2022–2023 | 123rd Season

The Philadelphia Orchestra

Friday, November 11, at 2:00
Saturday, November 12, at 8:00
Sunday, November 13, at 2:00

Nicholas McGegan Conductor and Harpsichord
Paul Jacobs Organ

Rebel "Le Cahos," from *Les Élémens*
First Philadelphia Orchestra performances

Bach Prelude and Fugue in A minor, BWV 543

Handel Organ Concerto No. 13 in F major, HWV 295 ("The Cuckoo and the Nightingale")
I. Larghetto—
II. Allegro
III. Larghetto—
IV. Allegro

Intermission

Bach Brandenburg Concerto No. 3 in G major, BWV 1048
I. [no tempo indicated]
II. Adagio
III. Allegro

Bach Brandenburg Concerto No. 4 in G major, BWV 1049
I. Allegro
II. Andante
III. Presto
David Kim, violin
Jeffrey Khaner and Olivia Staton, flutes

Bach Brandenburg Concerto No. 2 in F major, BWV 1047
I. [no tempo indicated]
II. Andante
III. Allegro assai
David Kim, violin
Jeffrey Khaner, flute
Philippe Tondre, oboe
Caleb Hudson, trumpet

This program runs approximately 1 hour, 50 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.

Jeff Fusco

The Philadelphia Orchestra

The world-renowned Philadelphia Orchestra strives to share the transformative power of music with the widest possible audience, and to create joy, connection, and excitement through music in the Philadelphia region, across the country, and around the world. Through innovative programming, robust education initiatives, a commitment to its diverse communities, and the embrace of digital outreach, the ensemble is creating an expansive future for classical music, and furthering the place of the arts in an open and democratic society. In June 2021 the Orchestra and its home, the Kimmel Center, united to form The Philadelphia Orchestra and Kimmel Center, Inc., reimagining the power of the arts to bring joy, create community, and effect change.

Yannick Nézet-Séguin is now in his 11th 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, in Verizon Hall and community centers, in classrooms and hospitals, and over the airwaves and online. In response to the cancellation of concerts due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Orchestra launched the Digital Stage, providing access to high-quality online performances, keeping music alive at a time when it was needed most. It also inaugurated free offerings: HearTOGETHER, a podcast on racial and social justice, and creative equity and inclusion, through the lens of the world of orchestral music, and Our City, Your Orchestra, a series of digital performances that connects the Orchestra with communities through music and dialog while celebrating the diversity and vibrancy of the Philadelphia region.

The Philadelphia Orchestra's award-winning education and community initiatives engage over 50,000 students, families, and community members of all ages through programs such as PlayINs; side-by-sides; PopUP concerts; Our City, Your Orchestra Live; School Concerts; 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 and one of our nation's greatest exports. It performs annually at Carnegie Hall, the Mann Center, the Saratoga Performing Arts Center, and the Bravo! Vail Music Festival. The Orchestra also has a rich touring history, having first performed outside Philadelphia in its earliest days. In 1973 it was the first American orchestra to perform in the People's Republic of China, launching a five-decade commitment of people-to-people exchange.

Under Yannick's leadership, the Orchestra returned to recording with 12 celebrated releases on the Deutsche Grammophon label, including the GRAMMY® Award–winning *Florence Price Symphonies Nos. 1 & 3*. The Orchestra also reaches thousands of radio listeners with weekly broadcasts on WRTI-FM and SiriusXM. For more information, please visit www.philorch.org.

Conductor

Laura Barisonzi

In his sixth decade on the podium, conductor **Nicholas McGegan** is recognized for his probing and revelatory explorations of music of all periods. He is music director laureate of the San Francisco–based Philharmonia Baroque Orchestra and Chorale and principal guest conductor of Hungary's Capella Savaria. He is best known as a Baroque and Classical specialist and his approach has led to appearances with many of the world's major orchestras. He made his Philadelphia Orchestra debut in 2002. In addition to these current performances, his appearances in North America this season include leading the Los Angeles Philharmonic in an all-Mozart program at the Hollywood Bowl; a program of works by André Campra and Jean-Philippe Rameau with the Philharmonia Baroque; return engagements with the St. Louis and Milwaukee symphonies; his first appearances with the Eugene and Edmonton symphonies; and a performance and recording of Bach's Mass in B minor with Cantata Collective. In Europe he appears with Denmark's Aalborg Symphony, the Royal Scottish National Orchestra in Handel's *Messiah,* and the Royal Northern Sinfonia in a program of Bach, Vivaldi, and Caroline Shaw.

