his way to Vienna, where he performed the E-minor Concerto, before eventually settling in Paris, the city in which he would spend the rest of his life. He played the E-minor Concerto in Breslau, Vienna, Munich, and on various occasions in France in the 1830s.

Critical Debates Loved from the start by pianists and audiences, both of Chopin's concertos have suffered some in critical assessment. The charge is that these are early works by a composer not yet fully comfortable handling large-scale forms or orchestration. Hector Berlioz's reaction was typical: "In Chopin all the interest is concentrated on the piano part; the orchestra in his piano concertos is merely a cold, almost superfluous accompaniment."

While there is some justice to this criticism (the orchestra tends to do rather little when the piano is present and otherwise asserts itself mainly in loud tutti passages), it may not be entirely appropriate to judge Chopin either by the standards of Beethoven's earlier symphonic concertos or by the later Romantic essays of his great contemporaries, such as Schumann and Liszt. Orchestral parts had to be fairly simple to accommodate traveling virtuosos who often had little (or even no) rehearsal with local orchestras. Chopin's model and competition in 1829–30 would have been the virtuoso fare of pianist/composers like Friedrich Kalkbrenner (to whom Chopin dedicated the E-minor Concerto), Ignaz Moscheles, and Johann Nepomuk Hummel, figures who are barely remembered today and whose concertos Chopin himself played.

A Closer Look The opening **Allegro maestoso** uses the so-called double exposition typical of Classical concertos in which the orchestra first presents the thematic material and the soloist waits some time before re-presenting it. In fact, Chopin has the soloist wait such a long time that conductors occasionally abridge the orchestral section. (This rarely happens any longer, but if one listens to the 1937 recording by Arthur Rubinstein, for example, the opening tutti is cut from about four minutes to just one.) Chopin's coloratura keyboard writing, reminiscent in some respects to the vocal style of Vincenzo Bellini's operas, is already apparent in this movement.

Of the second movement (**Larghetto**), Chopin wrote to his friend Tytus Woyciechowski that "it was not meant to create a powerful effect; it is rather a Romance, calm and melancholy, giving the impression of someone looking gently toward a spot that calls to mind a thousand happy memories. It is a kind of reverie in the moonlight on a beautiful spring evening. Hence the accompaniment

is muted; that is, the violins are muffled by a sort of comb that sits over the strings and gives them a nasal and silvery tone. I wonder if that will have a good effect. Well, time will tell."

The finale (**Vivace**), as in the F-minor Concerto, is a Polish dance, in this case the *krakowiak*. During rehearsals, Chopin remarked, "The Rondo, I think, will go down well with everyone." And so it does.

—Christopher H. Gibbs

Chopin composed his E-minor Concerto in 1830.

Ossip Gabrilowitsch was the soloist in The Philadelphia Orchestra's first performance of the work, in December 1902; Fritz Scheel conducted. The Concerto's most recent appearance on subscription was in January 2017, with Louis Lortie as soloist and Yannick Nézet-Séguin on the podium. Many of the great pianists have performed the piece with the Philadelphians, including Josef Hofmann, Arthur Rubinstein, Claudio Arrau, Emil Gilels, Van Cliburn, Garrick Ohlsson, Murray Perahia, and Emanuel Ax.

The Philadelphia Orchestra has recorded Chopin's First Piano Concerto five times, all with Eugene Ormandy: in 1952 with György Sándor, 1961 with Alexander Brailowsky, and 1964 with Gilels, all for CBS; and in 1969 with Cliburn and 1980 with Ax, both for RCA.

The score calls for solo piano, two flutes, two clarinets, two oboes, two bassoons, four horns, two trumpets, trombone, timpani, and strings.

The First Concerto runs approximately 40 minutes in performance.

The Music

Symphony No. 5

Dmitri Shostakovich

Born in St. Petersburg, September 25, 1906

Died in Moscow, August 9, 1975



The life and career of Dmitri Shostakovich were in a perilous state when he began writing his Fifth Symphony in April 1937. The 30-year-old composer had recently experienced a precipitous fall from the acclaim he had enjoyed throughout his 20s, ever since he burst on the musical scene at age 19 with his brash and brilliant First Symphony. That work won him overnight fame and extended his renown far beyond the Soviet Union. Bruno Walter, Wilhelm Furtwängler,

Arturo Toscanini, and other leading conductors championed the Symphony and Leopold Stokowski gave its American premiere with The Philadelphia Orchestra in 1928. Shostakovich's Second Symphony followed the next year and was entitled "To October—A Symphonic Dedication." It included a chorus praising Lenin and the Revolution, and the Third Symphony, entitled "The First of May," also employed a chorus to make a political statement. Despite their ideological baggage, his musical innovations continued, especially the opening of the Second Symphony.

