

The Philadelphia Orchestra

Yannick Nézet-Séguin Music Director

SEASON 2020-2021



Our  
World

Jessica Griffin

Michelle Cann  
Plays  
Florence Price

February 18, 2021

# The Philadelphia Orchestra

Thursday, February 18, at 8:00  
On the Digital Stage

**Yannick Nézet-Séguin** Conductor  
**Michelle Cann** Piano

**Rossini** Overture to *La scala di seta*

**Price** Piano Concerto in One Movement  
*First Philadelphia Orchestra performance*

**Schubert** Symphony No. 4 in C minor, D. 417 ("Tragic")  
I. Adagio molto—Allegro vivace  
II. Andante  
III. Menuetto: Allegro vivace  
IV. Allegro

This program runs approximately 1 hour and will be performed without an intermission.

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

Yannick Nézet-Séguin Music Director

Our  
World

# NOW

Lead support for the Digital Stage is provided by:

Claudia and Richard Balderston

Elaine W. Camarda and A. Morris Williams, Jr.

The CHG Charitable Trust

The Horace W. Goldsmith Foundation

Innisfree Foundation

Gretchen and M. Roy Jackson

Neal W. Krouse

John H. McFadden and Lisa D. Kabnick

The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation

Leslie A. Miller and Richard B. Worley

Ralph W. Muller and Beth B. Johnston

William Penn Foundation

Peter and Mari Shaw

Dr. and Mrs. Joseph B. Townsend

Waterman Trust

Constance and Sankey Williams

Wyncote Foundation

# The Philadelphia Orchestra

**Yannick Nézet-Séguin**

Music Director

*Walter and Leonore Annenberg Chair*

**Nathalie Stutzmann**

Principal Guest Conductor Designate

**Gabriela Lena Frank**

Composer-in-Residence

**Erina Yashima**

Assistant Conductor

**Lina Gonzalez-Granados**

Conducting Fellow

**Frederick R. Haas**

Artistic Advisor

Fred J. Cooper Memorial Organ Experience

## First Violins

David Kim, Concertmaster

Juliette Kang, First Associate  
Concertmaster

*Joseph and Marie Field Chair*

Marc Rovetti, Assistant Concertmaster

Barbara Govatos

*Robert E. Mortensen Chair*

Jonathan Beiler

Hirono Oka

Richard Amoroso

*Robert and Lynne Pollack Chair*

Yayoi Numazawa

Jason DePue

*Larry A. Grika Chair*

Jennifer Haas

Miyo Curnow

Elina Kalendarova

Daniel Han

Julia Li

William Polk

Mei Ching Huang

## Second Violins

Kimberly Fisher, Principal

*Peter A. Benoliel Chair*

Paul Roby, Associate Principal

*Sandra and David Marshall Chair*

Dara Morales, Assistant Principal

*Anne M. Buxton Chair*

Philip Kates

Davyd Booth

Paul Arnold

*Joseph Brodo Chair, given by Peter A. Benoliel*

Dmitri Levin

Boris Balter

Amy Oshiro-Morales

Yu-Ting Chen

Jeoung-Yin Kim

Christine Lim

## Violas

Choong-Jin Chang, Principal

*Ruth and A. Morris Williams Chair*

Kirsten Johnson, Associate Principal

Kerri Ryan, Assistant Principal

Judy Geist

Renard Edwards

Anna Marie Ahn Petersen

*Piasecki Family Chair*

David Nicastro

Burchard Tang

Che-Hung Chen

Rachel Ku

Marvin Moon

Meng Wang

## Cellos

Hai-Ye Ni, Principal

Priscilla Lee, Associate Principal

Yumi Kendall, Assistant Principal

Richard Harlow

Gloria dePasquale

*Orton P. and Noël S. Jackson Chair*

Kathryn Picht Read

Robert Cafaro

*Volunteer Committees Chair*

Ohad Bar-David

John Koen

Derek Barnes

Alex Veltman

## Basses

Harold Robinson, Principal  
*Carole and Emilio Gravagno Chair*

Joseph Conyers, Acting Associate  
Principal  
*Tobey and Mark Dichter Chair*

Nathaniel West, Acting Assistant Principal

David Fay

Duane Rosengard

*Some members of the string sections voluntarily  
rotate seating on a periodic basis.*

