

2022–2023 | 123rd Season

The Philadelphia Orchestra

Thursday, February 2, at 7:30

Friday, February 3, at 2:00

Yannick Nézet-Séguin Conductor

Tony Siqi Yun Piano

Schumann Piano Concerto in A minor, Op. 54

I. Allegro affettuoso

II. Intermezzo: Andantino grazioso—

III. Allegro vivace

Intermission

Dawson *Negro Folk Symphony*

I. The Bond of Africa

II. Hope in the Night

III. O Le' Me Shine, Shine Like a Morning Star!

This program runs approximately 1 hour, 40 minutes.

These concerts are sponsored by **David Haas**.

The February 3 concert is also sponsored by **Alexandra Edsall and Robert Victor**.

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**The
Philadelphia
Orchestra**

Yannick Nézet-Séguin Music Director

Photos: Pete Checchia, Julia Wesely, Nigel Parry



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 Play!N's; 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.

Music Director

George Etheredge



Yannick Nézet-Séguin is currently in his 11th season as music director of The Philadelphia Orchestra. Additionally, he became the third music director of New York's Metropolitan Opera in 2018. Yannick, who holds the Walter and Leonore Annenberg Chair, is an inspired leader of The Philadelphia Orchestra. His intensely collaborative style, deeply rooted musical curiosity, and boundless enthusiasm have been heralded by critics and audiences alike. The *New York Times* has called him "phenomenal," adding that "the ensemble, famous for its glowing strings and homogenous richness, has never sounded better."

Yannick has established himself as a musical leader of the highest caliber and one of the most thrilling talents of his generation. He has been artistic director and principal conductor of Montreal's Orchestre Métropolitain since 2000, and in 2017 he became an honorary member of the Chamber Orchestra of Europe. He was music director of the Rotterdam Philharmonic from 2008 to 2018 (he is now honorary conductor) and was principal guest conductor of the London Philharmonic from 2008 to 2014. He has made wildly successful appearances with the world's most revered ensembles and at many of the leading opera houses.

Yannick signed an exclusive recording contract with Deutsche Grammophon (DG) in 2018. Under his leadership The Philadelphia Orchestra returned to recording with 12 releases on that label, including *Florence Price Symphonies Nos. 1 & 3*, which won a GRAMMY Award for Best Orchestral Performance. His upcoming recordings will include projects with The Philadelphia Orchestra, the Metropolitan Opera, the Chamber Orchestra of Europe, and the Orchestre Métropolitain, with which he will also continue to record for ATMA Classique. Additionally, he has recorded with the Rotterdam Philharmonic on DG, EMI Classics, and BIS Records, and the London Philharmonic for the LPO label.

A native of Montreal, Yannick studied piano, conducting, composition, and chamber music at Montreal's Conservatory of Music and continued his studies with renowned conductor Carlo Maria Giulini; he also studied choral conducting with Joseph Flummerfelt at Westminster Choir College. Among Yannick's honors are an appointment as Companion of the Order of Canada; Companion to the Order of Arts and Letters of Quebec; an Officer of the Order of Quebec; an Officer of the Order of Montreal; an Officier de l'Ordre des Arts et des Lettres; *Musical America's* 2016 Artist of the Year; ECHO Klassik's 2014 Conductor of the Year; a Royal Philharmonic Society Award; Canada's National Arts Centre Award; the Prix Denise-Pelletier; the Oskar Morawetz Award; and honorary doctorates from the University of Quebec, the Curtis Institute of Music, Westminster Choir College of Rider University, McGill University, the University of Montreal, the University of Pennsylvania, and Laval University.

To read Yannick's full bio, please visit philorch.org/conductor.