A Fall from Grace Shostakovich had also received considerable attention for his contributions to the screen and stage, including film scores, ballets, incidental music, and two full-scale operas: *The Nose* and *Lady Macbeth of the Mtsensk District*. The latter enjoyed particular popular and critical success in the Soviet Union and abroad after its premiere in January 1934, so much so that a new production was presented at the Bolshoi Theater in Moscow two years later.

And that is when the serious troubles began that changed the course of Shostakovich's life. Stalin attended *Lady Macbeth* on January 26, 1936, and left before the end of the performance. A few days later an article entitled "Muddle Instead of Music" appeared in *Pravda*, the official newspaper of the Communist Party. The anonymous critic wrote that the opera "is a leftist bedlam instead of human music. The inspiring quality of good music is sacrificed in favor of petty-bourgeois formalist celebration, with pretense at originality by cheap clowning. This game may end badly."

Those terrifying final words were life-threatening; this was not just a bad review that could hamper a thriving career. The article was soon followed by another in *Pravda* attacking Shostakovich's ballet *The Limpid Stream*, and then by yet another.

The musical establishment, with a few brave exceptions, lined up in opposition to the composer, who was working at the time on a massive Fourth Symphony, which went into rehearsals in December 1936. At the last moment, just before the premiere, the work was withdrawn, most likely at the insistence of the authorities. The impressive Symphony would have to wait 25 years for unveiling in 1961. (The Philadelphians gave the American premiere in 1963.)

Shostakovich's Return Shostakovich, whose first child had just been born, was well aware of the show trials and mounting purges, as friends, family, and colleagues disappeared or were killed. He faced terrifying challenges in how to proceed after the sustained attacks on his music. He composed the first three movements of the Fifth Symphony with incredible speed—he later recounted that he wrote the Largo in just three days—although the finale slowed him down. The completion of his new symphony is usually dated July 29, 1937, but the most recent investigation for a new critical edition indicates that composition continued well into the fall.

The notable premiere took place on November 21 with the Leningrad Philharmonic under Evgeny Mravinsky, at that time a relatively unknown young conductor. In the words of Shostakovich biographer Laurel Fay: "The significance of the occasion was apparent to everyone. Shostakovich's fate was at stake. The Fifth Symphony, a non-programmatic, four-movement work in a traditional, accessible symphonic style, its essence extrapolated in the brief program note as 'a lengthy spiritual battle, crowned by victory,' scored an absolute, unforgettable triumph with the listeners."

The funereal third movement, the Largo, moved many listeners to tears. According to one account, members of the audience, one by one, began to stand during the extravagant finale. Composer Maximilian Steinberg, a former teacher of Shostakovich, wrote in his diary: "The ovation was stupendous, I don't remember anything like it in about the last 10 years." Yet the enormous enthusiasm from musicians and non-musicians alike—the ovations reportedly lasted nearly a half hour—could well have been viewed as a statement against the Soviet authorities' rebukes of the composer—artistic triumphs could spell political doom. Two officials were sent to monitor subsequent performances and concluded that the audience had been selected to support the composer—a false charge made even less tenable by the fact that every performance elicited tremendous ovations.

The Importance of Art It may be difficult for contemporary American audiences to appreciate how seriously art was taken in the Soviet Union. The attention and passions, the criticism and debates it evoked—dozens of articles, hours of official panels at congresses, and abundant commentary—raised the stakes for art and for artists. For his part Shostakovich remained silent at the time about the Fifth Symphony. He eventually stated that the quasi-autobiographical work was about the "suffering of man, and all-conquering optimism. I wanted to convey in the Symphony how, through a series of tragic conflicts of great inner spiritual turmoil, optimism asserts itself as a world view."

The best-known remark about the work is often misunderstood. In connection with the Moscow premiere of the Symphony, Shostakovich noted that among all the attention it had received, one interpretation gave him "special pleasure, where it was said that the Fifth Symphony is the practical creative response of a Soviet artist to just criticism." This last phrase was subsequently attributed to the composer as a general subtitle for the Symphony. Yet as Fay has observed, Shostakovich never agreed with what he considered the unjust criticism of his earlier work, nor did he write the Fifth along the lines he had been told to do. Most importantly, he gave no program or title to it at any time. The work, which reportedly was one the composer thought particularly highly of in later years, went on to be one of his most popular and successful compositions and a staple of the symphonic repertory.