## Flutes

Jeffrey Khaner, Principal  
*Paul and Barbara Henkels Chair*

Patrick Williams, Associate Principal  
*Rachelle and Ronald Kaiserman Chair*

Olivia Staton

Erica Peel, Piccolo

## Oboes

Philippe Tondre, Principal  
*Samuel S. Fels Chair*

Peter Smith, Associate Principal

Jonathan Blumenfeld  
*Edwin Tuttle Chair*

Elizabeth Starr Masoudnia,  
English Horn  
*Joanne T. Greenspun Chair*

## Clarinets

Ricardo Morales, Principal  
*Leslie Miller and Richard Worley Chair*

Samuel Caviezel, Associate Principal  
*Sarah and Frank Coulson Chair*

Socrates Villegas

Paul R. Demers, Bass Clarinet  
*Peter M. Joseph and Susan Rittenhouse  
Joseph Chair*

## Bassoons

Daniel Matsukawa, Principal  
*Richard M. Klein Chair*

Mark Gigliotti, Co-Principal

Angela Anderson Smith

Holly Blake, Contrabassoon

## Horns

Jennifer Montone, Principal  
*Gray Charitable Trust Chair*

Jeffrey Lang, Associate Principal  
*Hannah L. and J. Welles Henderson Chair*

Christopher Dwyer

Jeffrey Kirschen

Ernesto Tovar Torres

Shelley Showers

## Trumpets

David Bilger, Principal  
*Marguerite and Gerry Lenfest Chair*

Jeffrey Curnow, Associate Principal  
*Gary and Ruthanne Schlarbaum Chair*

Anthony Prisk

## Trombones

Nitzan Haroz, Principal  
*Neubauer Family Foundation Chair*

Matthew Vaughn, Co-Principal

Blair Bollinger, Bass Trombone  
*Drs. Bong and Mi Wha Lee Chair*

## Tuba

Carol Jantsch, Principal  
*Lyn and George M. Ross Chair*

## Timpani

Don S. Liuzzi, Principal  
*Dwight V. Dowley Chair*

Angela Zator Nelson, Associate Principal

## Percussion

Christopher Deviney, Principal

Angela Zator Nelson

## Piano and Celesta

Kiyoko Takeuti

## Keyboards

Davyd Booth

## Harp

Elizabeth Hainen, Principal

## Librarians

Nicole Jordan, Principal

Steven K. Glanzmann

## Stage Personnel

James J. Sweeney, Jr., Manager

Dennis Moore, Jr.



Jessica Griffin

The Philadelphia Orchestra is one of the world's preeminent orchestras. It 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 educational initiatives, and an ongoing commitment to the communities that it serves, the ensemble is on a path to create an expansive future for classical music, and to further the place of the arts in an open and democratic society.

Yannick Nézet-Séguin is now in his ninth 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, from Verizon Hall to community centers, the Mann Center to Penn's Landing, classrooms to hospitals, and over the airwaves and online. The Orchestra continues to discover new and inventive ways to nurture its relationship with loyal patrons.

In March 2020, in response to the cancellation of concerts due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Orchestra launched the Virtual Philadelphia Orchestra, a portal hosting video and audio of performances, free, on its website and social media platforms. In September 2020 the Orchestra announced Our World NOW, its reimagined season of concerts filmed without audiences and presented on its Digital Stage. Our World NOW also includes free offerings: HearTOGETHER, a podcast series on racial and social justice; educational activities; and Our City, Your Orchestra, small ensemble performances from locations throughout the Philadelphia region.

The Philadelphia Orchestra continues the tradition of educational and community engagement for listeners of all ages. It launched its **HEAR** initiative in 2016 to become a major force for good in every community that it serves. **HEAR** is a portfolio of integrated initiatives that promotes **H**health, champions music **E**ducation, enables broad **A**ccess to Orchestra performances, and maximizes impact through **R**esearch. The Orchestra's award-winning education and community initiatives engage over 50,000 students, families, and community members through programs such as PlayINs, side-by-sides, PopUP concerts, Free Neighborhood Concerts, School Concerts, sensory-friendly 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. It performs annually at Carnegie Hall, the Saratoga Performing Arts Center, and the Bravo! Vail Music Festival. The Orchestra also has a rich history of touring, having first performed outside Philadelphia in the earliest days of its founding. It was the first American orchestra to perform in the People's Republic of China in 1973, launching a now-five-decade commitment of people-to-people exchange.