Soloist



Canadian-born pianist **Tony Siqi Yun** makes his Philadelphia Orchestra subscription debut with these performances. He first performed with Yannick Nézet-Séguin and the Orchestra in the final round of the inaugural China International Music Competition in 2019, where he went on to win First Prize and a Gold Medal performing Tchaikovsky's Piano Concerto No. 1. Other recent concerto performances have included the Tchaikovsky First with the Cleveland Orchestra,

the Clara Wieck-Schumann with the Toronto Symphony and the Orchestre Métropolitain in Montreal, and Beethoven's First with the Chamber Orchestra of Paris, which he conducted from the keyboard.

Mr. Yun regularly performs solo recitals in both Europe and North America. Recent and future highlights include his debuts at the Hamburg Elbphilharmonie, the Gewandhaus in Leipzig, and in Düsseldorf and Luxembourg. His recitals in North America include with the Vancouver Recital Society and the Gilmore Rising Stars Series. At the 2022 Kissinger Piano Olympics, which is associated with the Kissinger Summer music festival in Bad Kissingen, Germany, he was awarded two prizes.

Mr. Yun has a long-standing relationship with the China Philharmonic, with which he has toured and also appeared as soloist on the 2019 CCT New Year's Gala Concert. He has also performed with the Shanghai Symphony.

Mr. Yun is a recipient of the Jerome L. Greene Fellowship at the Juilliard School where he studies with Yoheved Kaplinsky and Matti Raekallio.



The
Philadelphia
Orchestra

Yannick Nézet-Séguin Music Director

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Framing the Program

Parallel Events

1841

Schumann

Piano
Concerto

Music

Rossini
Stabat Mater

Literature

Browning
Pippa Passes

Art

Courbet
*The Forest in
Autumn*

History

Braid discovers
hypnosis

1934

Dawson

*Negro Folk
Symphony*

Music

Rachmaninoff
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a Theme of
Paganini

Literature

Graves
I Claudius

Art

Dali
Cousine

History

Lindbergh
baby
kidnapped

Robert Schumann made several attempts in his late teens to write a piano concerto but kept getting sidetracked by other projects. In 1841 he composed a one-movement *Phantasie* for piano and orchestra. He had recently married the brilliant piano virtuoso Clara Wieck, who urged him to expand the piece to a full three-movement concerto. She premiered the Piano Concerto in A minor in 1845 and said of the work, it "must give the greatest pleasure to those who hear it. The piano is most skillfully interwoven with the orchestra. It is impossible to think of the one without the other."

In 1934 Leopold Stokowski and The Philadelphia Orchestra gave the world premiere of the *Negro Folk Symphony* by the 35-year-old Black composer William Dawson. The four performances in Philadelphia and New York were critically acclaimed and enormously successful with audiences. Dawson drew from spirituals as the melodic basis for his three-movement Symphony, each of which carries a title: "The Bond of Africa," "Hope in the Night," and "O Le' Me Shine, Shine Like a Morning Star!"

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

Robert Schumann

Born in Zwickau, Saxony, June 8, 1810

Died in Eendenich (near Bonn), July 29, 1856



Robert Schumann's varied musical life and legacy evolved in stages. He initially aspired to be a great virtuoso pianist, then won much of his lifetime fame as a brilliant music critic. Posterity best remembers him as one of the great Romantic composers.

It was in pursuit of keyboard renown that in the summer of 1828 the teenage Schumann sought out Friedrich Wieck, one of the preeminent piano instructors of the day. Schumann was a law student at the time but ever more drawn to a career in music. What at first seemed like a promising path forward as a performer was thwarted, however, by an injury to the middle finger of his right hand. The causes are unclear, although it may have been his use while practicing of a mechanical contraption to strengthen the independence of the fingers. Schumann shifted his energies toward composing and writing music criticism. In 1834 he helped to found the *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik* (The New Journal of Music), which became one of the most influential publications of the century.

In 1830 his teacher invited Schumann to live with his family, which allowed closer contact with his daughter, and star student, Clara. While at first Robert played the role of unofficial older brother to the nine-year-younger pianist, the two fell in love and the rest is history: one of the great romances and partnerships in music. During their years together, until mental illness incapacitated him, Clara was the more famous musician of the couple. She was also Robert's muse, encouraged his composing, and was the preeminent performer of his works. At the same time, she raised their eight children and was often touring and teaching.