A Closer Look The first movement (**Moderato**) opens with the lower strings intoning a striking, jagged theme, somewhat reminiscent of the one Beethoven used in his "Great Fugue," Op. 133. It is immediately imitated by the violins and gradually winds down to become an accompaniment to an eerie theme that floats high above in the upper reaches of the violins. The tempo eventually speeds up (**Allegro non troppo**), presenting a theme that will appear in different guises elsewhere in the Symphony, most notably transformed in the triumphant conclusion.

The brief scherzo-like **Allegretto** shows Shostakovich's increasing interest at the time in the music of Mahler, in this case the Fourth Symphony, which also includes a grotesque violin solo. The **Largo**, the movement that so moved audiences at the first performances, projects a tragic mood of enormous intensity. The brass instruments do not play at all in the movement but return in full force to dominate the finale (**Allegro non troppo**). The "over the top" exuberance of this last movement has long been debated, beginning just after the first performances. Especially following the effect of the preceding lament, some have found the optimistic triumphalism of the ending forced and ultimately false. Perhaps it is the ambiguity still surrounding the work that partly accounts for its continued appeal and prominence.

—Christopher H. Gibbs

Shostakovich composed his Symphony No. 5 in 1937.

Leopold Stokowski led the first Philadelphia performances of the Symphony, in March 1939. Since then the Orchestra has performed the work many times at home, as well as on domestic and international tours, including performances in the Soviet Union under Eugene Ormandy in 1958. Among the other conductors to lead the piece here are István Kertész, André Previn, Riccardo Muti, Yuri Temirkanou, Maxim Shostakovich, Leonard Slatkin, Wolfgang Sawallisch, and Christoph Eschenbach. The most recent subscription performances were in October 2015, with Marin Alsop.

The Philadelphians have recorded the Symphony five times: in 1939 for RCA with Stokowski; in 1965 for CBS with Ormandy; in 1975 for RCA with Ormandy; in 1992 for EMI with Muti; and in 2006 with Eschenbach for Ondine.

Shostakovich scored the work for piccolo, two flutes, two oboes, two clarinets, E-flat clarinet, two bassoons, contrabassoon, four horns, three trumpets, three trombones, tuba, timpani, percussion (bass drum, cymbals, orchestra bells, snare drum, tam-tam, triangle, xylophone), harp, piano (doubling celesta), and strings.

The Symphony runs approximately 45 minutes in performance.

Musical Terms

GENERAL TERMS

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

Chord: The simultaneous sounding of three or more tones

Coloratura: Florid figuration or ornamentation, particularly in vocal music

Double-stop: In violin playing, to stop two strings together, thus obtaining two-part harmony

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

Hocket: In medieval polyphonic music, the device of alternating single notes, or groups of notes, between parts. The result is a more or less continuous flow with one voice resting while the other voice sounds. More recently the term has been applied to instrumental textures, characterized by rapid, often single-note, exchanges between different parts.

Krakowiak: Polish folk dance, from the Kraków region, characterized by syncopated rhythms in a fast duple meter

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.

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.

Overtone: Overtones or harmonics are the natural parts of any pitch heard when it is sounded. That is to say, that each pitch that we hear contains additional pitches within it that are termed overtones or harmonics.

Parallel fourth: In part-writing, the simultaneous duplication of the melodic line of one part by another at the interval of a perfect fourth. Also known as a consecutive fourth.

Romance: Originally a ballad, or popular tale in verse; now a title for epico-lyrical songs or of short instrumental pieces of sentimental or romantic nature, and without special form

Rondo: A form frequently used in symphonies and concertos for the final movement. It consists of a main section that alternates with a variety of contrasting sections (A-B-A-C-A etc.).

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

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

Tutti: All; full orchestra

THE SPEED OF MUSIC (Tempo)

Allegretto: A tempo between walking speed and fast

Allegro: Bright, fast

Larghetto: A slow tempo

Largo: Broad

Maestoso: Majestic

Moderato: A moderate tempo, neither fast nor slow

Vivace: Lively

TEMPO MODIFIERS

Non troppo: Not too much

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