

2023–2024 | 124th Season

# The Philadelphia Orchestra

Sunday, December 31, at 7:00

**Thomas Wilkins** Conductor  
**Charlotte Blake Alston** Speaker  
**Paulo Szot** Baritone

**Johann Strauss, Jr.** Overture to *Die Fledermaus*

**Tchaikovsky** Polonaise, from *Eugene Onegin*, Op. 24

**Leigh** "I, Don Quixote," from *Man of La Mancha*

**Rodgers/orch. Bennett** "Some Enchanted Evening," from *South Pacific*

**Rodgers/orch. Bennett** "This Nearly Was Mine," from *South Pacific*

**Josef Strauss** "Ohne Sorgen" Polka, Op. 271

**Suppé/arr. Jungnickel** Overture to *The Beautiful Galatea*

## Intermission

**Offenbach/arr. Dorati** *La Vie parisienne*, Overture on Themes of Offenbach  
*First Philadelphia Orchestra performance*

**Loewe/arr. Mauceri/orch. Salinger** Suite from *Gigi*  
*First Philadelphia Orchestra performance*

**Schönberg** "Stars," from *Les Misérables*

**Leigh/arr. Waldin** "The Impossible Dream," from *Man of La Mancha*

**Abreu/arr. Colnot** "Tico-Tico no Fubá"

**Bernstein** Three Dance Episodes from *On the Town*  
I. The Great Lover  
II. Lonely Town: Pas de deux  
III. Times Square 1944

This program runs approximately 2 hours.

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](http://www.wrti.org) to listen live or for more details.



## 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 and inclusive 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 12th 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 around the community, in classrooms and hospitals, and over the airwaves and online. The 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; sensory-friendly concerts; open rehearsals; the School Partnership Program and School Ensemble Program; All City Orchestra Fellowships; and residency work in Philadelphia and abroad. The Orchestra's free online video series, Our City, Your Orchestra (OCYO), uncovers and amplifies the voices, stories, and causes championed by unique Philadelphia organizations and businesses. Joining OCYO in connecting with the community is HearTOGETHER, a free monthly podcast featuring artists and activists who discuss music, social justice, and the lived experiences that inform the drive to create a more equitable and inclusive future for the arts.

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 13 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



Devoted to promoting a life-long enthusiasm for music, **Thomas Wilkins** brings energy and commitment to performances and is hailed as a master at communicating and connecting with audiences of all ages. He is principal conductor of the Hollywood Bowl Orchestra; artistic advisor, education and community engagement, to the Boston Symphony; principal guest conductor of the Virginia Symphony; and he holds Indiana University's Henry A. Upper Chair of Orchestral

Conducting, established by the late Barbara and David Jacobs as a part of the University's "Matching the Promise" campaign. He completed his long and successful tenure as music director of the Omaha Symphony at the close of the 2020–21 season. Other past positions have included resident conductor of the Detroit Symphony and the Florida Orchestra in Tampa Bay, and associate conductor of the Richmond Symphony. He has also served on the music faculties of North Park University in Chicago, the University of Tennessee in Chattanooga, and Virginia Commonwealth University in Richmond. He made his Philadelphia Orchestra debut in 2003 at the Marian Anderson Award Gala and his subscription debut in 2006.

Following his highly successful first season with the Boston Symphony, the *Boston Globe* named Mr. Wilkins among the "Best People and Ideas of 2011." His awards include the Outstanding Artist award at the Nebraska Governor's Arts Awards for his significant contribution to music in the state (2014); the Leonard Bernstein Lifetime Achievement Award for the Elevation of Music in Society conferred by Boston's Longy School of Music (2018); and the Virginia Symphony's Dreamer Award (2019). In 2022 the Omaha Entertainment and Arts Awards presented him with its Lifetime Achievement Award for Music, the Boston Conservatory awarded him an honorary Doctor of Arts, and he was the recipient of the League of American Orchestras's Gold Baton Award. His commitment to community has been demonstrated by his participation on several boards, including the Greater Omaha Chamber of Commerce, the Charles Drew Health Center in Omaha, and the Center Against Spouse Abuse in Tampa Bay. He serves as chairman of the board for the Raymond James Charitable Endowment Fund and as national ambassador for the non-profit World Pediatric Project headquartered in Richmond, Virginia, which provides children throughout Central America and the Caribbean with critical surgical and diagnostic care.

A native of Norfolk, Virginia, Mr. Wilkins is a graduate of the Shenandoah Conservatory of Music in Winchester, Virginia, and the New England Conservatory of Music in Boston. He and his wife, Sheri-Lee, are the proud parents of twin daughters, Erica and Nicole.

