

2022–2023 | 123rd Season

# The Philadelphia Orchestra

Thursday, October 13, at 7:30

Friday, October 14, at 2:00

Saturday, October 15, at 8:00

**William Eddins** Conductor

**Hilary Hahn** Violin

**Perkinson** Sinfonietta No. 1

I. Sonata allegro

II. Song Form: Largo

III. Rondo: Allegro furioso

*First Philadelphia Orchestra performances*

**Debussy** *La Mer*

I. From Dawn to Midday at Sea

II. Play of the Waves

III. Dialogue of the Wind and the Sea

## Intermission

**Tchaikovsky** Violin Concerto in D major, Op. 35

I. Allegro moderato—Moderato assai

II. Canzonetta: Andante—

III. Allegro vivacissimo

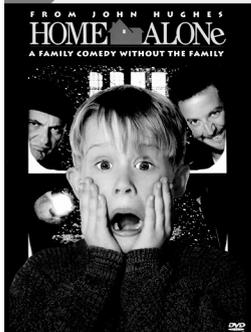
This program runs approximately 1 hour, 40 minutes.

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## 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.

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Under Yannick's leadership, the Orchestra returned to recording with 11 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](http://www.philorch.org).

# Conductor



Conductor and pianist **William Eddins** made his Philadelphia Orchestra debut in April 2002 at an Access Concert, conducting and playing Gershwin's *Rhapsody in Blue*. He makes his subscription debut with these current performances. Mr. Eddins is music director emeritus of the Edmonton Symphony, where he served as music director from 2004 to 2017 and a frequent guest conductor of major orchestras throughout the world.

Recently he collaborated with Wynton Marsalis's Jazz

at Lincoln Center Orchestra with both the Detroit Symphony and the Minnesota Orchestra. In the United States he has also conducted the New York, Los Angeles, and Buffalo philharmonics, and the St. Louis, Boston, Cincinnati, Atlanta, Dallas, Baltimore, Indianapolis, Milwaukee, and Houston symphonies. Internationally he was principal guest conductor of the RTÉ National Symphony in Ireland from 2001 to 2006. He has also conducted the Berlin Staatskapelle, the Berlin Radio Orchestra, the Welsh National Opera, the Royal Scottish National Orchestra, the Adelaide and Barcelona symphonies, and the Lisbon Metropolitan Orchestra.

Mr. Eddins's career highlights include taking the Edmonton Symphony to Carnegie Hall in May 2012, conducting the RAI National Symphony on Italian television, and leading the KwaZulu-Natal Philharmonic on tour in South Africa with soprano Renée Fleming. Equally at home on opera stages, he conducted Gershwin's *Porgy and Bess* with Opera de Lyon both in France and at the Edinburgh Festival. He is an accomplished pianist and chamber musician and regularly conducts from the piano in works by Mozart, Beethoven, Gershwin, and Ravel. He has performed at the Ravinia Festival with both the Chicago Symphony and the Ravinia Festival Orchestra and has also conducted the orchestras of the Aspen Music Festival, the Hollywood Bowl, the Chautauqua Festival, the Boston University Tanglewood Institute, and the Civic Orchestra of Chicago. His recordings include a release on his own label featuring Beethoven's "Hammerklavier" Sonata and William Albright's *The Nightmare Fantasy Rag*.

A native of Buffalo, New York, Mr. Eddins attended the Eastman School of Music, studying with David Effron and graduating at age 18. He also studied conducting with Daniel Lewis at the University of Southern California and was a founding member of the New World Symphony in Miami. He currently lives and works in Minneapolis and is co-founder of MetroNOME Brewery, a socially missioned brewery established in the wake of the public unrest during the summer of 2020 with the objective of Nurturing Outstanding Music Education. Proceeds provide musical instruments, lessons, and education for underprivileged youth in the Twin Cities metro area.