Mr. McGegan's prolific discography includes more than 100 releases spanning five decades. Having recorded over 50 albums of works by Handel, he has explored the depths of the composer's output with a dozen oratorios and close to 20 of his operas. Since the 1980s he has released more than 20 recordings with Capella Savaria on the Hungaroton label, including groundbreaking recordings of repertoire by Monteverdi, Scarlatti, Telemann, Mendelssohn, Vivaldi, Schubert, Mozart, and Haydn. His extensive discography with Philharmonia Baroque includes two GRAMMY nominations, Handel's *Susanna,* and Haydn's Symphonies Nos. 104, 88, and 101. He has released two albums with the Swedish Chamber Orchestra under the BIS label. This past season he released an album of Mozart violin concertos with Gil Shaham and the SWR Symphonieorchester.

Mr. McGegan is committed to the next generation of musicians, frequently conducting and coaching students in residencies and engagements at Yale and Harvard universities, the Juilliard School, the Colburn School, the Aspen Music Festival and School, the Sarasota Music Festival, and the Music Academy of the West. Born in England, he was educated at Cambridge and Oxford. He was made an Officer of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire "for services to music overseas." Other awards include the Halle Handel Prize and a declaration of Nicholas McGegan Day by the mayor of San Francisco. For more information visit nicholasmcgegan.com.

Soloist

Claudio Papapietro

Internationally celebrated organist **Paul Jacobs** combines a probing intellect and extraordinary technical mastery with an unusually large repertoire, both old and new. He has performed to great critical acclaim on five continents and in each of the 50 United States. The only organist ever to have won a GRAMMY Award—in 2011 for Messiaen's towering *Liure du Saint-Sacrement*—he is an eloquent champion of his instrument both in the United States and abroad. He has transfixed audiences, colleagues, and critics alike with landmark performances of the complete works for solo organ by J.S. Bach and Messiaen. He made musical history at age 23 when he gave an 18-hour marathon performance of Bach's complete organ works on the 250th anniversary of the composer's death. A fierce advocate of new music, he has premiered works by Samuel Adler, Mason Bates, Michael Daugherty, Bernd Richard Deutsch, John Harbison, Wayne Oquin, Stephen Paulus, Christopher Theofanidis, and Christopher Rouse. As a teacher he has been a vocal proponent of the redeeming nature of traditional and contemporary classical music.

Mr. Jacobs made his Philadelphia Orchestra debut in 2008. He is repeatedly invited as soloist to perform with prestigious orchestras, making him a pioneer in the movement for the revival of symphonic music featuring the organ. He regularly appears with the Chicago, Cincinnati, Edmonton, Indianapolis, Kansas City, Lucerne, Montreal, Nashville, National, Pacific, Phoenix, San Francisco, Toledo, and Utah symphonies; the Cleveland and Minnesota orchestras; and the Los Angeles Philharmonic, among others. Recent season highlights include debuts with the Warsaw Philharmonic in the Lou Harrison Organ Concerto led by Alexander Shelley and with the NFM Wrocław Philharmonic, both in recital and with the Horatio Parker Organ Concerto and Guilmant's Organ Symphony No. 1 led by frequent collaborator Giancarlo Guerrero.

Mr. Jacobs studied at the Curtis Institute of Music, double majoring with John Weaver for organ and Lionel Party for harpsichord, and at Yale University with Thomas Murray. He joined the faculty of the Juilliard School in 2003 and was named chairman of the organ department in 2004, one of the youngest faculty appointees in the school's history. He received Juilliard's prestigious William Schuman Scholar's Chair in 2007. In addition to his concert and teaching appearances, he is a frequent performer at festivals across the world, and he has appeared on American Public Media's *Performance Today*, *Pipedreams*, and *Saint Paul Sunday*, as well as NPR's *Morning Edition*, ABC's *World News Tonight*, and BBC Radio 3. In 2017 he received an honorary doctorate from Washington and Jefferson College.

