2022-2023 | 123rd Season

The Philadelphia Orchestra

Friday, March 3, at 2:00 Saturday, March 4, at 8:00 Sunday, March 5, at 2:00

Herbert Blomstedt Conductor **Emanuel Ax** Piano

Mozart Piano Concerto No. 18 in B-flat major, K. 456

- I. Allegro vivace
- II. Andante un poco sostenuto
- III. Allegro vivace

Intermission

Bruckner Symphony No. 4 in E-flat major ("Romantic") (1878–80 version)

- I. Bewegt, nicht zu schnell
- II. Andante quasi allegretto
- III. Scherzo: Bewegt—Trio: Nicht zu schnell. Keinesfalls schleppend
- IV. Finale: Bewegt, doch nicht zu schnell

This program runs approximately 2 hours.

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The Philadelphia Orchestra

Yannick Nézet-Séguin Music Director

Photos: Pete Checchia, Julia Wesely, Nigel Parry



The Philadelphia Orchestra

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Yannick Nézet-Séguin is now in his 11th season with The Philadelphia Orchestra, serving as music and artistic director. 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.

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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



Herbert Blomstedt made his Philadelphia Orchestra debut in 1987 and last appeared with the ensemble in 2020. In the more than 60 years of his career, he has acquired the unrestricted respect of the musical world. Noble, charming, sober, modest—such qualities play a major role in human coexistence and are often considered atypical for extraordinary personalities such as conductors. Whatever the general public's notion of a conductor may be, Mr. Blomstedt is an exception,

precisely because he possesses those very qualities that seemingly have so little to do with a conductor's claim to power. That he disproves the usual clichés in many respects should not lead to the assumption that he does not have the power to assert his clearly defined musical goals. Anyone who has attended his rehearsals and experienced his concentration on the essence of the music, the precision in the phrasing of musical facts and circumstances as they appear in the score, the tenacity regarding the implementation of an aesthetic view, is likely to have been amazed at how few despotic measures were required to this end. He has always represented that type of artist whose professional competence and natural authority make all external emphasis superfluous. His work as a conductor is inseparably linked to his religious and human ethos, and his interpretations combine great faithfulness to the score and analytical precision, with a soulfulness that awakens the music to pulsating life.

Born in the United States to Swedish parents and educated in Uppsala, New York, Darmstadt, and Basel, Mr. Blomstedt made his conducting debut in 1954 with the Stockholm Philharmonic and subsequently served as chief conductor of the Oslo Philharmonic, the Swedish and Danish radio orchestras, and the Staatskapelle Dresden. Later, he became music director of the San Francisco Symphony, chief conductor of the NDR Symphony, and music director of the Leipzig Gewandhaus Orchestra. His former orchestras in San Francisco, Leipzig, Copenhagen, Stockholm, and Dresden, as well as the Bamberg and NHK symphonies, have all honored him with the title of conductor laureate. Since 2019 he has been an honorary member of the Vienna Philharmonic.

Mr. Blomstedt holds several honorary doctorates. He is also an elected member of the Royal Swedish Music Academy and was awarded the German Federal Cross of Merit. Over the years, all the leading orchestras around the globe have secured his services. At the age of 95, he continues to be at the helm of leading orchestras with enormous mental and physical presence, verve, and artistic drive.

Soloist



Born to Polish parents in what is today Lviv, Ukraine, pianist **Emanuel Ax** moved to Winnipeg, Canada, with his family when he was a young boy. He made his New York debut in the Young Concert Artists Series and in 1974 won the first Arthur Rubinstein International Piano Competition in Tel Aviv. He won the Michaels Award of Young Concert Artists in 1975, the same year he made his Philadelphia Orchestra debut. Four years later he was awarded the Avery Fisher Prize.

In fall 2021 Mr. Ax resumed a post-COVID touring schedule that included concerts with the Colorado, Pacific, Cincinnati, and Houston symphonies; the Los Angeles and New York philharmonics; and the Cleveland, Minnesota, and Philadelphia orchestras. In addition to these current performances, highlights of his 2022–23 season include a tour with Itzhak Perlman "and Friends." He also continues the "Beethoven for Three" touring and recording project with regular partners violinist Leonidas Kavakos and cellist Yo-Yo Ma, including a performance in Verizon Hall later this month. In recital he can be heard in Palm Beach, Los Angeles, St. Louis, Chicago, Washington D.C., Houston, Las Vegas, and New York. He also appears with orchestras in Atlanta, Detroit, Boston, San Francisco, San Diego, New York, Naples, Portland, Toronto, Pittsburgh, and Cleveland. Touring in Europe includes concerts in Germany, the United Kingdom, Switzerland, and France.