# Soloist

Dana van Leeuwen/Decca



Three-time GRAMMY Award–winning violinist **Hilary Hahn** melds expressive musicality and technical expertise with a diverse repertoire guided by artistic curiosity. Her barrier-breaking attitude toward classical music and her commitment to sharing her experiences with a global community have made her a fan favorite. She is a prolific recording artist and commissioner of new works, and her 21 feature recordings have received every critical prize in the international press. She was 14

years old when she made her Philadelphia Orchestra debut in 1993 as a winner of the Children’s Division of the Orchestra’s Albert M. Greenfield Student Competition. In the 2017–18 season she was The Philadelphia Orchestra’s artist-in-residence.

In March 2021 Deutsche Grammophon released Ms. Hahn’s latest album, *Paris*, recorded with Mikko Franck and the Orchestre Philharmonique de Radio France. *Paris* features the world premiere recording of Einojuhani Rautavaara’s Two Serenades, a piece written for her and completed after Rautavaara’s death by Kalevi Aho. The album also includes performances of Ernest Chausson’s *Poème* and Prokofiev’s First Violin Concerto. A strong advocate for new music, Ms. Hahn has championed and commissioned works by a diverse array of contemporary composers. In the 2018–19 season she premiered two new works written for her: Two Serenades and Lera Auerbach’s Sonata No. 4 (“Fractured Dreams”). Jennifer Higdon’s Violin Concerto, which was written for Ms. Hahn and which she recorded along with the Tchaikovsky Concerto, went on to win the Pulitzer Prize.

Ms. Hahn has related to her fans naturally from the very beginning of her career. She has committed to signings after nearly every concert and maintains and shares a collection of the fan art she has received over the course of 20 years. An avid and early blogger, she hosts a variety of original writing dating back to 2002 on her website. Her “Postcards from the Road” feature, a series of personal updates from her travels around the world, evolved from an initial year-long postcard project that she began with a classroom of third graders. Her “Bring Your Own Baby” concerts—developed over residencies in Vienna, Seattle, Lyon, and Philadelphia—create opportunities for parents to share their enjoyment of live classical music with their children. She is the subject of two documentaries by filmmaker Benedict Mirow: *Hilary Hahn—A Portrait*, released in 2006, and *Hilary Hahn—Evolution of an Artist*, which chronicles the past 16 years of her career. She is the recipient of numerous awards and holds honorary doctorates from Middlebury College and Ball State University, where there are three scholarships in her name.

# Framing the Program

## Parallel Events

1878

**Tchaikovsky**

Violin

Concerto

**Music**

Sullivan

*H.M.S. Pinafore*

**Literature**

James

*Daisy Miller*

**Art**

Degas

*Singer with a*

*Glove*

**History**

Edison patents

phonograph

1905

**Debussy**

*La Mer*

**Music**

Strauss

*Salome*

**Literature**

Wharton

*House of Mirth*

**Art**

Picasso

*Two Youths*

**History**

Einstein

formulates

Theory of

Relativity

1955

**Perkinson**

Sinfonietta

No. 1

**Music**

Barber

*Medea's Dance*

*of Vengeance*

**Literature**

Nabokov

*Lolita*

**Art**

De Chirico

*Italian Square*

**History**

Churchill

resigns

The innovative American composer Coleridge-Taylor Perkinson composed his Sinfonietta No. 1 for string orchestra in his early 20s, although it took more than a decade to be premiered, which he attributed to the limited opportunities available to Black classical composers. The three-movement work encompasses an eclectic range of music styles, from ones associated with J.S. Bach to Stravinsky and Bartók.

Composers tend not to like labels and it is perhaps understandable that Claude Debussy rejected the term "Impressionism" when it was first applied to his works. Yet equally understandable is that critics and listeners would make connections between his music and currents in French painting of his time. *La Mer*, subtitled "symphonic sketches," shows his marvelous ability to evoke three scenes associated with the sea: "From Dawn to Midday at Sea," "Play of the Waves," and "Dialogue of the Wind and the Sea."

