The Philadelphia Orchestra

Thursday, February 23, at 7:30
Friday, February 24, at 2:00
Saturday, February 25, at 8:00

Stéphane Denève Conductor
Yefim Bronfman Violin

Ravel *Mother Goose* Suite
I. Pavane of Sleeping Beauty
II. Tom Thumb
III. Laideronnette, Empress of Pagodes
IV. The Conversations of Beauty and the Beast
V. The Fairy Garden

Firsova Piano Concerto, Op. 175
I. Andante
II. Allegro
III. Andante
United States premiere

Intermission

Rachmaninoff Symphony No. 3 in A minor, Op. 44
I. Lento—Allegro moderato
II. Adagio ma non troppo—Allegro vivace—Tempo come prima
III. Allegro—Allegro vivace—Allegro (Tempo I)—Andante con moto—Allegretto—Allegro—Allegro vivace

This program runs approximately 2 hours.

Lead support for the Rachmaninoff 150 Celebration is provided by **Tatiana Copeland.** Mrs. Copeland's mother was the niece of Sergei Rachmaninoff, and Tatiana Copeland was named after the composer's daughter, Tatiana Sergeyevna Rachmaninoff.

The February 25 concert is sponsored by **Dr. Richard M. Klein.**

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

Genevieve Caron

Stéphane Denève is music director of the St. Louis Symphony and artistic director of the New World Symphony. In 2023 he also begins serving as principal guest conductor of the Netherlands Radio Philharmonic. He recently concluded terms as principal guest conductor of The Philadelphia Orchestra and chief conductor of the Brussels Philharmonic, and previously served as chief conductor of the Stuttgart Radio Symphony and music director of the Royal Scottish National Orchestra. Recognized internationally for the exceptional quality of his performances and programming, he regularly appears at major concert venues with the world's greatest orchestras and soloists. He has a special affinity for the music of his native France and is a passionate advocate for music of the 21st century.

In addition to these current performances, Mr. Denève's recent and upcoming engagements include appearances with the Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra; the Bavarian Radio, Vienna, and NHK symphonies; the Deutsches Symphonie-Orchester Berlin; the Czech and Rotterdam philharmonics; the NDR Elbphilharmonie Orchestra; the Orchestre National de France; the Orchestre Philharmonique de Radio France; and the Royal Stockholm Philharmonic, with which he also conducted the 2020 Nobel Prize Concert. He made his Carnegie Hall debut with the Boston Symphony and has appeared with the ensemble both in Boston and at Tanglewood. He regularly conducts the Philadelphia and Cleveland orchestras, the New York and Los Angeles philharmonics, and the San Francisco and Toronto symphonies. On the opera stage, he led a new production of Debussy's *Pelleas and Melisande* with the Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra and Netherlands Opera at the 2019 Holland Festival. In 2022 he was the conductor for John Williams's official 90th Birthday Gala with the National Symphony in Washington, D.C.

Mr. Denève has won critical acclaim for his recordings of the works of Poulenc, Debussy, Ravel, Roussel, Franck, and Connesson. He is a triple winner of the Diapason d'Or, was shortlisted for *Gramophone*'s Artist of the Year award, and won the prize for symphonic music at the International Classical Music Awards. Recent releases include a live recording of Honegger's *Joan of Arc at the Stake* with the Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra and two discs of the works of Connesson with the Brussels Philharmonic. A box set of his complete Ravel recordings with the Stuttgart Radio Symphony was released in 2022 by Hänssler Classic. A graduate of, and prizewinner at, the Paris Conservatory, he worked closely in his early career with Georg Solti, Georges Prêtre, and Seiji Ozawa. For further information please visit www.stephanedeneve.com.

Soloist

Dario Acosta

Internationally recognized as one of today's most acclaimed and admired pianists, **Yefim Bronfman** stands among a handful of artists regularly sought by festivals, orchestras, conductors, and recital series. His commanding technique, power, and exceptional lyrical gifts are consistently acknowledged by the press and audiences alike. He made his Philadelphia Orchestra debut in 1977 and has performed regularly with the ensemble ever since. In addition to these current performances, highlights of his 2022–23 season include return visits to the New York Philharmonic and the Pittsburgh, Houston, New World, Pacific, New Jersey, Toronto, and Montreal symphonies. He began the season appearing at opening week of the Chicago Symphony. In Europe he tours with the Rotterdam Philharmonic and can also be heard with the Berlin Philharmonic, the Bavarian Radio and Bamberg symphonies, the Dresden Staatskapelle, the Orchestra of the Maggio Musicale Fiorentino, and the Zurich Opera Orchestra. In summer 2022 he appeared at the festivals in Verbier and Salzburg and on tour with mezzo-soprano Magdalena Kožená.