# Speaker



**Charlotte Blake Alston** is an internationally acclaimed storyteller, narrator, and librettist. In July 2021 she was named The Philadelphia Orchestra's Imasogie Storyteller, Narrator, and Host. She has appeared as host and narrator on the Orchestra's School and Family concerts since 1991 and has been the host of Sound All Around, the Orchestra's preschool concert series, since 1994. She has also appeared on each of the Orchestra's Martin Luther King, Jr., Tribute Concerts since 2003.

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

Ms. Alston has produced several commissioned texts for orchestras and choirs including original narration for Saint-Saëns's *The Carnival of the Animals* and Rimsky-Korsakov's *Sheherazade*. Her honors include two honorary Ph.Ds, a Pew Fellowship in the Arts, and the Circle of Excellence Award from the National Storytelling Association. She is the recipient of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania's Artist of the Year Award and the Zora Neale Hurston Award, the highest award bestowed by the National Association of Black Storytellers. In 2023 she received the Distinguished Artist Award at the New Jersey Governor's Awards for Excellence in the Arts in Education.

# Soloist

Priscilla Prade



Baritone **Paulo Szot** has garnered international acclaim as both an opera singer and an actor. Born in São Paulo to Polish immigrants, he has appeared with most major opera companies throughout the world. In 2008 he won the Tony Award for Best Actor in a Musical for his portrayal of Emile de Beque in the Broadway revival of *South Pacific* at Lincoln Center Theater. He made his Philadelphia Orchestra debut in June 2023 at the annual Pride Concert.

Highlights of Mr. Szot's past seasons include concerts in Warsaw and St. Louis, and at Lincoln Center and 54 Below in New York City. He has appeared in concert at Arizona Opera and with the Puerto Rico and Barcelona symphonies. At the Ravinia Festival he has performed Mahler's Symphony No. 8 and Bernstein's *Trouble in Tahiti*. He has sung Bernstein's MASS with the Chicago Symphony at the Ravinia Festival and with the National Youth Orchestra of Great Britain at the Royal Festival Hall in London, conducted by Marin Alsop. Recent opera credits include a return to the Metropolitan Opera as Sharpless in Puccini's *Madame Butterfly*; Frank Mourant in Weill's *Street Scene* with Monte Carlo Opera and at the Teatro Real in Madrid; Count Danilo in Lehár's *The Merry Widow* at the Teatro dell'Opera in Rome; Escamillo in Bizet's *Carmen* at the Bavarian State Opera in Munich; Don Alfonso in Mozart's *Così fan tutte* at the Opéra national de Paris; Lescaut in Puccini's *Manon Lescaut* at the Theatro Municipal de São Paulo; and Dr. Falke in Strauss's *Die Fledermaus* at the Met. He created the roles of Alexander Hamilton, Bill Clinton, and Dick Cheney in the world premiere of Mohammed Fairouz's *The New Prince* at Dutch National Opera. Additional highlights include Juan Perón in Opera Australia's production of *Evita*; a solo recital at Madrid's Teatro Real as a salute to Frank Sinatra's recordings of Antonio Carlos Jobim's bossa novas; and a performance at the New York Philharmonic's nationally televised New Year's Eve gala with Alan Gilbert and Joyce DiDonato.

Mr. Szot began his musical training at age five, first studying piano and later adding violin and dance. He studied at Jagiellonian University in Poland, the country from which his parents had emigrated following World War II. He began singing professionally in 1990 with the Polish National Song & Dance Ensemble Slask, and he made his operatic debut in Rossini's *The Barber of Seville* at the Teatro Municipal de São Paulo. In addition to the Tony Award, he won the Drama Desk, Outer Critic's Circle, and Theater World awards in 2008 for his portrayal of Emile de Beque in *South Pacific*, becoming the first Brazilian actor to receive such honors.



The  
Philadelphia  
Orchestra

Yannick Nézet-Séguin Music Director

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Photo: Jeff Fusco

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We want you to enjoy each and every concert experience you share with us. We would love to hear about your experience at the Orchestra and it would be our pleasure to answer any questions you may have.

Please don't hesitate to contact us via phone at 215.893.1999, in person in the lobby, or online at [philorch.org/ContactPatronServices](http://philorch.org/ContactPatronServices).

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**Ticket Office:**  
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The Academy of Music  
Broad and Locust Streets  
Philadelphia, PA 19102  
Tickets: 215.893.1999

**Concert dates (two hours before concert time and through intermission):**  
The Kimmel Center  
Broad and Spruce Streets  
Philadelphia, PA 19102

**Web Site:** For information about The Philadelphia Orchestra and its upcoming concerts or events, please visit [philorch.org](http://philorch.org).

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**Subscriptions:** The Philadelphia Orchestra offers a variety of subscription options each season. These multi-concert packages feature the best available seats, ticket exchange privileges, discounts on individual tickets, and many other benefits. Learn more at [philorch.org](http://philorch.org).

**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.

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