Today it is hard to believe that Tchaikovsky initially faced considerable opposition to his Violin Concerto, which he composed in his late 30s. The Russian violinist for whom he wrote the piece declined to perform it, which led to a delayed official premiere in distant Vienna. There the powerful music critic Eduard Hanslick declared it music whose "stink you can hear." Audiences, however, responded to its passion, energy, and virtuoso fireworks and it did not take long for the Concerto to become a triumphant repertory favorite.

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

## Sinfonietta No. 1

**Coleridge-Taylor Perkinson**

**Born in Winston-Salem, North Carolina, June 14, 1932**

**Died in Chicago, March 9, 2004**



In an interview published in 1978, the composer Coleridge-Taylor Perkinson remarked, "I really think the opportunity to be familiar with any composer's work is what will bring about more satisfactory performances." He said this in response to discussing Stravinsky's *The Rite of Spring*. "It is only by virtue of the fact that the piece has become familiar that the problems of performing his music have lessened." The familiarity that we have with such composers as Bach, Mozart,

and Brahms, whom Perkinson names as his greatest influences, is what propels music in perpetuity, into the historical psyche, and ensures its technical excellence, which he writes is paramount for him: "The only thing that I try to do in my music is to try to be excellent in my craft. My concepts are really classical in nature."

Born in Winston-Salem, North Carolina, in 1932, Perkinson was named after the Black British composer Samuel Coleridge-Taylor by his mother, an accomplished pianist, church organist, and theater director. Around the age of 11, he moved to New York City and attended the High School of the Arts, where he studied composing and conducting and won the LaGuardia Prize in music in 1949. He began college at New York University's School of Education before transferring to the Manhattan School of Music, where he studied composition with Charles Mills and Vittorio Giannini and conducting with Jonel Perlea, earning his B.M. in 1953 and his M.M. in 1954.

**More Than Just a Composer** Among Perkinson's many contributions to musical life were serving as the music director for the Professional Children's School in New York City and holding conducting jobs with the Brooklyn Community Symphony Orchestra and the Symphony of the New World. Later he held teaching positions at the University of Indiana, and from 1998 until his death in 2004 he worked as coordinator of performance activities at Columbia College Chicago's Center for Black Music Research.

In addition, Perkinson arranged for jazz and soul artists, including Marvin Gaye, Lou Rawls, and Harry Belafonte. He composed the themes for television shows, among them *The Barbara McNair Show* and *Room 222*. He wrote scores for the movies *A Warm December*, *Amazing Grace*, and *The Education of Sonny Carson*

and the ballets *Ode to Otis* for the Dance Theatre of Harlem and *For "Bird," with Love* for the Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater. A cantata titled *Attitudes*, commissioned by the Ford Foundation, and *Commentary*, a work for cello and orchestra commissioned by the National Association of Negro Musicians, are among his most-known works.

Perkinson composed the Sinfonietta No. 1 for strings in 1955 and it was premiered by the Radio Chamber Orchestra in 1966 in Hilversum, the Netherlands. He visited the Netherlands in the summers from 1960 to 1963, deciding to spend time studying and meeting people in Europe. "I had written music that had been well-received, and then all of a sudden, the bottom dropped out." Perkinson expands on the headwinds faced by Black composers, including lack of performances and limited opportunities to have music published: "All kinds of problems! Performances are difficult to come by because there are a limited number of black artists."

**A Closer Look** The Sinfonietta No. 1 is scored for strings and consists of three movements—fast, slow, fast—in the tradition of an Italian Baroque overture. The movements are contrapuntal, at times consonant and at times dissonant, exuding a skillful bravura. Highly eclectic, Perkinson explored the familiar and one can hear Stravinsky, Bartók, and Vivaldi, placing him squarely in the post-Modernist tradition of Alfred Schnittke. The first movement, **Sonata allegro**, begins with a jagged polyphonic recall of Vivaldi, with meters changing from measure to measure like Stravinsky. Baroquely inspired, even the dynamics and tempos tend to stay rather measured and static, producing a piece of entertainment that seems like a playful riff on tradition, as Stravinsky did in his neo-Classical ballet *Pulcinella*.