Framing the Program

Parallel Events

1721
Bach
Brandenburg Concertos

Music
Handel
Acis and Galatea
Literature
Montesquieu
Lettres persanes
Art
Watteau
Pilgrimate to Cythera
History
Regular mail service between London and New England

1738
Rebel
Les Élémens

Music
Arne
Comus
Literature
Pope
The Universal Prayer
Art
Chardin
The Wash Barrel
History
English declare war on Spain (War of Jenkin's Ear)

1739
Handel
"Cuckoo and the Nightingale" Concerto

Music
D. Scarlatti
Suite from *The Good Humored Ladies*
Literature
Voltaire
De la Gloire, ou entretien avec un Chinois
Art
Boucher
The Breakfast
History
Stono slave rebellion in SC

Today's concert offers an array of Baroque music written in the 1720s and '30s. It opens with the daring "Le Cahos"—a representation of primordial chaos from the ballet *Les Élémens* by French composer Jean-Féry Rebel. This brief excerpt, an overture of sorts, begins with a shocking dissonance and goes on to depict the elements of water, air, fire, and earth unfolding in seven parts corresponding to the days of creation.

George Frideric Handel could justly be considered the inventor of the organ concerto. He wrote most of his during the 1730s to play as an added attraction at performances of oratorios in London. Audiences loved the thrilling instrumental virtuosity and hearing the composer himself pull it off. His most famous organ concerto is known as "The Cuckoo and the Nightingale" because of bird call imitations in the second movement.

In March 1721 Bach gathered together six of his recent concertos in a handsome manuscript copy and wrote an elaborate dedication to Christian Ludwig, the Margrave of Brandenburg and an enthusiastic music patron. Although Bach had a good job at the time, he was evidently open to a better one. The Margrave got some measure of immortality due to these concertos, but Bach did not receive a position from him. The virtuoso writing Bach crafted for the individual instrumentalists—each concerto has a different orchestration—lets the Philadelphians shine forth as we hear three from the set.

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

"Le Cahos," from *Les Élémens*

Jean-Féry Rebel
Born in Paris, April 18, 1666
Died there, January 2, 1747

The ancient Greek concept of an inchoate chaos that somehow morphed into the "elements," and formed the universe, actually contains similarities to today's scientific thinking. Granted, early descriptions of the elements were rudimentary: earth, water, air, fire, and, in some versions, "ether" (the spiritual realm). But in time these gave way to atoms, cells, and the Periodic Table—and to the idea that, in the chaos of primordial nothingness, the entire universe was formed by a really Big Bang.

Jean-Féry Rebel was not the first to attempt a musical depiction of this transformation from chaos to order, nor would he be the last. His own contemporaries André Cardinal Destouches and Michel Richard Delalande had written an opera-ballet titled *Les Élémens* in 1721, and Jean-Philippe Rameau would later tackle the idea of creation in the prologue to his opera *Zaïs* (1748). A half-century later, Joseph Haydn would open his path-forging oratorio *The Creation* with a harmonically jarring "Representation of Chaos."

An Accomplished Musician in a Royal Court A member of a large, prominent family of musicians, Rebel began his career as a violinist, composer, and *batteur de mesure* (an early type of conductor) in the court of Louis XIV. His father, Jean Rebel, was a tenor in the Chapelle Royale and his uncle, sister, and eldest son were all professional musicians. Jean-Féry studied violin and composition with Jean-Baptiste Lully and rose quickly in the ranks of the Académie Royale de la Musique, the prestigious court institution that included both opera and ballet.

Rebel performed as violinist for the court's celebrated Les 24 Violons du Roi for much of his career, and he also wrote a considerable amount of sacred music, an opera (*Ulysse,* 1703), and solo instrumental sonatas. But a great deal of Rebel's music was written for the dance, beginning with *Les Caractères de la danse* (1715) and culminating in his last known composition, *Les Élémens* (1738). Dance was central to Louis XIV's court: It is no exaggeration to say that the art of ballet as we know it was born in France during the 72-year reign of "The Sun King" and continued to flourish long after his death in 1714.

Ballets during this period were becoming choreographed dramas—often with loose narrative and featuring opulent sets and costumes—that were occasionally performed as independent presentations or, just as often, between

the acts of operas. Rebel's innovative spirit is perhaps most evident in his "ballet symphonies," works written so that they could accompany dance or be performed as discrete concert compositions.