Mr. Ax has been a Sony Classical exclusive recording artist since 1987. With Mr. Ma and Mr. Kavakos, he has launched an ambitious, multi-year project to record all the Beethoven trios and symphonies arranged for trio. The first two discs have recently been released. He has received GRAMMY awards for the second and third volumes of his cycle of Haydn's piano sonatas. He has also made a series of GRAMMY-winning recordings with Mr. Ma of the Beethoven and Brahms sonatas for cello and piano. In the 2004–05 season he contributed to an International Emmy Award-winning BBC documentary commemorating the Holocaust that aired on the 60th anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz. In 2013 his recording *Variations* received the Echo Klassik Award for Solo Recording of the Year (19th-Century Music/Piano).

Mr. Ax is a fellow of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences and holds honorary doctorates of music from Skidmore College, the New England Conservatory of Music, Yale University, and Columbia University. For more information, please visit www.EmanuelAx.com.

Framing the Program

Parallel Events

1784 Mozart Piano Concerto No. 18

Music Salieri Les Danaïdes Literature

Schiller Kabale und Liebe

Art
David
Oath of the
Horatii
History

Treaty of Constantinople

1874 BrucknerSymphony No. 4

Music Musorgsky Pictures from an Exhibition

LiteratureHardy
Far from the
Madding Crowd

Art
Renoir
La Loge

HistoryFirst Ameri

First American zoo founded in Philadelphia In the winter of 1785 Leopold Mozart heard his son perform the Piano Concerto in B-flat major and informed his daughter that "when your brother left the stage, the Emperor tipped his hat and called out 'Bravo Mozart!' and when he came on to play there was a great deal of clapping." Piano concertos were Mozart's principal vehicle for fame during his career, allowing him to show off his gifts as a brilliant composer, flawless performer, and dazzling improviser. He most likely wrote the B-flat Concerto for his piano student Maria Theresa von Paradis, who had been blind since early childhood.

Anton Bruckner was a relatively late bloomer when it came to writing the pieces that posterity values most: his monumental symphonies. He made his first attempt at age 39 but suppressed this early work. His official Symphony No. 1 followed three years later. Bruckner struggled for years to win broad recognition, which he finally enjoyed with the Fourth Symphony that we hear today, completed at age 50. He titled this powerful work, which was actually his sixth symphony because he had composed two earlier unnumbered ones, the "Romantic."

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

Piano Concerto No. 18

Wolfgang Amadè Mozart Born in Salzburg, January 27, 1756 Died in Vienna, December 5, 1791



Mozart may not have invented the piano concerto, but he was the composer who succeeded in making the genre really matter. It took him awhile. His earliest piano concertos were arrangements of piano sonatas by C.P.E. Bach, J.C. Bach, and lesser lights; most likely they were assignments given to the pre-teen composer by his father, the formidable Leopold. The Concerto in D major, K. 175, was Mozart's first independent piano concerto, which he wrote at age 17. Three more

followed early in 1776, before the magnificent "Jenamy" Concerto in E-flat (K. 271) in January 1777, the month of his 21st birthday.

Writing for Himself and Others The Concerto we hear today was the fourth of an astounding series of 12 Mozart composed in Vienna between 1784–86, at the summit of his public career. Recently married to singer Constanze Weber, finally freed—for the most part—from the domination of his father in Salzburg, and soon to be a father himself, Mozart was enjoying new kinds of professional success as a mature musician, one whose gifts clearly went much deeper than his earlier miraculous exploits as a child prodigy.

Piano concertos best allowed him to display the scope of his gifts to the public. He often performed as the keyboard soloist when the works premiered, which gave him the chance to shine in the dual roles of composer and pianist. Mozart's concertos became star vehicles as he sought fame during the 1780s. He presented them at concerts for which he took personal financial responsibility in the hopes of supporting himself and his growing family. In some instances he wrote concertos for others. This has a great practical advantage for posterity in that Mozart tended in these cases to be more specific about what he wanted from the pianist and also to write out cadenzas for the soloist's use. For the Concerto No. 18 he wrote several different cadenzas for the first and last movements. (In today's performance Mr. Ax will be performing Mozart's cadenzas.)