The second movement, **Song Form: Largo**, is a plaintive step-driven poem of exquisite beauty and pathos. After the introduction a viola cries out, ducking slowly back into the polyphonic tapestry. The strings, tugging at the heart, move to a low tessitura before returning to the initial melodic materials where the music rises again before slowly quieting. The third movement, **Rondo: Allegro furioso**, returns to a form made famous by Haydn and Mozart. It is fast, combining syncopation and repetition into a riveting experience.

—Aaron Beck

*Perkinson composed his Sinfonietta No. 1 in 1955.*

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

*The score is for strings only.*

*Performance time is approximately 15 minutes.*

# The Music

## *La Mer*

Claude Debussy

Born in St. Germain-en-Laye, August 22, 1862

Died in Paris, March 25, 1918



In a letter to André Messager dated September 12, 1903, Claude Debussy announced, "I am working on three symphonic sketches entitled: 1. 'Calm Sea around the Sanguinaires Islands'; 2. 'Play of the Waves'; 3. 'The Wind Makes the Sea Dance'; the whole to be titled *La Mer*." In a rare burst of autobiography, he then confided, "You're unaware, maybe, that I was intended for the noble career of a sailor and have only deviated from that path thanks to the quirks of fate. Even so, I have retained

a sincere devotion to the sea." Debussy points out to Messager the irony that he is working on his musical seascape in landlocked Burgundy, but declares, "I have innumerable memories, and those, in my view, are worth more than a reality which, charming as it may be, tends to weigh too heavily on the imagination."

**The Advancing Tide** But the quirks of fate, of which Debussy wrote so lightly in 1903 led him back to the sea over and over again in the two years that elapsed between this letter and the premiere of *La Mer* on October 15, 1905, performed in Paris by the Lamoureux Orchestra conducted by Camille Chevillard. It was a twist of fate that Debussy finished correcting the proofs of his symphonic sketches by the sea while staying at the Grand Hotel in the quirky British resort of Eastbourne. The otherwise ironical composer had washed up on the Atlantic shores of this little town swept away by that most oceanic of emotions: love.

What did the concierge at the Grand Hotel think of the curious French couple staying there during July and August of 1905? The other guests, who were probably too British and well-bred to have initiated a conversation, must have been intrigued by the saturnine Frenchman with the protruding forehead, who spoke no English and, indeed, rarely said a word even in his native tongue. But what of the woman with him, speaking fluent English with an enchanting accent, charming, vivacious, and clearly pregnant? Surely represented to the hotel management as Debussy's wife, she was in reality Emma Bardac, née Moysé, a socialite and gifted singer who had left her wealthy husband for an impecunious composer. Her husband, Sigismund, who had tolerated with indulgent good humor her earlier affair with the discreet Gabriel Fauré, assumed that she would return to him after her passion for Debussy cooled. But Emma never looked back: She bore Debussy a daughter,

Claude-Emma, nicknamed “Chou-Chou” by her adoring father, who was born some two weeks after the first performance of *La Mer*.

In the scandal that followed their elopement, especially after Debussy's unsophisticated first wife made an ineffectual attempt at suicide, he lost many friends—but not the loyal Messenger. In consequence of her adultery, Emma lost a lavish inheritance from her wealthy uncle, thus condemning her reticent husband to seek lucrative but agonizing public appearances as a pianist and conductor. They finally married in 1908, enjoying their life together until he died of cancer on March 25, 1918, as German artillery bombarded Paris; despite the acute danger, Emma refused to leave her husband's side.