Mr. Bronfman has been nominated for six GRAMMY awards, winning in 1997 with Esa-Pekka Salonen and the Los Angeles Philharmonic for their recording of the three Bartók piano concertos. His prolific catalogue of recordings includes works for two pianos by Rachmaninoff and Brahms with Emanuel Ax; the complete Prokofiev concertos with the Israel Philharmonic and Zubin Mehta; the soundtrack to Disney's *Fantasia 2000;* the 2014 GRAMMY-nominated recording of Magnus Lindberg's Piano Concerto No. 2, commissioned for him and performed by the New York Philharmonic conducted by Alan Gilbert; a recital disc, *Perspectives,* complementing his designation as a Carnegie Hall "Perspectives" artist for the 2007–08 season; and Beethoven's Triple Concerto with violinist Gil Shaham, cellist Truls Mørk, and the Tönhalle Orchestra under David Zinman. Now available on DVD are his performances of Liszt's Second Piano Concerto with Franz Welser-Möst and the Vienna Philharmonic and Beethoven's Fifth Piano Concerto with Andris Nelsons and the Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra from the 2011 Lucerne Festival.

Born in Tashkent in the Soviet Union, Mr. Bronfman immigrated to Israel with his family in 1973. In 1991 he gave a series of joint recitals with violinist Isaac Stern in Russia, marking his first public performances there since leaving the country at age 15. A recipient of the prestigious Avery Fisher Prize and the Jean Gimbel Lane prize in performance from Northwestern University, he also holds an honorary doctorate from the Manhattan School of Music.

Framing the Program

Parallel Events

1908	**Music**	Maurice Ravel is justly recognized as one of the great orchestrators of the 20th century. His coloristic gifts led to the marvelous version he crafted of Modest Musorgsky's piano suite *Pictures from an Exhibition,* as well as to arrangements of some of his own piano works. From 1908 to 1910 Ravel composed a collection of four-hand piano pieces called *Mother Goose* for the children of close friends. In 1911 he added a few more French fairy tales when he was asked to orchestrate the suite for performances as a ballet, which premiered in Paris the following year.
Ravel	Elgar	
Mother Goose	Symphony	
Suite	No. 1	
	Literature	
	Stein	
	Three Lives	
	Art	
	Chagall	
	Nu rouge	
	History	
	First Model "T"	
	produced	
1935	**Music**	The contemporary Russian composer Elena Firsova wrote her new Piano Concerto, which receives its American premiere on this concert, for Yefim Bronfman, the soloist today. The central melodic idea in the three-movement piece is the "Must it be?" motto that Beethoven used in the final movement of his last composition, the String Quartet in F major, Op. 135.
Rachmaninoff	Gershwin	
Symphony	*Porgy and Bess*	
No. 3	**Literature**	
	Steinbeck	
	Tortilla Flat	
	Art	
	Dalí	
	Giraffe on Fire	
	History	
	Nazis	
	repudiate	
	Versailles	
	Treaty	

Between 1927 and 1941 The Philadelphia Orchestra gave five significant world premieres of pieces by Sergei Rachmaninoff, including the "Paganini" Rhapsody, Third Symphony, and Symphonic Dances, and also made historic recordings together with the composer either conducting or featured as piano soloist. During the latter part of his career Rachmaninoff confessed that he often wrote with the sound of the Philadelphians in his head, which one senses when hearing the sumptuous string writing of the Third Symphony. Leopold Stokowski conducted the world premiere of the work at the Academy of Music in 1936 and three years later the Orchestra recorded it with the composer conducting.

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

Mother Goose Suite

Maurice Ravel
Born in Ciboure, Lower Pyrenees, March 7, 1875
Died in Paris, December 28, 1937

It was not until the first decade of the 20th century that Maurice Ravel's career as a composer, which had suffered fitful starts, finally took flight. He had failed several attempts to win the coveted Prix de Rome at the Paris Conservatory, partly because his daring experiments with color and harmony did not fit easily into a conservatory mentality. Finally he abandoned his studies altogether, becoming involved instead with "Les Apaches," the vaguely disreputable collection of Parisian aesthetes who met to discuss art, literature, painting, music, history, and any other topic that might arise. Ravel tried out many of his new works at meetings of Les Apaches—often for groups that included such notables as Manuel de Falla.