Of the six concertos Mozart composed in 1784 alone, three were apparently intended for others. He dedicated the relatively modest Concerto in E-flat (K. 449) and the joyful G-major (K. 453) to Barbara von Ployer, the daughter of a Salzburg official posted in Vienna and a student of Mozart's. He clearly thought

highly of her gifts, as later did Haydn, who dedicated a set of variations to her after Mozart's death. The B-flat-major Concerto we hear today was most likely composed for Maria Theresa von Paradis. She was three years younger than Mozart and had been blind since early childhood. A composer as well as an accomplished singer and pianist, she had enjoyed a thorough training from Antonio Salieri, Leopold Kozeluch, and Abbé Vogler.

The Emperor Tips His Hat The chronology surrounding the Concerto in B-flat is not entirely clear. Paradis evidently requested that Mozart compose the piece for her to play on a tour of London and Paris in 1784. Although the manuscript is undated, Mozart entered the work into the catalogue that he kept of his compositions on September 30. This would seem to have been too late for it to have been sent off for her to play in Paris, but it is not entirely clear when the work was actually finished or what the dates of all her concert engagements were.

Early the next year Leopold made an extended visit to Vienna to witness first-hand how things were going with his son's career now that he was no longer micromanaging it himself. He must have been impressed by the sheer number and success of the concerts Mozart was giving at the time. It was during his stay that Haydn made his famous comment to him: "Before God, and as an honest man, I tell you that your son is the greatest composer known to me in person or by name. He has taste, and, what is more, the greatest knowledge of composition."

Among the concerts Leopold attended was one on February 13, 1785, about which he wrote to his daughter Nannerl that he had heard Mozart play "a masterful concerto that he wrote for Paradis. ... I had the great pleasure of hearing all the interplay of the instruments so clearly that for sheer delight tears came to my eyes. When your brother left the stage, the Emperor tipped his hat and called out 'Bravo Mozart!' and when he came on to play there was a great deal of clapping."

A Closer Look The first movement Allegro vivace opens with an orchestral presentation of two themes, the first of which, as so often in Mozart's concertos from this time, has a march-like character, although in this instance gentle rather than militaristic. The orchestration is without trumpets and timpani and wonderfully highlights the woodwind instruments, which gives the work an intimate chamber quality. The second theme is lyrical and would not be out of place in one of the composer's operas.

The minor-key second movement (**Andante un poco sostenuto**) is a theme and variations, the mood initially quite similar to the brief cavatina for the character of Barbarina that opens the last act of *The Marriage of Figaro*. In contrast to this melancholy movement, the final rondo movement (**Allegro vivace**) provides a lively and cheerful conclusion.

—Christopher H. Gibbs

Mozart composed his Piano Concerto No. 18 in 1784.

The first Philadelphia Orchestra performance of the Concerto was in April 1968 in Ann Arbor, Michigan, with Claude Frank as soloist; Thor Johnson conducted. The first, and only previous, subscription performances were in January 2010 with Robert Levin and Nicholas McGegan on the podium. The first movement only was played on a Children's Concert in October 1980 with Hugh Jay Sung and William Smith conducting.

The Concerto is scored for solo piano, flute, two oboes, two bassoons, two horns, and strings.

The work runs approximately 30 minutes in performance.

The Music

Symphony No. 4 ("Romantic")

Anton Bruckner Born in Ansfelden, Austria, September 4, 1824 Died in Vienna, October 11, 1896



Most biographies of Anton Bruckner agree that there is little direct correlation between the composer's personality and the traits displayed in his music. As one of the last great Austro-German symphonists (succeeded only by Mahler), Bruckner expanded the scope of the genre to bold, ambitious proportions, and enlivened the traditional four-movement format with rich harmonies, unusual orchestrations, and late-Romantic expressivity. But he was, by all accounts, a

self-effacing man in an era when humility was something of a liability among leading musicians.

Constant Tinkering During the 20th century, Bruckner scholars focused much of their attention on the composer's apparently constant second-guessing and solicitation of approval from his associates. It is true that he was an inveterate reviser, producing multiple versions of many of his most important scores. For a more assertive composer this might simply be regarded as a mark of perfectionism. But Bruckner has often been portrayed as a feeble and indecisive man who too readily acceded to others' suggestions and vacillated chronically, thus creating what was labelled the "Bruckner Problem."