**“Symphonic Sketches”** During his lifetime and after, critics labeled Debussy as an “Impressionist,” associating him with the then-radical but now beloved painters Monet and Renoir. Debussy protested that he was not merely an Impressionist but a Symbolist like Maurice Maeterlinck, whose play *Pelléas et Mélisande* (1902) he had transformed into an opera, or his friend Pierre Louÿs, whose poems he set in the voluptuous song cycle *Chansons de Bilitis* (1898). Despite the suggestive titles of his pieces, Debussy was at least as much a “literary” composer as he was a “visual” one. By insisting that his publisher, Jacques Durand, place a stylized picture of a wave by the great Japanese artist Hokusai on the cover of *La Mer*, Debussy indicated implicitly that his score was not merely a seascape painted rapidly from prosaic reality nor a pantheistic rhapsody, but rather an evocation of those elemental forces that the sea itself symbolizes: birth (in French, the word for the sea, *mer*, is a homonym for the word for mother, *mère*); desire (waves endlessly lapping the shore, forever unsatisfied); love (all-enveloping emotion in which the lover is completely submerged); and, of course, death (dissolution into eternity).

Furthermore, as was evinced in his choice of a Japanese print for the score's cover, Debussy went to considerable trouble to differentiate his work from the aesthetics of the Impressionist painters. Although its subtitle has puzzled critics over the years, Debussy knew exactly what he was doing when he called *La Mer* a series of “symphonic sketches.” “Symphonic” because of the sophistication of the processes involved in generating the musical materials, but the word “sketches” is not used in the sense of something rapidly executed or unfinished, but rather to denote a clearly delineated line drawing, nothing remotely “Impressionistic.”

**A Closer Look** Writing shortly after the premiere of *La Mer*, the critic Louis Laloy noted, “in each of these three episodes ... [Debussy] has been able to create enduringly all the glimmerings and shifting shadows, caresses and murmurs, gentle sweetness and fiery anger, seductive charm and sudden gravity contained in those waves which Aeschylus praised for their ‘smile without number.’” The slow, tenebrous, and mysterious opening of the first “sketch,” which Debussy ultimately called **From Dawn to Midday at Sea**, contains all of the thematic motifs that will pervade the rest of the entire score, just as in a Beethovenian

symphony. The resemblance to the German symphonic tradition essentially ends there, however, for only the most evanescent lineaments of sonata form, with its contrasting themes and development section, can be discerned flickering behind Debussy's complex formal design. There is no formal section devoted exclusively to development in *La Mer* because Debussy develops incessantly from the very first notes. The second of the "sketches," **Play of the Waves**, is constructed from tiny mosaic-like thematic and harmonic fragments, a process that anticipates the extraordinary subtlety of Debussy's last completed orchestral score, *Jeux* (1912–13), in which the "games" are more explicitly erotic. The final "sketch," **Dialogue of the Wind and the Sea**, begins in storm and, rising to grandeur, concludes with an orgasmic burst of enveloping, oceanic rapture.

—Byron Adams

*La Mer was composed from 1903 to 1905.*

*Carl Pohlig conducted the first Philadelphia Orchestra performances of the piece, in January 1911. The most recent subscription performances were under the direction of Stéphane Denève in October 2018. In between the work has been heard many times, with such conductors as Fritz Reiner, Pierre Monteux, Artur Rodzinski, Ernest Ansermet, George Szell, Charles Munch, Carlo Maria Giulini, André Previn, Christoph Eschenbach, and Esa-Pekka Salonen.*

*The Philadelphians have recorded the work four times: in 1942 for RCA with Arturo Toscanini; in 1959 for CBS with Eugene Ormandy; in 1971 for RCA with Ormandy; and in 1993 for EMI with Riccardo Muti.*

*Debussy scored La Mer for piccolo, two flutes, two oboes, English horn, two clarinets, three bassoons, contrabassoon, four horns, three trumpets, two cornets, three trombones, tuba, timpani, percussion (bass drum, cymbals, glockenspiel, suspended cymbal, tam-tam, and triangle), two harps, celesta, and strings.*

*Performance time is approximately 25 minutes.*

# The Music

## Violin Concerto

**Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky**

**Born in Kamsko-Votkinsk, Russia, May 7, 1840**

**Died in St. Petersburg, November 6, 1893**



Although Tchaikovsky ultimately triumphed with his Violin Concerto, which became one of his most beloved and frequently performed compositions, its path to success was unusually discouraging and came during a period of deep personal crisis. The turmoil began with his ill-considered marriage to a student in July 1877, undertaken to quiet gossip about his homosexuality. After a few weeks Tchaikovsky left his wife and fled Russia to spend the next eight months

wandering Europe. Intense work on two masterpieces came in the immediate wake of the marriage fiasco: the Fourth Symphony and the opera *Eugene Onegin*. As Tchaikovsky's mental state stabilized, however, he found it increasingly difficult to compose and mainly wrote trifles.