Despite critical aspersions, his reputation grew steadily. Around 1900 the Parisian publisher Demets had started to print several of the composer's early works, such as the *Pavane for a Dead Princess,* the String Quartet, and the piano piece *Jeux d'eau.* They were received by the public with astonished enthusiasm. Buoyed by these successes, Ravel produced, in rapid succession, a string of brilliant works that secured his position as more than just Debussy's also-ran—including several of the works for which he is best known, such as the *Sonatine* (1905), the five *Miroirs* (1905), *Rapsodie espagnole* (1907), *Gaspard de la nuit* (1908), *Mother Goose* (1908–11), and *Daphnis and Chloe* (1909–12).

Children's Duets Ravel composed *Mother Goose* as a set of pieces for piano duet, originally intending them for Mimie and Jean, the young children of the composer's close friends Xavier and Ida Godebski. He wrote the work mostly in 1908 at La Grangette, the Godebski's summer home near Fontainebleau, but he didn't complete the set until early 1910. Although he made the piano writing as simple and straightforward as possible, in the end it proved too difficult for the Godebski children (the youngest of whom was only eight). The piece was premiered, in this initial piano version, in Paris in April 1910, by Jeanne Leleu and Geneviève Durony—themselves only children at the time. The following year the composer transcribed the work for full orchestra, and this version is the one heard on this concert. He also expanded it into a full-length ballet score, adding two movements and rearranging the order of the pieces; this last version received its premiere in January 1912 at the Théâtre des Arts in Paris.

A Closer Look Ravel's delightful evocation of childish pleasures takes its inspiration from three different versions of the *Mother Goose* tales, giving the version by Charles Perrault (1628–1703) the most credence. It is the first story from Perrault's *Contes de ma Mère l'Oye* (Mother Goose Stories, 1697), for example, that supplies the opening piece of Ravel's Suite, **Pavane of Sleeping Beauty**—a slow-moving dance of melancholy charm. Ravel himself inscribed the second piece (**Tom Thumb**), with the following excerpt from Perrault: "Tom Thumb [who was lost in the woods] believed that he would easily be able to find the way by means of the bread that he had scattered wherever he passed—but he was surprised to discover not one single crumb. The birds had come and eaten it all!"

The brilliant, coloristic atmosphere of the third piece is a reflection of its subject, **Laideronnette, Empress of Pagodes.** Again Ravel heads this quick march with a passage from the tale as told in Marie-Catherine d'Aulnoy's *Serpentin vert*: "She disrobed and entered her bath. At once the pagodes and pagodines began to sing and play on instruments. Some had archlutes made of walnut shells, others played on viols made from the shells of almonds, for they were obliged to proportion their instruments to their stature." (A pagode is a fairy creature made of jewels and precious metals.)

The fourth piece is a delicate and sad waltz, a sort of dreamy depiction of **The Conversations of Beauty and the Beast.** Ravel inscribes the score with a dialogue between the couple, taken this time from a version by Marie Leprince de Beaumont:

> When I think how good-hearted you are, you do not seem so ugly.
> Yes, I have indeed a kind heart, but I am a monster.
> There are many men more monstrous than you.
> If I had wit I would invent a fine compliment to thank you, but I am only a beast.
>
> Beauty, will you be my wife?
> No, Beast.
> I die content since I have had the pleasure of seeing you again.
> No, my dear Beast, you shall not die; you shall live to be my husband!
>
> The beast suddenly disappeared, and she saw at her feet a prince more beautiful than love, who thanked her for having broken his enchantment.

The clarinet tune at the beginning of this movement seems to represent Beauty, while the growling contrabassoon stands for the Beast; after a heartfelt discussion, the Beast's theme is transformed, finally, into a "beautiful" violin melody. The fifth piece, **The Fairy Garden** (marked slowly, seriously) brings the set to a plaintive, subtly shaded close.

—Paul J. Horsley

Ravel composed the Mother Goose *Suite from 1908 to 1910 and orchestrated it in 1911.*

Artur Rodzinski was on the podium for the first Philadelphia Orchestra performances of the piece, in January 1926. The most recent subscription performances were in April 2010, with Charles Dutoit conducting. More recently, Yannick Nézet-Séguin led the piece on a Digital Stage concert in July 2021.