A Closer Look The entirety of *Les Élémens* consists of a series of dances illustrating the individual elements: a Loure to make earth and water appear, a Chaconne that makes fire, and so forth. (The composer even included a movement depicting love, possibly a representation of the "Fifth Element.") An introductory segment, which Rebel called *Le Cahos* (an alternate spelling of the French *chaos*), was originally intended as a self-contained piece. The composer would later add *Le Cahos* (which contains interwoven hints of each of the elements) as a sort of "overture."

It seems almost inconceivable that the opening bars of this piece were composed nearly three centuries ago. There had surely been nothing of this shock-magnitude written before 1738, and music history had to wait another two centuries before composers began creating such sounds on a semi-regular basis.

Rebel provided an intriguing and helpful prologue to the score when it was published, which is excerpted here:

> The introduction of this symphony, drawn from nature, is chaos itself: the confusion that reigned before the moment that, subject to immutable laws, they assumed their prescribed places in the natural order.
>
> This initial idea led me somewhat further: I have dared to link the idea of confusion of the elements with that of confusion in harmony. I have risked opening with all the notes sounding together—or rather, all the notes of an octave [a D-harmonic-minor scale] played as a single sound.
>
> To designate each particular element in this confusion, I have availed myself of some widely accepted conventions. The bass expresses the earth with tied notes that are played in a shaking manner. The flutes, with their rising and falling lines, imitate the flow and murmur of water. Air is depicted by sustained notes followed by resolutions on the piccolos. The violins, finally, represent the activity of fire with their lively and brilliant passages.
>
> These characteristics may be recognized, separately or intermingled, in whole or in part, in the diverse reprises that I have called chaos, and which mark the efforts of the elements to free themselves from each other. At the seventh appearance of chaos, these efforts diminish, as order begins to assert itself.
>
> *—Paul J. Horsley*

Rebel composed Les Élémens *in 1738.*

These are the first Philadelphia Orchestra performances of the work, and the first time the Orchestra has performed anything by the composer.

The score calls for two flutes (both doubling piccolo), two oboes, bassoon, two horns, two trumpets, timpani, harpsichord, and strings.

Performance time is approximately five minutes.

The Music

Organ Concerto No. 13 ("The Cuckoo and the Nightingale")

George Frideric Handel
Born in Halle, Germany, February 23, 1685
Died in London, April 14, 1759

The fame that George Frideric Handel and Johann Sebastian Bach enjoyed during their time is often at odds with their present-day reputations. They never met, although they were born within a month of one another in 1685 in adjoining German provinces. Handel was the far more famous, successful, and cosmopolitan figure while Bach's career was relatively provincial and his greatness took much longer to be widely acclaimed. Handel won wide recognition writing Italian operas for English audiences in London. After considerable success with dozens of them, he found that the public wanted something new and more understandable, so in the 1730s he shifted his energies to oratorios, creating what are in essence sacred operas in English.

Handel discovered that one way to make this venture even more appealing was by including organ concertos as part of the oratorio performance, works that he would play himself and thus show his compositional ingenuity as well as virtuoso keyboard skills, including improvisation. This became a selling point announced in the press and in advertisements.

Inventing the Organ Concerto Bach was a celebrated organist whose great compositions for the mighty instrument form the "Old Testament" of the literature. Handel likewise found the organ served as his calling card to success as a performer. His first professional job was as an organist in Halle. There is a story that once he moved for some years to Italy in his early 20s, he engaged in a keyboard faceoff of sorts with his friend Domenico Scarlatti, who won at the harpsichord but ceded to Handel on the organ. He performed throughout his decades in London, even after he had become blind at the end of his life.

Handel could be said to have invented the organ concerto and did so beginning in the mid-1730s at the crucial juncture when he was switching his focus from Italian opera to English oratorio. His first organ concertos accompanied *Esther, Deborah, Athalia,* and *Alexander's Feast* and were published by John Walsh in 1738 as his Op. 4. Two more concertos soon followed. The manuscript of the Concerto

in F major (HWV 295) that we hear today is dated April 2, 1739, and most likely was the "new concerto" that the press promised Handel would play two days later at the premiere of his oratorio *Israel in Egypt* at the King's Theatre. The Concerto is sometimes numbered as Handel's 13th but is more popularly known as "The Cuckoo and the Nightingale" because of the bird effects in the second movement. In 1740 Walsh published it as one of a second set of concertos for "harpsichord or organ." (A third set appeared posthumously as Op. 7 in 1761.)