**Seeking “Musical Beauty”** In March 1878 Tchaikovsky settled in Clarens, Switzerland, where he was visited by a former student, a young violinist named Iosif Kotek, who would go on to study in Berlin with Joseph Joachim, for whom Schumann, Brahms, Dvořák, and others wrote concertos. The two played through some violin literature together and Tchaikovsky was particularly delighted with Eduard Lalo's *Symphonie espagnole*, which inspired him to compose his own Violin Concerto in the space of just some three weeks. What he admired was that Lalo, “in the same way as Léo Delibes and Bizet, does not strive after profundity, but he carefully avoids routine, seeks out new forms, and thinks more about *musical beauty* than about observing established traditions, as the Germans do.”

This comment is revealing of Tchaikovsky's musical values and his antipathy toward the gloried German tradition exemplified at the time by Wagner and Brahms. Tchaikovsky preferred composers who are now considered minor figures, such as Delibes (remembered best for his ballet *Coppélia* and opera *Lakmé*) and Bizet. “I think that music's entire future is now in France,” Tchaikovsky declared after playing through a four-hand arrangement of Brahms's brand new First Symphony, which elicited his comment: “God, what a loathsome thing it is.”

It is in this spirit that Tchaikovsky set about to write an attractive concerto that would please listeners, and yet initially the work did not completely please anyone. The first discouraging response came from Kotek and Tchaikovsky's

brother Modest, who liked the first and third movements, but not the middle one. Tchaikovsky decided to write a new slow movement. The next blow came from his extremely generous patroness, Madame Nadezhda von Meck, to whom over the years he would send most of his works and who usually reacted enthusiastically. In this instance, however, she expressed some dissatisfaction with the opening movement. Tchaikovsky responded by thanking her for her honesty but saying, "I must defend the first movement of the Concerto a little. Of course there is much that is cold and calculated in any piece written to display virtuosity, but the ideas for the themes came spontaneously to me and, indeed, the whole shape of the movement came in a flash. I still hope you will come to like it."

**Premiere Troubles** Things got worse with the scheduled premiere of the Concerto in March 1879. The initial dedicatee, the distinguished violinist Leopold Auer, declared the piece unplayable. Tchaikovsky later recalled: "A verdict such as this from the authoritative St. Petersburg virtuoso cast my poor child for many years into the abyss, it seemed, of eternal oblivion." There may have been a performance of the recently published violin and piano version in New York in 1879 played by Leopold Damrosch, but no details survive and the real premiere was still nowhere in sight. In the past few years, however, it has come to light that the Concerto was performed in Hanover in March 1880 by an obscure local concertmaster named Georg Hänflein, receiving a negative review. It is unclear whether the composer ever knew this performance took place.

Tchaikovsky eventually found a willing violinist in Adolf Brodsky, who performed the Concerto in December 1881 with the Vienna Philharmonic under Hans Richter. That under-rehearsed performance (long thought to have been the premiere) led to an infamous review from the powerful critic Eduard Hanslick, who condemned the vulgarity of the work, especially its lively folk-like finale: "We see plainly the savage vulgar faces, we hear curses, we smell vodka. Friedrich Vischer once observed, speaking of obscene pictures, that they stink to the eye. Tchaikovsky's Violin Concerto gives us for the first time the hideous notion that there can be music that stinks to the ear." Modest Tchaikovsky said no review more hurt his brother, who could recite it word for word until his death. The composer's memoirs further indicate how much the review stung, although he notes that because of the support of performers and audiences "my concerto had been saved, and now it is quite frequently played in Western Europe."