The Orchestra also makes live recordings available on popular digital music services and as part of the Orchestra on Demand section of its website. Under Yannick's leadership, the Orchestra returned to recording, with eight celebrated CDs on the prestigious Deutsche Grammophon label. The Orchestra also reaches thousands of radio listeners with weekly broadcasts on WRTI-FM and SiriusXM.

For more information, please visit [philorch.org](http://philorch.org).



Jessica Griffin

Music Director **Yannick Nézet-Séguin** will lead The Philadelphia Orchestra through at least the 2025–26 season, a significant long-term commitment. 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 in 2018. Under his leadership The Philadelphia Orchestra returned to recording with eight CDs on that label. His upcoming recordings will include projects with the Philadelphians, the Metropolitan Opera, the Chamber Orchestra of Europe, and the Orchestre Métropolitain, with which he will also continue to record for ATMA Classique.

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; an Officer of the Order of Montreal; *Musical America's* 2016 Artist of the Year; 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, and the University of Pennsylvania.





Pianist **Michelle Cann**, who is making her Philadelphia Orchestra debut, is an accomplished soloist and educator. She made her orchestral debut at age 14 and has since performed with such ensembles as the Florida Orchestra; the New Jersey, Memphis, Knoxville, and Cleveland Institute of Music symphonies; and the Pennsylvania Philharmonic. She has also played with members of the Los Angeles Philharmonic at the Walt Disney Concert Hall and the Barbican Centre in London. She regularly appears in recital and as a chamber musician throughout the United States, China, and South Korea. In 2016 Ms. Cann gave the New York premiere of Florence Price's Piano Concerto in One Movement with the Dream Unfinished, an organization whose purpose is to bring to the forefront those female and minority composers too long lingering in the background of American music. Recently she performed a chamber recital with members of the Cincinnati Symphony as its MAC Music Innovator.

Hailing from a musical family in Avon Park, Florida, Ms. Cann began piano lessons at age seven, soon adding organ, steel drums, trombone, tuba, and violin. Her primary focus on the piano earned her top prizes in numerous competitions, including the International

Russian Music Piano Competition, the Blount-Slawson Young Artists Competition, and, most recently, the Wideman International Piano Competition. She received her bachelor and master degrees in piano performance from the Cleveland Institute of Music, where she studied with Paul Schenly and Daniel Shapiro, and an artist diploma from the Curtis Institute of Music in Philadelphia, where she studied with Robert McDonald. Currently, Ms. Cann holds the inaugural Eleanor Sokoloff Chair in piano studies at Curtis.

Ms. Cann is a leader in creating opportunities for music education in her community. During her time in Philadelphia, she has served as the choir director of two 30-member children's choruses in the El-Sistema-inspired program Play On Philly. She served as one of three inaugural fellows of the Curtis Institute's ArtistYear. Through that one-year fellowship, she worked with local community partners, such as City Year, Teach for America, and AmeriCorps, to bring the arts to local Philadelphia communities where arts education and access are unattainable.

Michelle Cann's performance is supported by **ONEcomposer**, an initiative dedicated to musicians whose contributions have been historically erased, housed at Cornell University. In providing a platform for the study, performance, and discussion of a single, underrepresented composer's life and legacy, **ONEcomposer** promotes a more complete understanding of musical histories.

During the first part of the 19th century Gioachino Rossini was the most popular and frequently performed composer in Europe. The brilliant overtures to his operas remain staples of the orchestral repertory as well as audience favorites. His first overture to achieve wide success was the sparkling one to *La scala di seta* (The Silken Ladder), which opens the concert.

The Philadelphia Orchestra recently gave its first complete performance of Florence Price's magnificent Symphony No. 1, which in 1933 was the first such work written by an African-American woman to be performed by a leading American orchestra. We now hear her Piano Concerto in One Movement. The full score of the piece was thought to have been lost and was reconstructed from various sources. In 2018, however, Price's original manuscript copy was discovered. On this concert the Philadelphians and soloist Michelle Cann present the first North American performance of the Concerto in its original orchestration since the composer's death in 1953, and possibly since the mid-1930s.

Among Rossini's many contemporaries who delighted in his music was the young Franz Schubert, who composed two "Overtures in the Italian Style," which is to say à la Rossini. Schubert was best known during his lifetime for intimate, small-scale works, particularly his hundreds of songs, but sought recognition for his larger dramatic and orchestral works. Although his symphonies were not performed in public during his lifetime, they were played by amateur and student orchestras—such as was the case with his Fourth Symphony, which he composed at age 19.