More recent scholarship has tempered this view and suggests that Bruckner revised not out of indecision or feebleness but rather because he felt there were necessary changes to be made. Moreover, his revisions are almost always for the better, showing the astuteness and sensitivity of a great musical mind. And he seems not to have bowed to external pressure or acted indecisively as readily as some scholars had earlier suggested.

Bruckner's first music teacher was his father, a schoolmaster in the Upper Austrian village of Ansfelden, near Linz. Though he quickly became proficient on the organ, young Bruckner was perpetually concerned that he didn't know enough to be a successful professional musician. He took a position as an assistant schoolmaster but continued to study music in his spare time, and even composed a little. After a few years he moved to Saint Florian to work as an assistant schoolteacher at the monastery, while also teaching music to the choirboys and playing the monastery organ. In 1855 he was appointed cathedral

organist in Linz and, although already in his 30s, began a six-year study of harmony and counterpoint with the noted Viennese theorist Simon Sechter. He then studied form and orchestration with Otto Kitzler, conductor at the Linz Theatre, who introduced him to the music of Wagner. Through the 1860s, Bruckner divided his time between Vienna and Linz, and in 1868 committed himself permanently (though somewhat reluctantly) to Vienna, where he took a position at the Conservatory and played organ for the Court Chapel.

A Focus on Symphonies It was in Vienna that Bruckner turned his attention to writing symphonies, in the end totaling nine numbered symphonies in addition to the two earlier unnumbered ones he had composed in Linz. The mature symphonies are long works, richly harmonized and polyphonically complex. While some of his contemporaries described the early Vienna works as "wild" and "nonsensical," they inspired a generation of younger composers—including Mahler—who attended Bruckner's lectures at the Vienna Conservatory.

The Fourth Symphony was the first of Bruckner's works in the genre to receive an enthusiastically positive response and remains his best-known piece. It was written in 1874 but was then revised six more times over the next 14 years. Bruckner made substantial alterations to the Symphony in 1878, revising the first two movements and completely replacing the last two. A year later he composed a third finale, and it was this version that was premiered under the baton of Hans Richter in 1881. More tweaking took place over the 1880s, sometimes notated in the hands of Bruckner's associates. The later version was performed to great acclaim in January 1888, again conducted by Richter. The following month, Bruckner made some more revisions, and this was the version that was finally published in 1889.

As the first complete scholarly edition of the works of Bruckner was being prepared for publication in the 1930s, the editors began to question the authenticity of the published score, claiming it was based on a bowdlerized or "murky" manuscript whose validity was "unverifiable." The chief editor, Robert Haas, proclaimed the 1878–80 version as the definitive one, and it was that score that was performed almost exclusively for the remainder of the 20th century. Recently the American musicologist Benjamin Korstvedt has argued for the authenticity of the 1888 version.

A Closer Look The subtitle "Romantic" is Bruckner's own—the only subtitle he gave to any of his symphonies—and refers to the deeply mythologized notions of medieval romance that appealed to late-19th-century Europeans, who were then in the midst of a Gothic revival in all the arts. In his correspondence, Bruckner indicated that the program for this work centered on the story of a hunt. After a nocturnal string tremolo that opens the first movement (Bewegt, nicht zu schnell), the horn announces the sunrise and the dawn of a new day for hunting. The theme is eventually taken up by the rest of the orchestra and

developed using Bruckner's favorite rhythm of two beats followed by a triplet. A lighthearted second theme appears first in the strings, evoking the gentle folk-dance flavor that Mahler would later allude to in the Ländler movements of some of his symphonies. The main "horn call" motif then opens the development section, which ebbs and flows around a brief treatment of the second theme and further development of the "Bruckner rhythm," culminating in a majestic brass chorale garlanded with string tremolos. This sets up the recapitulation, where the first theme is embroidered with an added flute solo, and the second theme is harmonically enriched with unusual modulations. An extended coda prepares for a triumphant return to E-flat at the conclusion.

Bruckner described the C-minor second movement (**Andante quasi allegretto**) as a "song," "prayer," and "serenade," though it is written in the tempo and rhythm of a funeral march. (This movement undoubtedly inspired the slow movement of Mahler's First Symphony, which is also a hunt-based funeral march.) The first theme is introduced by the cellos and developed before the haunting second theme appears in the violas. In a modified sonata-allegro form, both themes are then further developed and reprised, and after some harmonic wandering and a triumphant fanfare, the movement settles into a mysterious C-major conclusion.