Tchaikovsky was often ambivalent about the quality of his compositions, and it did not help when friends, family, and critics were unsupportive. In the case of the Violin Concerto, however, public enthusiasm came quickly and it did not take long for the piece to emerge triumphant in the standard repertoire. Before his early death in 1885, Kotek performed the work he had helped birth in Moscow and Berlin. Leopold Auer, despite initially rejecting the work, became its champion, as did many of his celebrated students, including Jascha Heifetz, Mischa Elman, Nathan Milstein, and Efrem Zimbalist (who long served as president of the Curtis Institute of Music).

**A Closer Look** The opening **Allegro** begins with the violins quietly stating a noble tune (not heard again) that soon ushers in the lilting appearance of the soloist. Both of the principal themes in the long movement are lyrical, the second one marked "con molto espressione." Although the themes do not contrast, ample variety is provided by interludes, including a majestic one with a Polonaise rhythm, and by a brilliant coda of virtuoso fireworks to conclude.

The brief **Canzonetta: Andante** projects a plaintive mood and proves a satisfying substitute for Tchaikovsky's original thoughts. (He published his rejected slow movement as *Méditation* for violin and piano, the first of three pieces in *Souvenir d'un lieu cher*, Op. 42.) The energetic finale (**Allegro vivacissimo**) bursts forth without a break. A brief orchestral introduction leads to the soloist's unaccompanied entrance in a cadenza-like passage that teasingly tips over into a dazzling rondo theme that keeps returning and gives further opportunities for virtuoso display.

—Christopher H. Gibbs

*Tchaikovsky composed the Violin Concerto in 1878.*

*Fritz Kreisler was soloist in the first Philadelphia Orchestra performances of the Concerto, in February 1905; Fritz Scheel conducted. The piece's most recent appearance on subscription concerts was in September 2018, with violinist Lisa Batiashvili and Yannick Nézet-Séguin.*

*The Orchestra has recorded the work five times: in 1946 for CBS with Bronislaw Huberman and Eugene Ormandy; in 1949 for CBS with Isaac Stern and Alexander Hilsberg; in 1958 for CBS with Stern and Ormandy; in 1959 for CBS with David Oistrakh and Ormandy; and in 1978 for EMI with Itzhak Perlman and Ormandy. The Concerto also appears on The Philadelphia Orchestra: The Centennial Collection (Historic Broadcasts and Recordings from 1917–1998) in a 1961 performance with violinist Michael Rabin and William Smith.*

*The score calls for solo violin; pairs of flutes, oboes, clarinets, and bassoons; four horns; two trumpets; timpani; and strings.*

*The Concerto runs approximately 35 minutes in performance.*

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# 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

**Canzonetta:** A short, simple song. The term was also adopted for instrumental pieces of a songlike nature.

**Chord:** The simultaneous sounding of three or more tones

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

**Contrapuntal:** See counterpoint

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

**Dissonance:** A combination of two or more tones requiring resolution

**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

**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

**Neo-Classicism:** A movement of style in the works of certain 20th-century composers who revived the balanced forms and clearly perceptible thematic processes of earlier styles to replace what were, to them, the increasingly exaggerated gestures and formlessness of late Romanticism

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

**Polonaise:** A Polish national dance in moderate triple meter

**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.).

**Sinfonietta:** A small symphony, sometimes for a chamber orchestra

**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.

**Syncopation:** A shift of rhythmic emphasis off the beat

**Tessitura:** A term used to describe the part of a vocal (or less often instrumental) compass in which a piece of music lies—whether high or low, etc. The tessitura of a piece is not decided by the extremes of its range, but rather by which part of the range is most used.

## THE SPEED OF MUSIC (Tempo)

**Allegro:** Bright, fast

**Andante:** Walking speed

**Con espresione:** With feeling

**Furioso:** Wild, passionate

**Largo:** Broad

**Moderato:** A moderate tempo, neither fast nor slow

**Vivace:** Lively

## TEMPO MODIFIERS

**Assai:** Much

**Molto:** Very

## MODIFYING SUFFIXES

**-issimo:** Very

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