Toward a New Kind of Piano Concerto Between 1827 and 1831 Schumann made several fitful starts at writing a piano concerto, the genre that he hoped would showcase his gifts both as a pianist and composer. That strategy had worked for Mozart and Beethoven, as well as for leading (if now forgotten) contemporaries such as Johann Nepomuk Hummel, Friedrich Kalkbrenner, and Henri Herz. We can follow his ideals for the genre from the music criticism he published in the 1830s, especially as they changed when it became clear that his performing career was doomed and his compositional ambitions grew. He increasingly

looked down on virtuoso trivialities and aimed for greater compositional integrity within large-scale concerto form.

In an article from 1839 Schumann commented that many fewer piano concertos were being composed in comparison with earlier in the century. One work he took understandable interest in, and helped to give birth to, was by Clara, her Op. 7, which The Philadelphia Orchestra performed earlier this season. She began writing this ambitious piece at age 14 and premiered it in 1835 with Felix Mendelssohn conducting the Leipzig Gewandhaus Orchestra. Robert orchestrated the final movement for her, and perhaps some of the first. (The second is for piano and cello alone.)

As a composer, Robert would become intensely preoccupied writing certain kinds of music and concentrate, sometimes for years at a time, on little else. Piano compositions dominated the 1830s and account for all his first two dozen published opuses. (1840, the year he married Clara, was his "Year of Song," 1841 the symphonic one, and 1842 was devoted to chamber works.) Shortly before their marriage, Clara wrote in her diary that her "highest wish is that Robert should compose for orchestra. *That* is his field! May I succeed in bringing him to it. His imagination cannot find sufficient scope on the piano."

In 1839 Robert attempted to write a piece that he called "something in between a symphony, concerto, and large sonata." The project was never finished but it influenced his next venture, a single-movement *Phantasie* in May 1841, which he described as a "piano concerto with a form of its own." Clara played private rehearsals of the piece that summer at the Gewandhaus, which led to some revisions but still no prospects for public performance or publication. Thus started the complicated genesis for the Concerto in A minor that we hear on the concert today. Four years later Schumann decided to expand the *Phantasie*, first adding a finale that he titled "Rondo." Next came a slow middle movement, completed in July 1845. In December Clara played the premiere in Dresden conducted by Ferdinand Hiller, to whom the Concerto is dedicated. Reviews praised both the work and her exemplary playing, which led to its publication as Op. 54. She performed the work more than 100 times over the course of her career, establishing it as one of the preeminent Romantic piano concertos.

A Closer Look The Classical piano concerto typically begins with a long orchestral introduction before the soloist utters a word—that is, plays an independent note. Beethoven mixed this up in his Fourth Concerto, which opens with solo piano (briefly, then remains silent for a few minutes), and his Fifth, in which the pianist soon enters with a dazzling cadenza. After a bold full orchestral chord, Schumann has the pianist storm in and never much recede. The Concerto will be a true partnership between soloist and orchestra. In an earlier article about concertos, Schumann had written that he hoped someday "a genius will show us in a new and brilliant way how to combine the orchestra with the piano such that pianists, taking



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Your Philadelphia Orchestra is more than music on the stage ... we are a community connected through music. Together with Philadelphia partners and thinkers from far and wide, programs like HearTOGETHER and Our City, Your Orchestra share stories that inspire, connect, challenge, and unite us through the power of music.

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Photos: Jeff Fusco, Bowie Verschuuren



HEAR
TOGETHER



the lead, can display the riches of their instrument while the orchestra is allowed to act as more than a mere bystander." He follows his own advice and becomes that genius. It would influence many concertos to follow.

After the passionate first movement (**Allegro affettuoso**), the slower Intermezzo (**Andantino grazioso**) provides a lyrical respite. We know that Schumann struggled over the uninterrupted transition to the finale (**Allegro vivace**), but he succeeded brilliantly to set up a thrilling dance-like conclusion to the Concerto.