One way the incredibly prolific Handel was able to accomplish so much was by constantly recycling his music, and sometimes that of others. The practice was quite common—most composers did so—before a cult of "originality" emerged in the Romantic period. Handel did this rather more than others and was occasionally criticized for it. In this four-movement Concerto the first and last are reworked from his earlier Trio Sonata Op. 5, No. 6, and he later adapted the second and third for his Concerto Grosso Op. 6, No. 9. In the second movement he called upon themes from two long-forgotten Baroque composers, Giovanni Porta and Johann Kaspar Kerll, the latter of whom provided the musical idea of the cuckoo motif.

A Closer Look Like most of Handel's organ concertos, "The Cuckoo and the Nightingale" is scored for two oboes, bassoon, strings, continuo, and the solo organ—which would have been a modest one-manual instrument, not a grand Baroque one such as we associate with Bach.

The four movements, totaling some 14 minutes, are of roughly equal length. The opening **Larghetto** is a stately movement that leads without pause to a lively **Allegro** that includes some organ passages suggestive of a cuckoo and nightingale. The following **Larghetto** unfolds as an elegant siciliano, with solo strings alternating in a dialog with the solo organ. The final **Allegro** brings the Concerto to a spirited conclusion.

—Christopher H. Gibbs

Handel composed his "Cuckoo and the Nightingale" Concerto in 1739.

Organist Robert Elmore gave the first Philadelphia Orchestra performances of the work, in December 1943, with Eugene Ormandy on the podium. The most recent subscription performances were in September 1963, with E. Power Biggs and Ormandy. It was performed more recently on the Glorious Sound of Christmas concerts in December 2006, with organist Michael Stairs and Rossen Milanov.

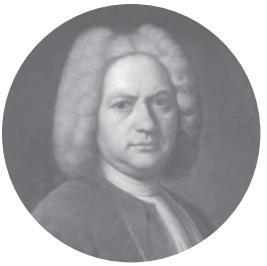
The Concerto is scored for solo organ, two oboes, bassoon, harpsichord, and strings.

Performance time is approximately 14 minutes.

The Music

Brandenburg Concertos Nos. 3, 4, and 2

Johann Sebastian Bach
Born in Eisenach, March 21, 1685
Died in Leipzig, July 28, 1750



It is a great irony in Baroque music history that one of the most famous sets of instrumental concertos, the so-called Brandenburg Concertos by J.S. Bach, were never performed at the court in Brandenburg, nor were they originally written for that court. In 1721 Bach dedicated a very ornate and elaborately presented score of six concerto grossos to Christian Ludwig, the Margrave of Brandenburg, who, two years earlier, had made a vague request of Bach to see some of his music. It is quite probable that Bach intended this collection of scores as a kind of job application, hoping to gain a position at the Margrave's court in Berlin. But the score was never opened and sat unperformed on the Margrave's shelf until his death. Bach was never offered a position in Berlin.

Works in Several Versions But this doesn't mean that the Brandenburg Concertos weren't performed during Bach's lifetime. In fact each of the six concertos in the set had been performed by the orchestra in Cöthen, where Bach was court composer and director of the orchestra from 1717 to 1723. Several of them are based on earlier works, and after he moved to Leipzig in 1723 he reworked a number of the concertos into cantata movements and other vocal and instrumental pieces. With several different versions of the concerto scores extant, each performed during Bach's lifetime, there are a variety of arrangements with legitimate claims to being "authentic." To make matters more interesting, the score sent to the Margrave of Brandenburg is riddled with errors, and includes parts for instruments that were not part of the Margrave's band of musicians, so even that famous score cannot be considered definitive.

Since these works emerged for the most part from Bach's years in Cöthen and were almost certainly all played there as courtly entertainments for the Prince during his Sunday evening concerts, these six concertos give a very accurate picture of the musical performances and practices at Cöthen during Bach's tenure. Detailed records were kept regarding musician payments, and so it is possible to reconstruct the make-up and instrumentation of that ensemble from week to week, and even to speculate when they may have performed each of the concertos.