Ravel scored the work for two flutes (II doubling piccolo), two oboes (II doubling English horn), two clarinets, two bassoons (II doubling contrabassoon), two horns, timpani, percussion (bass drum, cymbals, glockenspiel, tam-tam, triangle, xylophone), harp, celesta, and strings.

The Suite runs approximately 15 minutes in performance.

Piano Concerto

Elena Firsova
Born March 21, 1950, in Leningrad (now St. Petersburg)
Now living in London

Happily, we have another chance to hear the luminous and powerful music of Elena Firsova, whose Shostakovich tribute *The Garden of Dreams,* on The Philadelphia Orchestra's schedule for spring 2020, had to be cancelled due to the pandemic. Right at that time, over in England, the composer had just finished the work we hear today: her Piano Concerto, which she wrote for Yefim Bronfman, who gave the first performance with the Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra of Amsterdam in June last year.

The two artists, Firsova and Bronfman, have it in common that they are both Russian émigrés who have never left the Russia they carry within them. This is true of Bronfman, even though he was just a young teenager when his family resettled in Israel. Firsova had to stay much longer, and was already a fully formed composer when, in 1991, she and her husband packed their suitcases and prepared their two young children for the trip to London.

Her life had begun as the child of physicists. Her father, Oleg Firsov, made important contributions to the theory of atomic collisions; her mother concentrated on teaching. The young Firsova, meanwhile, found her vocation in music—and at an early age. She started composing when she was 12 and had gained wide experience before she entered the Moscow Conservatory. There she and a classmate, Dmitri Smirnov, found a mentor in Edison Denisov, the institution's lone Modernist. He introduced them to Philipp Herschkowitz, a Romanian-born musician who had studied with Anton Webern in Vienna in the 1930s.

An Official Denunciation In 1972 she and Smirnov married and embarked on a shared program of making sparks through the culturally stagnant Brezhnev era. They were, inevitably, among the seven denounced in 1979 by Tikhon Khrennikov, head of the Union of Soviet Composers, and their opportunities were curtailed. The situation eased under Mikhail Gorbachev, but Firsova and Smirnov still could see no future for themselves and their children in Moscow.

London was their obvious choice because they had both received performances and a warm welcome there. Firsova had written a piece for the Proms, *Augury,* setting lines by William Blake for choir and orchestra, and this was to be performed the following summer.

In their new environment they both thrived, and Firsova, always a generously creative composer, became a prolific one. By now, she has composed almost 200 works with opus numbers, with an emphasis on chamber pieces for standard formations (14 string quartets) and non-standard ones. The poetry of Osip Mandelstam has been a persistent inspiration and challenge, drawing her to find ways the singing voice can fly, exultant and fragile.

Concertos also feature prominently in her output, including a Double Concerto for violin and cello from 2015 to which her Piano Concerto turned out to have an unexpected relationship. Firsova has stated that

> The introduction and both movements of the Double Concerto were based on the 'Must it be?' motif from the finale of Beethoven's last string quartet. In my Piano Concerto the material of all three movements is based on one and the same motif. I did it completely unconsciously at the beginning, not realizing it until I had finished the first movement, and was amazed at how different the music was from the Double Concerto. I would just say that in the Piano Concerto I focused more on life's problems and questions. At the end, however, the clock inevitably appears as a reminder that everything has an end. As in the Double Concerto, the last movement of the Piano Concerto is the most important and longest part of the music.

A Closer Look The first movement (**Andante**) is a short preparation for what follows, lasting just three minutes and scored for a limited orchestra. At first quite slow and tentative, it becomes faster and more vociferous before trailing away.

Already a shadowy presence here, Beethoven's "Must it be?" is hammered out by the soloist to ignite the fast second movement (**Allegro**), which, though so different in character, is not much longer than the first. The piano's dialogue is now with the full orchestra, except that the percussion section's contribution remains small until the next movement. The question is everywhere.

Considerably longer than everything that has happened so far, the finale (**Andante**) begins in a condition of great delicacy and rises to an outburst. This pattern is repeated, the piano accompanied at first by strings in many parts—except that this time the "outburst" becomes a whole way of being. Furious and driven, the music arrives at a cadenza. When the piano has exhausted itself, violas creep back into the silence to initiate a postlude. The question, however, cannot be forgotten. The piano trips into musical clockwork. Its final gesture may be submission—or escape.

—Paul Griffiths

Firsova completed her Piano Concerto in 2020.