—Christopher H. Gibbs

Schumann composed his Piano Concerto from 1841 to 1845.

Raoul Pugno, the French composer, pianist, and friend of Debussy and Franck, was soloist in the first Philadelphia Orchestra performances of the Schumann Concerto, in January 1903; Fritz Scheel conducted. The most recent subscription performances by the Orchestra were in April 2019 with pianist Jonathan Biss and Yannick Nézet-Séguin.

The Philadelphia Orchestra recorded Schumann's Piano Concerto in 1956 and 1964, both for CBS and both with Rudolf Serkin and Eugene Ormandy.

In addition to the solo piano, Schumann scored the work for two flutes, two oboes, two clarinets, two bassoons, two horns, two trumpets, timpani, and strings.

The Concerto runs approximately 30 minutes in performance.

The Music

Negro Folk Symphony

William Levi Dawson

Born in Anniston, Alabama, September 26, 1899

Died in Tuskegee, Alabama, May 2, 1990



In the early 1930s three Black composers came to prominence with remarkable symphonies. When Howard Hanson conducted the premiere of William Grant Still's Symphony No. 1 ("Afro-American") in 1931 with the Rochester Philharmonic it was the first time a leading American orchestra had programmed a symphony by a Black composer. (Six years later Leopold Stokowski and The Philadelphia Orchestra premiered Still's Second Symphony, "Song of a New

Race.") In 1933 Friedrich Stock and the Chicago Symphony Orchestra unveiled Florence Price's Symphony No. 1, the first such work written by a Black woman performed by a major orchestra. And then, in November 1934, Stokowski and the Philadelphians gave, to glowing reviews, the premiere of the work we hear today, William Dawson's *Negro Folk Symphony*.

While Still's First Symphony remained on the margins of the repertory, those by Price and Dawson have only more recently been rediscovered, with The Philadelphia Orchestra playing a particularly prominent role in the promotion of the former, including a recent GRAMMY Award for its recording of her Symphonies Nos. 1 and 3.

From Spirituals to Symphony William Dawson was born in Anniston, Alabama, and built a distinguished career not only as a composer but also as an instrumentalist, choral conductor, arranger, and educator. He described his path to writing the *Negro Folk Symphony* in an extensive program note that he provided when the Philadelphians gave its world premiere. He tells of "at age thirteen running away from home to enter Tuskegee Institute," arriving without the means to pay, but winning support from its principal, Booker T. Washington, to work on a farm and to study. It was then that he began to learn a wide variety of orchestral instruments, piano, and music theory, and to travel with the celebrated Tuskegee Choir around the country. He continued his education in Kansas and Chicago.

Dawson composed the Symphony over a period of some five years beginning in the late 1920s. It was while on tour in New York performing at Radio City Music Hall with the Tuskegee Choir that a friend of Dawson's gave the manuscript of the work to Stokowski, who recognized its worth, suggested some revisions,

and agreed to give the premiere. In advance of that event, Dawson told a Philadelphia newspaper that the Symphony was

an attempt to develop Negro music, something they said again and again could not be developed. ... I have never doubted the possibilities of our music, for I feel that buried in the South is music that somebody, some day, will discover. They will make another great music out of the folksongs of the South. I feel from the bottom of my heart that it will rank one day with the music of Brahms and the Russian composers.

Stokowski informed the press he was looking forward to the performances: "Dawson has succeeded in portraying that aspect of American life which he has seen and lived and felt most profoundly. It is a work which is both vital and personal. He has voiced the spirit of his people struggling in a new land; the ancient voice of Africa transferred to America." Stokowski led four performances in Philadelphia and at Carnegie Hall, one of which was broadcast on the radio, before enthusiastic audiences, calling Dawson back to the stage repeatedly, and winning critical praise. Dawson revised the Symphony in 1952 after a trip to West Africa where he was fascinated by complex rhythmic practices he encountered. Stokowski recorded the work in 1963 with the American Symphony Orchestra.