While in Cöthen, Bach had at his disposal a relatively large orchestra of up to 18 musicians. The ensemble did not include horn players, but on numerous occasions traveling horn players were hired to play the horn parts in Bach's compositions. Most of the full-time musicians were trained in Berlin and were performers of the highest order. Bach himself played lead viola in the ensemble and directed the group from the viola desk.

The size and variety of the orchestra at Cöthen is reflected in the instrumentation of these six concertos, each of which is scored for a different ensemble. They are all concerto grossos in the sense that the music juxtaposes a small ensemble of soloists (or concertino) against a larger group (the ripieno), but Bach's scoring is so chamberistic that the division between soloist and ensemble is very fluid, and at times almost moot. These are not the same kind of concerto grossos as, for example, those written by Vivaldi or Corelli, where the division is much clearer. It seems to have been Bach's purpose to demonstrate the remarkable variety of instrumental combinations, timbres, and textures possible within the chamber concerto genre.

Concerto No. 3 The Concerto No. 3 in G major (BWV 1048) is scored entirely for strings and continuo, with three violins, three violas, three cellos, and harpsichord. Each of the string groups functions as a concertino or solo group, but also combine to constitute the complete ripieno. This demonstrates perfectly Bach's blurring of the division between groups, allowing each instrument to perform multiple functions in the texture.

The first movement (without tempo indication but performed Allegro) blends concerto form with a rondo principle. In Baroque concerto form, the ripieno main theme alternates with contrasting episodes for the concertino. It is the persistent return of the main theme (or fragments of it) that creates a resemblance to rondo form, but the rondo elements are obscured behind a sophisticated surface texture and archaic antiphonal writing. The strongest suggestion of rondo influence is the appearance of a new tutti theme in the middle of the movement.

The slow movement (**Adagio**) is notated in the score as nothing more than a two-chord Phrygian cadence, a common final cadence in minor-key works of the Baroque period. Some scholars suggest that Bach meant this as an opportunity to improvise a slow movement by providing the last two chords as a suggested conclusion. Others treat it as simply a break in momentum between two fast movements, and not something to be elaborated upon too extensively. For the **Allegro** finale, which also blends rondo and concertante techniques, Bach writes a lively perpetuum mobile with the triplet feel of a gigue.

Concerto No. 4 In the Brandenburg Concerto No. 4 in G major (BWV 1049) Bach calls for a concertino of violin and two "echo-flutes," almost certainly a reference to a kind of Baroque recorder. (When Bach wanted a transverse flute he called for it specifically, as in the Fifth Brandenburg Concerto.) But the violin is so

greatly favored in the first and last movements of this Concerto that it essentially becomes a solo violin concerto (in the style of Vivaldi) with obbligato flutes. Even in the **Allegro** opening movement—a pastorale in ritornello form—the paired flutes are introduced early on, but it is the solo violin that commands the soloistic episodes. The flutes are included primarily to enhance orchestral color and add an idyllic perfume to the bucolic movement.

While the first movement had seemingly separated the solo violin from the flutes with different motifs and roles, the second-movement **Andante** groups the concertino instruments together and contrasts them with the rest of the ensemble. In this minor-key movement, the violin assumes the role of bass-line instrument when the three soloists play alone, allowing the flutes to trace the melodic arches in the style of a slow movement from a Corelli trio sonata. The last movement (**Presto**) is a vibrant concertante fugue with especially virtuosic displays from the violin.

Concerto No. 2 The Concerto No. 2 in F major (BWV 1047) is written for a concertino of four treble-ranged instruments—trumpet, recorder, oboe, and violin—each required to play in their upper registers throughout. The solo trumpet part, written originally for natural trumpet, is still considered one of the most difficult in the repertory because of its range and virtuosic passage work. With their shared high registers, this ensemble would not normally play well together as a quartet, so Bach minimizes the potential for shrillness by writing their parts in smaller ensembles of accompanied solos, duets, and trios.

In their variety of configurations, these concertino instruments stand out clearly against the background of strings in the first movement (without tempo indication but performed Allegro), as they explore the entire harmonic range of the home key. The movement's harmonic motion wanders further and further afield until the relentless 16th-note flow of modulations stops suddenly on an A-minor triad—a key not closely related to the home key of F. But, after a grand pause, the whole ensemble simply restarts in the tonic key for one final statement of the congenial theme.