These are the United States premiere performances of the Concerto, and the first time The Philadelphia Orchestra has performed any work by the composer.

The score calls for solo piano, three flutes, three oboes, three clarinets, three bassoons, four horns, three trumpets, three trombones, tuba, timpani, percussion (cymbal, glockenspiel, snare drum, suspended cymbals, tam-tam, temple blocks, tom-toms, triangle, tubular bells, whip, woodblock, vibraphone), and strings.

Performance time is approximately 20 minutes.

The Music

Symphony No. 3

Sergei Rachmaninoff
Born in Semyonovo, Russia, April 1, 1873
Died in Beverly Hills, March 28, 1943

In the mid-1930s, as he was nearing the end of his life, Sergei Rachmaninoff composed his Symphony No. 3, his last work in the genre. In it he wedded a distinctive musical style formed over four decades with an idealized sound he kept in his mind of The Philadelphia Orchestra, the ensemble he loved best and worked with the most. The Third Symphony amply displays the composer's Russian roots as well as the new possibilities offered by having an extraordinary orchestra at his disposal.

At this point in his distinguished career Rachmaninoff had not written a symphony in 30 years. His first attempt, in his early 20s, had proved one of the traumas of his life upon its disastrous premiere in 1897; the work then disappeared and was thought lost, although it resurfaced a few years after his death. His Second Symphony, completed in 1907, fared much better and would eventually become a signature work for The Philadelphia Orchestra. Rachmaninoff conducted it here himself on his first trip to America in 1909.

A Final Symphony Rachmaninoff and his family left Russia after the 1917 Revolution, never to return. He split his time between the United States and a lovely villa near Lake Lucerne in Switzerland that he called Senar (made up of the beginning of his and his wife's names). Most of his energies were devoted to concertizing and he maintained a grueling schedule of orchestral dates and solo recitals. For nearly 10 years he did not compose at all until his Piano Concerto No. 4, which he premiered with the Philadelphians in 1927.

What Rachmaninoff wrote during his American years usually met with less success than his earlier Russian compositions. Audiences seemed to want to hear the old favorites, like his Second and Third piano concertos, and the Prelude in C-sharp minor, while critics tended to disparage the new pieces as out of step with Modernist developments. He enjoyed considerable success in 1934, however, with his Rhapsody on a Theme of Paganini, which won popular and critical acclaim at its premiere, again with The Philadelphia Orchestra and Leopold Stokowski.

During the following summer at Senar Rachmaninoff started to compose a three-movement symphony, using some musical ideas he had written down years earlier.

He had not yet finished the final movement when the concert season resumed and returned to the project the following spring. The Symphony was completed by the end of June for Stokowski to conduct the world premiere with the Philadelphians in November. After attending the first performances in Philadelphia and New York Rachmaninoff remarked that "It was played wonderfully. … Its reception by both the public and critics was—sour. One review sticks painfully in my mind: that I, Rachmaninoff, did not have a Third Symphony in me anymore. Personally, I am firmly convinced that it is a good work. But … sometimes composers are mistaken too! Be that as it may, I am holding to my opinion so far." Other orchestras immediately took up the Symphony, apparently with mixed results, and Rachmaninoff set about revising the piece. Performances in Europe initially did not fare much better: "It has been heard once in every capital in the musical world," the composer recalled, "and it has been condemned in them all."

It did not take too long, however, for the Symphony to establish a valued place in the repertory. The composer conducted the Philadelphians in performances during a celebrated "Rachmaninoff Cycle" here and in New York in 1939 and soon recorded it with the Orchestra. When arrangements were being made for its premiere back in his native Russia, he wrote to a Soviet official: "If the Symphony is prepared for performance in Moscow, I would insist that you also send them the Victor recording of it. Hearing the recording will serve as the composer's instructions for the interpretation." The very successful Russian performance came in July 1943, a few months after Rachmaninoff's death, in a country traumatized at the time by the war and eager to embrace a work of such beauty and Russianness.

A Closer Look Like Rachmaninoff's Second Symphony, the piece begins with a short chant-like theme (**Lento**), a motto of sorts, that recurs throughout the entire composition. In this case it is softly scored for solo clarinet, two horns, and muted cello and projects a Russian religious character with a narrow range of three notes not unlike the memorable opening of the Third Piano Concerto. The motto is quickly set aside as the pace quickens (**Allegro moderato**), leading eventually to one of Rachmaninoff's glorious Romantic themes. The expansive movement ends with a reference to the opening chant motto.