In 1878 Bruckner fashioned a lusty "Hunting Scherzo" (**Bewegt**) that opens with the horns playing a variation on the composer's favorite rhythm. Though it starts softly, the movement builds into a wholehearted celebration, interspersed with shadowy episodes where the hunting horns sound from a distance. The Trio section (**Nicht zu schnell. Keinesfalls schleppend**) features a pastoral dance tune that, according to Bruckner's program, imitates the sound of a barrel organ entertaining the hunters while they break for lunch.

In 1878 Bruckner had also composed a "Volksfest" finale to the Symphony, which he replaced in 1880 with a new one (**Bewegt, doch nicht zu schnell**) that seems to dispense entirely with the work's "hunting" theme. Rather than returning firmly to the tonic key of E-flat, this finale tends to linger furtively around B-flat (the dominant) before exploring myriad other key areas. A slow, falling motif in the winds and brass at the start overshadows the lingering remnants of the "Bruckner rhythm" from the Scherzo. In sonata-allegro form, the finale then juxtaposes two theme groups, developing and recapitulating the grand, sinister theme and its more lyrical counterpart. But all this is merely prolonged preparation for the apotheosis of the Finale, which is its lengthy coda. Over 65 measures of tremolo string sextuplets, a slow, long-breathed brass theme builds to a cosmically expansive conclusion that finally, radiantly, settles onto tonic harmony at the end.

—Luke Howard

Bruckner composed his Fourth Symphony in 1874 and revised it from 1878 to 1880 and again from 1887 to 1888.

Fritz Scheel introduced the Bruckner Fourth to Philadelphia Orchestra audiences in November 1906. The most recent subscription performances of the piece were in January 2016, with Yannick Nézet-Séguin conducting.

The Orchestra has recorded the Fourth Symphony twice: in 1967 with Eugene Ormandy for CBS and in 1994 with Wolfgang Sawallisch for EMI.

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

Performance time is approximately 65 minutes.

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Musical Terms

GENERAL TERMS

Aria: An accompanied solo song (often in ternary form), usually in an opera or oratorio **Cadenza:** A passage or section in a style of brilliant improvisation, usually inserted near the end of a movement or composition

Cavatina: A song, particularly a short aria without a second section

Chorale: A hymn tune of the German Protestant Church, or one similar in style. Chorale settings are vocal, instrumental, or both.

Chord: The simultaneous sounding of three or more tones

Coda: A concluding section or passage added in order to confirm the impression of finality

Counterpoint: The art of combining different melodic lines in a musical composition

Harmony: The combination of simultaneously sounded musical notes to produce chords and chord progressions **K.:** Abbreviation for Köchel, the

K.: Abbreviation for Köchel, the chronological list of all the works of Mozart made by Ludwig von Köchel

Ländler: An Austrian folk dance in triple time

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.

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

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: An instrumental composition in three or four extended movements.

Sonata: An instrumental composition in three or four extended movements contrasted in theme, tempo, and mood, usually for a solo instrument

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.

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

Tremolo: An effect produced by the very rapid alternation of down-bow and up-bow

THE SPEED OF MUSIC (Tempo)

Allegretto: A tempo between walking speed

and fast

Allegro: Bright, fast **Andante:** Walking speed **Bewegt:** With motion

Keinesfalls schleppend: Not sluggish

Nicht zu schnell: Not too fast

Sostenuto: Sustained

Vivace: Lively

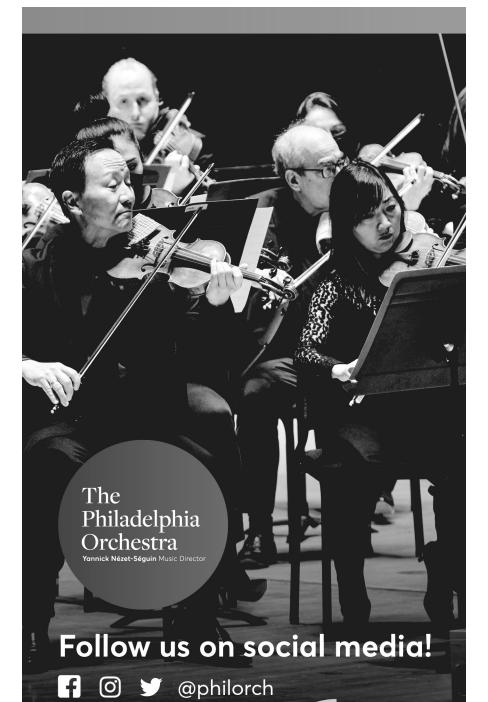


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