The trumpet and orchestral strings are silent in the middle movement (**Andante**), leaving the three remaining soloists to elaborate on a single melodic idea over a continuo accompaniment. In one of Bach's master strokes, he leaves out the melody entirely for the last section of the movement, providing only the accompaniment and expecting the listener to "fill in" the missing melody using their own imaginations—a silent, 18th-century form of karaoke, perhaps. Rarely has a composer trusted the musicality and intelligence of his listeners so deeply that he would invite them to "complete" the music in their own heads, as Bach does here. The **Allegro assai** finale combines the form of the fugue with a concerto movement, as the soloists enter one-by-one with the fugue theme and dominate the episodic material.

A recording of the first movement of the Second Brandenburg Concerto was included on the two "golden records" sent into deep space on the Voyager spacecraft in the late 1970s. It was one of several representative musical examples of the "Sounds of Earth" contained on those recordings.

—Luke Howard

Bach composed his Brandenburg Concertos around 1721.

The first Philadelphia Orchestra performances of the Concerto No. 3 were in October 1913 with Leopold Stokowski; the Concerto No. 4 in December 1926 with Stokowski; and the Concerto No. 2 in February 1921 with Stokowski. Most recently on subscription all three works were heard in April 2013 with Nicholas McGegan.

The Philadelphians recorded the Second Brandenburg Concerto in 1929 for RCA with Stokowski.

The Third Concerto is scored for harpsichord and strings. The Fourth Concerto is scored for two flutes, harpsichord, and strings. And the Second Concerto is scored for flute, oboe, trumpet, harpsichord, and strings.

Performance time for the Third Concerto is approximately 11 minutes; for the Fourth Concerto is approximately 18 minutes; and for the Second Concerto is approximately 13 minutes.

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The Philadelphia Orchestra
Yannick Nézet-Séguin Music Director

Photos: Pete Checchia, Julia Wesely, Nigel Parry

Musical Terms

GENERAL TERMS

Antiphonal: Works in which an ensemble is divided into distinct groups, performing in alternation and together

Aria: An accompanied solo song, usually in an opera or oratorio

BWV: The thematic catalog of all the works of J.S. Bach. The initials stand for *Bach-Werke-Verzeichnis* (Bach-Works-Catalog).

Cantata: A multi-movement vocal piece consisting of arias, recitatives, ensembles, and choruses and based on a continuous narrative text

Chaconne: Before 1800, a dance that generally used variation techniques

Chord: The simultaneous sounding of three or more tones

Chromatic: Relating to tones foreign to a given key (scale) or chord

Concerto grosso: A type of concerto in which a large group (the ripieno or the concerto grosso) alternates with a smaller group (the concertino)

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

Gigue: A Baroque instrumental dance, written in a moderate or fast tempo

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

HWV: The thematic catalog of all the works of George Frideric Handel. The initials stand for *Händel-Werke-Verzeichnis* (Handel-Works-Catalog).

Loure: A French dance and instrumental air popular in the late 17th and early 18th centuries, usually of a slow or moderate tempo

Obbligato: Literally "obligatory." An essential instrumental part that is not to be omitted.

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

Oratorio: Large-scale dramatic composition 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.

Perpetuum mobile: A title sometimes given to a piece in which rapid figuration is persistently maintained

Phrygian mode: One of the musical scales of the Medieval and Renaissance periods, before the major and minor scales came to prominence

Recitative: Declamatory singing, free in tempo and rhythm

Ritornello: Literally "a little thing that returns." Relatively short passages of music played by the entire ensemble alternating with sections dominated by the soloist(s).

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.).

Scale: The series of tones which form any major or minor key

Siciliano: A Sicilian dance in 6/8 meter and fairly slow

Timbre: Tone color or tone quality

Tonic: The keynote of a scale

Tutti: All; full orchestra

THE SPEED OF MUSIC (Tempo)

Ad libitum: Freely, at will, improvised

Adagio: Leisurely, slow

Allegro: Bright, fast

Andante: Walking speed

Larghetto: A slow tempo

Presto: Very fast

TEMPO MODIFIERS

Assai: Much

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