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.

**1812****Rossini***La scala di seta***Music**

Weber

Piano Concerto No. 2

**Literature**

The Brothers Grimm

*Grimm's Fairy Tales, Vol. 1***Art**

David

*The Emperor Napoleon in His Study at the Tuileries***History**

War of 1812 begins

**1816****Schubert**

Symphony No. 4

**Music**

Beethoven

Piano Sonata No. 28

**Literature**

Austen

*Emma***Art**

Goya

*The Duke of Osuna***History**

Argentina declared independent

**1934****Price**

Piano Concerto in One Movement

**Music**

Rachmaninoff

Rhapsody on a Theme of Paganini

**Literature**

Graves

*I Claudius***Art**

Dali

*Cousine***History**

Lindbergh baby kidnapped



## Overture to *La scala di seta*

### Gioachino Rossini

Born in Pesaro, Italy, February 29, 1792

Died in Passy, near Paris, November 13, 1868

Before Rossini began the brilliant series of successes for which we know him best—the tragedy *Tancredi* of 1813 and the comic operas *The Italian Girl in Algiers* (1813), *The Barber of Seville* (1816), and *The Thieving Magpie* (1817)—he had learned the art of aria, ensemble, and overture through a series of earlier works that culminated in *La scala di seta* (The Silken Ladder) of 1812. Based on a libretto by Giuseppe Maria Foppa (from an earlier French text for Pierre Gaveaux's 1808 opera *L'Échelle de soie*), the opera is a retelling of the popular theme of the "secret marriage," and the story's farcical tone inspired in Rossini a score filled with the playful effervescence that would later form the essence of his comic style.

### Last-Minute Inspiration

Rossini's overtures are among his most enduring works, despite his own tendency to belittle them. Late in life he described his formula for writing an overture: "Wait until the evening before opening night. Nothing primes inspiration more than necessity, whether it be the presence of a copyist waiting for your work, or the prodding of an impresario tearing his hair. In my time, all the impresarios in Italy were bald at 30." He went on to detail how each of his best-known overtures was written. That for *Count Ory* was written on a fishing trip "with my feet in the water, and in the company of Signor Agnado, who talked of Spanish finance." That for *The Thieving Magpie* was written on the day of the production's opening: "I was imprisoned by the director and under the surveillance of four stage-hands, who were instructed to throw the original text through the window, page by page, to the copyists waiting below to transcribe it. In the absence of pages, they were ordered to throw me out of the window."

Subsequent evaluations of Rossini and his music (such as Bernard

Shaw's characterization of him as the "greatest master of claptrap who ever lived") have often taken the composer's jocular self-criticism as a starting point, averting one's attention from the density and subtlety of this music. Rossini's contribution to the development of grand opera was critical; but more important, his irresistible comic idiom and fluid melodic style paved the way for the comic opera of modern times. With Rossini the opera overture takes on a new independence as well—to such an extent that his overtures are far more familiar today than the operas to which they are attached. It goes without saying that the craftsmanship and calculated wit in these pieces suggest considerably more care than the composer was willing to admit.

### A Closer Look

Giulia is the charge of Dormont, who wishes to marry her off to a wealthy army officer, Blansac. But secretly she has married the dashing Dorvil, and to subvert Dormont's matchmaking, she and Dorvil must get Blansac to fall in love with Giulia's cousin Lucilla. Through a series of intrigues and tricks—including a huge silken ladder that is used to escape—the scheme finally succeeds. Performed in May 1812 at Venice's Teatro San Moisè, *La scala di seta* signaled the presence of a composer of talent and unstoppable promise.

The Overture to *La scala di seta* is unusual in the straightforwardness with which it employs Classical sonata form: after a brief burst of opening energy and a moderately paced introduction, there are two clearly delineated themes (the first introduced by the violins and taken up by the oboe), a fully formed development section, and a direct recapitulation of the two themes. But Rossini doesn't miss the opportunity to inject elements that would later become salient features of his instrumental style, particularly the dizzily repetitive crescendo that enlivens the second theme.