While his first two symphonies sported four movements, this one just has three, but the middle one (**Adagio ma non troppo**) includes a scherzo-like section (**Allegro vivace**), which provides more variety. The final movement (**Allegro**) includes an impressive fugue and allusions to the *Dies irae* chant from the Mass for the Dead that Rachmaninoff used in so many of his compositions. The remarkable orchestration of the Symphony, such as the imaginative use of percussion instruments, is even more "Technicolor" than found in most of his earlier works and a tribute to what Rachmaninoff knew the Philadelphians could do.

—Christopher H. Gibbs

The Third Symphony was composed from 1935 to 1936 and was revised in 1938.

Leopold Stokowski conducted the world premiere of Rachmaninoff's Third Symphony with The Philadelphia Orchestra, November 6–7, 1936. The composer himself conducted the work here (and in New York) in December 1939. Most recently the Symphony appeared on subscription programs in January 2020, with Yannick Nézet-Séguin on the podium.

The Orchestra has recorded the work four times: in 1939 for RCA with Rachmaninoff; in 1954 and 1967 for CBS with Eugene Ormandy; and in 1990 for London with Charles Dutoit.

The Symphony is scored for piccolo, two flutes, two oboes, English horn, two clarinets, bass clarinet, two bassoons, contrabassoon, four horns, three trumpets, three trombones, tuba, timpani, percussion (bass drum, cymbals, snare drum, tam-tam, triangle, xylophone), harp, celesta, and strings.

The Third Symphony runs approximately 40 minutes in performance.

Musical Terms

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

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

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

Meter: The symmetrical grouping of musical rhythms

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

Mute: A mechanical device used on musical instruments to muffle the tone

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.

Pavane: A court dance of the early 16th century, probably of Spanish origin

Rhapsody: Generally an instrumental fantasia on folksongs or on motifs taken from primitive national music

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.).

Scherzo: Literally "a joke." Usually the third movement of symphonies and quartets that was introduced by Beethoven to replace the minuet. The scherzo is followed by a gentler section called a trio, after which the scherzo is repeated. Its characteristics are a rapid tempo, vigorous rhythm, and humorous contrasts. Also an instrumental piece of a light, piquant, humorous character.

Sonata form: The form in which the first movements (and sometimes others) of symphonies are usually cast. The sections are exposition, development, and recapitulation, the last sometimes followed by a coda. The exposition is the introduction of the musical ideas, which are then "developed." In the recapitulation, the exposition is repeated with modifications.

Suite: A group of pieces extracted from a larger work, especially an opera or ballet

Timbre: Tone color or tone quality

THE SPEED OF MUSIC (Tempo)

Adagio: Leisurely, slow

Andante: Walking speed

Allegretto: A tempo between walking speed and fast

Allegro: Bright, fast

Con moto: With motion

Lento: Slow

Moderato: A moderate tempo, neither fast nor slow

Tempo come prima: Tempo like the original

Vivace: Lively

TEMPO MODIFIERS

Ma non troppo: But not too much

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Ticket Turn-In: Subscribers who cannot use their tickets are invited to donate them and receive a tax-deductible acknowledgement by calling 215.893.1999. Twenty-four-hour notice is appreciated, allowing other patrons the opportunity to purchase these tickets and guarantee tax-deductible credit.

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

Lost and Found: Please call 215.670.2321.

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

Accessible Seating: Accessible seating is available for every performance. Please call Patron Services at 215.893.1999 or visit philorch.org for more information.

Assistive Listening: With the deposit of a current ID, hearing enhancement devices are available at no cost from the House Management Office in Commonwealth Plaza. Hearing devices are available on a first-come, first-served basis.

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

Fire Notice: The exit indicated by a red light nearest your seat is the shortest route to the street. In the event of fire or other emergency, please do not run. Walk to that exit.

No Smoking: All public space on the Kimmel Cultural Campus is smoke-free.

Cameras and Recorders: The taking of photographs or the recording of Philadelphia Orchestra concerts is strictly prohibited, but photographs are allowed before and after concerts and during bows. By attending this Philadelphia Orchestra concert you consent to be photographed, filmed, and/or otherwise recorded for any purpose in connection with The Philadelphia Orchestra.

Phones and Paging Devices: All electronic devices—including cellular telephones, pagers, and wristwatch alarms—should be turned off while in the concert hall.