A Closer Look In his program note Dawson writes that the three-movement Symphony

is based entirely upon Negro folk-music. The themes are taken from what are popularly known as Negro spirituals, and the practiced ear will recognize the recurrence of characteristic themes throughout the composition. This folk-music springs spontaneously from the life of the Negro people as freely today as at any time in the past, though the modes and forms of the present day are sometimes vastly different from the older creations. In this composition the composer has employed three themes taken from typical melodies over which he has brooded since childhood, having learned them at his mother's knee.

Dawson gave each movement a title. The first, **"The Bond of Africa"** (Adagio—Allegro con brio), begins with a slow introduction in which the French horn sounds the "Leading Motive" that unites the entire Symphony. He calls this the "link [that] was taken out of a human chain when the first African was taken from the shores of his native land and sent to slavery." There are two principal themes in the sonata-form movement, the first given by the horn and the second by the oboe, drawn from the spiritual "Oh, My Little Soul's Goin' to Shine."

The second movement is **"Hope in the Night"** (Andante). Over muted strings and harp, three soft gong strokes, which Dawson meant "to suggest the Trinity, who guides forever the destiny of man," open the movement and lead to the first

theme. Dawson states the walking pace conveys “the hum-drum life of a people whose bodies were baked by the sun and lashed with the whip for two hundred and fifty years; whose lives were proscribed before they were born. The English horn sings a melody that describes the characteristics, hopes, and longings of a Folk held in darkness.” A faster, scherzo-like middle part depicts “the children, unmindful of the heavy cadences of despair, sing and play; but even in their world of innocence, there is a little wail, a brief note of sorrow.” Solo instruments, preeminently the cello, usher the return of the opening Andante now as a horn and flute duet.

The lively finale, **“O Le’ Me Shine, Shine Like a Morning Star”** (Allegro con brio), calls upon two spirituals: the title one and “Hallelujah, Lord, I Been Down to the Sea.”

—Christopher H. Gibbs

Dawson composed the Negro Folk Symphony from 1929 to 1934 and revised it in 1952.

The Philadelphia Orchestra and Leopold Stokowski gave the world premiere of the work on a Youth Concert on November 14, 1934. It was repeated on subscription concerts in Philadelphia on the 16th and 17th and at Carnegie Hall in New York on the 20th. The Orchestra’s only other performance of the complete work was on its 1998 Martin Luther King, Jr., Tribute Concert, led by André Raphael Smith. The third movement only was also heard on the 2005 Tribute Concert, led by Raymond Harvey, and on the 2008 Tribute Concert, led by Thomas Wilkins.

The score calls for piccolo, two flutes, two oboes, English horn, two clarinets, E-flat clarinet, bass clarinet, two bassoons, contrabassoon, four horns, three trumpets, three trombones, tuba, timpani, percussion (adawura [African claves], bass drum, chimes, cymbals, gong, side drum, tenor drum, triangle, xylophone), harp, and strings.

Performance time is approximately 36 minutes.

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

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

Fantasy: A composition free in form and more or less fantastic in character

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

Intermezzo: A) A short movement connecting the main divisions of a symphony. B) The name given to an independent piece, often solo piano, that is predominantly lyrical in character.

Legato: Smooth, even, without any break between notes

Meter: The symmetrical grouping of musical rhythms

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.

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 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.

Timbre: Tone color or tone quality

THE SPEED OF MUSIC (Tempo)

Adagio: Leisurely, slow

Affettuoso: Tenderly, with feeling

Allegretto: A tempo between walking speed and fast

Allegro: Bright, fast

Andante: Walking speed

Andantino: Slightly quicker than walking speed

Con brio: Vigorously, with fire

Grazioso: Graceful and easy

Scherzando: Playfully

Vivace: Lively

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Yannick Nézet-Séguin Music Director

Photo: Jeff Fusco

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