—Paul J. Horsley

*Rossini composed La scala di seta in 1812.*

*William Smith conducted the first Philadelphia Orchestra performances of the Scala di seta Overture, in March 1957. Most recently on subscription, Wolfgang Sawallisch led the piece in January/February 1998.*

*The work is scored for one flute (doubling piccolo), two oboes, two clarinets, one bassoon, two horns, and strings.*

*Performance time is approximately six minutes.*



## Piano Concerto in One Movement

### Florence Price

Born in Little Rock, Arkansas, April 9, 1887

Died in Chicago, June 3, 1953

In early-20th-century America, orchestral music was largely regarded as the province of dead white men, a field in which a living Black woman had no apparent hope of gaining any foothold. This makes Florence Price's career all the more unlikely, and therefore more remarkable. Price faced the unrelenting double challenge of racism and gender bias her entire life. Nevertheless, she persisted and earned a crucial place in American music history that is still in the process of being fully recognized and celebrated.

### Hardships and Tremendous Successes

Price was born into an upper-middle-class mixed-race family in Arkansas. Her mother, a music teacher, provided her first musical training. Graduating at the top of her high school class, Price was accepted into the New England Conservatory of Music to study piano and organ, but won admittance only by "passing" as Mexican, in order to avoid the heightened racial bias against African Americans. After graduating in 1906, she taught at colleges in Arkansas and Georgia before moving to Chicago in 1927 to escape racially motivated violence and segregation. Once in Illinois, she continued her education with the leading music teachers in the Chicago area.

In 1932 Price's Symphony No. 1 in E minor won a Wanamaker Foundation Award and was performed the following year by the Chicago Symphony Orchestra—the first time a major orchestra had performed a work by a Black American woman. The conductor on that occasion was Frederick Stock—one of only a handful of conductors in America at the time willing to program Price's orchestral music. It was Stock who then encouraged her to write a piano concerto.

Price's Piano Concerto in One Movement was premiered in Chicago in 1934, with the composer as soloist and Stock conducting. It was dedicated to Helen Armstrong Andrews, Price's patron and friend. Other performances followed soon after, eliciting almost universal critical acclaim. One reviewer wrote in the *Pittsburgh Sun-Telegraph*, "There [in the Concerto] is real American music, and Mrs. Price is speaking a language she knows," acknowledging both the Concerto's technical assuredness and its musical roots in African-American tradition.

### **Lost Masterpieces**

After her death in 1953, Price and almost all her 300 compositions (including about 100 songs) faded into obscurity. Several decades later, scholars including Barbara Garvey Jackson, Helen Walker-Hill, and Rae Linda Brown started researching her career and music, and her compositions also gradually began to appear on concert programs again. A collection of Price's scores and papers were miraculously discovered in a derelict house outside St. Anne, Illinois, in 2009—it had been Price's summer home near the end of her life. Further fueled by this unexpected discovery, the simmering Price revival gathered momentum, and in 2018 the publishing house of G. Schirmer acquired the rights to her entire catalog.

In 2015 the Center for Black Music Research in Chicago commissioned Trevor Weston, a composition professor at Drew University, to reconstruct the orchestration of Price's Piano Concerto. Although the original orchestral score had been lost for several decades, some of the orchestral parts were discovered in the early 1990s, and Price had left a piano rehearsal score, plus a two-piano reduction of the Concerto, annotated with some of her ideas on orchestration. Weston reconstructed the missing orchestral parts, and his orchestration premiered in 2016.

Then, two years later, the original manuscript copy turned up unexpectedly at an auction in the same Illinois town, St. Anne, where so many of Price's other scores had been recently rediscovered. Schirmer quickly readied the publication of the Concerto's original orchestration, which was then released in 2020. This concert by The Philadelphia Orchestra with soloist Michelle Cann marks the first North American performance of the Concerto in its original orchestration at least since Price's death in 1953, and possibly since the mid-1930s.

### A Closer Look

As its name suggests, the Piano Concerto in One Movement is played without a break, but with three sections corresponding to the three traditional movements of a Classical piano concerto. A sparse introduction, presenting the first section's main theme, leads quickly into an extended piano cadenza. Then the theme—an original melody in which Price draws on the flavor of the spiritual—develops into a propulsive, energetic quasi-sonata form. The slower central section is a lyrical Adagio whose melody suggests the nostalgic, yearning quality of African-American "sorrow songs" such as "Sometimes I Feel Like a Motherless Child" or "Deep River." Call-and-response exchanges within the orchestra confirm the allusion.

Price believed the "juba"—a lively, syncopated plantation dance that predates the Civil War—was as essential to African-American music as the spiritual. She included a "juba" (although not always named as such in the score) in every one of her larger works. The final section in this Concerto is a rollicking, exultant "juba" whose lively rhythms clearly underscore how integral that dance form was to the development of ragtime.

—Luke Howard

*Florence Price composed her Piano Concerto in One Movement in 1934.*

*This is the first Philadelphia Orchestra performance of the work.*

*The piece is scored for solo piano, flute, oboe, two clarinets, bassoon, two horns, two trumpets, two trombones, timpani, percussion (bass drum, crash cymbal, snare drum, suspended cymbal), and strings.*

*The Concerto runs approximately 18 minutes in performance.*

## Symphony No. 4 ("Tragic")

### Franz Schubert

Born in Vienna, January 31, 1797

Died there, November 19, 1828



Myths about Schubert are so deeply ingrained in the popular consciousness that they are difficult to dislodge, especially because, like many myths, they register some realities. For nearly two centuries Schubert has been cast as a largely unrecognized genius (except for the support of loyal friends) who dashed off immortal songs but who less often succeeded when tackling larger forms. And indeed he did compose many works, especially smaller ones, at amazing speed. As a teenager he would write three, four, or more songs a day. Although his music was widely published, performed, and praised, this considerable exposure was generally limited to domestic genres, such as songs, dances, and keyboard music. Only near the end of his life did Schubert's remarkable piano sonatas and substantial chamber compositions begin to reach the larger public.

With some justification on either account, therefore, one can tell a happy story or a sad one. One can speak of a brilliant young composer whose career was on the rise, or of a pathetic genius who never received the full recognition he deserved before his untimely death. The first of the great Viennese composers actually born in the city, Schubert enjoyed the best musical education available, was a member of the Vienna Boys' Choir, studied with Antonio Salieri, and gradually found his music being championed by the leading performers of the day. A strong case to be made that despite the rather limited professional opportunities available to a young composer in Vienna during the 1820s, Schubert's career flourished and was clearly heading to new heights when he died at age 31, just 20 months after Beethoven.

### Youthful Symphonies

The fate of Schubert's symphonies needs to be considered in their historical context, lest the sad story prevail. None was performed

in public during his lifetime, which would seem quite discouraging except for the fact that these symphonies served exactly the purpose for which Schubert wrote them: to experiment and learn. Although the general public did not hear them, Schubert, his friends, and colleagues did—as they played them. He wrote these symphonies to be played (not performed) by small private orchestras at the school he attended or in middle-class homes.

The First Symphony dates from 1813, when Schubert was 16, and the next five followed at the rate of about one a year. He later disowned these initial efforts, as he did many early compositions. (Brahms, and many other composers, simply destroyed their early works and therefore there is no possibility of mistaking student for mature statements.) We can surmise Schubert's view of his early symphonies from one of his relatively rare surviving letters. Around 1823 he was asked to supply a work for performance, but responded that he had "nothing for full orchestra that [he] could send out into the world with a clear conscience." Yet by this point he had written all but his final "Great" C-major Symphony.

The same disavowal appears later in a letter Schubert wrote to a publisher. He mentions having composed "three operas, a Mass, and a symphony," as if all his earlier pieces in those genres did not exist or matter. In any case, Schubert never returned to his early symphonies or to the many unfinished ones (including the "Unfinished" in B minor), but rather moved on to the final C-major Symphony. The point needs emphasizing: For more than a century audiences have delighted in symphonies that the teenage Schubert composed to learn how to write really important symphonies. These youthful works are spontaneous and joyful, but they, unlike the songs or keyboard music from these same years that he so eagerly published, were not intended as imposing artistic statements for posterity.

### **The Genesis and Discovery of the "Tragic"**

Schubert wrote his Fourth Symphony in April 1816, apparently only later adding the title "Tragic" that appears in the manuscript in his own hand. While his earlier symphonies had been written for, and first performed by, the student orchestra at the boarding school he had attended, there are no surviving performance materials for the Fourth and therefore it is unclear whether it was played at the school or in the home of Otto Hatwig, a musician who ran what amounted to a community orchestra, comprised of professionals and amateurs. Schubert was a violist in the ensemble, which was

large enough to tackle works by Haydn, Mozart, and Beethoven, and which played Schubert's Fifth and Sixth symphonies.

The first known public performance of the Fourth Symphony took place long after Schubert died, occurring in Leipzig in 1849. Johann Herbeck conducted the second movement at a concert in Vienna in 1860; August Manns presented the Symphony in London's Crystal Palace in 1868. The second movement, for a long time the favorite in the Symphony, was published in 1871, and a piano arrangement of the whole work appeared around the same time. Nonetheless, the complete orchestral score, necessary for the work to enter the general repertory of orchestras around the world, only appeared in 1884, edited by Brahms, in the first collected edition of Schubert's compositions.

### A Closer Look

Although the title "Tragic" is Schubert's own, it has baffled commentators for generations. Does it refer to the nature of the C-minor opening to the first movement—that might be apt, but not for most of what follows. Symphonies in minor keys were relatively rare at the time. They are infrequent among Haydn's symphonies (except for a handful during his "Storm and Stress" period). Just two of Mozart's some 50 symphonies are in minor keys (G minor in both cases). Perhaps Schubert was being ironic with the title. In any case, although the first and last movements both begin in C minor, they end in C major. The model here, of course, is Beethoven's Fifth, another C-minor work. Indeed, Schubert's attraction to various C-minor compositions by the older master is apparent throughout.

The first movement begins with a mighty unison C-minor chord for the full orchestra (similar to the way Beethoven's *Coriolan* Overture—in C minor—opens). The mysterious slow introduction (**Adagio molto**) leads to a buoyant **Allegro vivace** theme presented first by the violins with lower string accompaniment. By the time the tuneful second theme appears, thoughts of anything tragic are gone. By the end things seem to have turned triumphant, and Schubert takes full advantage of the two trumpets and four horns (a surprisingly large number) for a brilliant C-major coda.

As in the movements that follow, Schubert uses traditional forms in fairly traditional ways, looking back to Mozart and Haydn, as well as to early Beethoven. The second movement **Andante**, the audience favorite in the 19th century, opens with the strings presenting a

Mozartian melody before the oboe joins in. Its simplicity shows an especially charming side of the youthful Schubert. The **Menuetto: Allegro vivace** approaches the speed and mood of a Beethovenian scherzo. Minuets are in triple meter, as indeed this one is, but at first it sounds as if it is in duple time. The more intimate middle Trio section, featuring flute, oboe, and clarinet, projects a more relaxed and danceable dance. The **Allegro** finale begins in an anxious C minor and has particularly dramatic and breathless themes. The second begins as a dialogue between violins and clarinets.

—Christopher H. Gibbs

*Schubert composed his Fourth Symphony in 1816.*

*Pierre Monteux was on the podium for the first Philadelphia Orchestra performances of the "Tragic" Symphony, in March 1928. It wasn't heard again until April 1962, when Eugene Ormandy conducted it in Philadelphia and Baltimore. The work has only been heard on five other occasions: in October 1970 with Lorin Maazel; in October 1974 with Claudio Abbado; in October 1988 with Riccardo Muti; in October 2003 with András Schiff; and, most recently, in 2006 with Neeme Järvi.*

*The Philadelphians recorded the Symphony for CBS in 1962 with Ormandy.*

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

*Schubert's Fourth Symphony runs approximately 30 minutes in performance.*

## 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

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

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

**D.:** Abbreviation for Deutsch, the chronological list of all the works of Schubert made by Otto Erich Deutsch

**Juba dance:** An African-American style of dance that involves stomping as well as slapping and patting the arms, legs, chest, and cheeks

**Meter:** The symmetrical grouping of musical rhythms

**Minuet:** A dance in triple time commonly used up to the beginning of the 19th century as the lightest movement of a symphony

**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.

**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.

**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.

**Storm and Stress (Sturm und Drang):** A movement throughout the arts that reached its highpoint in the 1770s, whose aims were to frighten, stun, or overcome with emotion

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

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

**Trio:** A division set between the first section of a minuet or scherzo and its repetition, and contrasting with it by a more tranquil movement and style

### THE SPEED OF MUSIC (Tempo)

**Adagio:** Leisurely, slow

**Allegro:** Bright, fast

**Andante:** Walking speed

**Vivace:** Lively

### TEMPO MODIFIERS

**Molto:** Very

### DYNAMIC MARKS

**Crescendo:** Increasing volume