

The Philadelphia Orchestra

Yannick Nézet-Séguin Music Director

SEASON 2020-2021



Our
World

Aaron Diehl Plays Rhapsody in Blue

Jessica Griffin

April 15, 2021

The Philadelphia Orchestra

Thursday, April 15, at 8:00
On the Digital Stage

Yannick Nézet-Séguin Conductor
Aaron Diehl Piano

Ellington/arr. Gould "Solitude"

Gershwin/orch. Grofé *Rhapsody in Blue* (original jazz band version)

Stravinsky Suite from *Pulcinella*

- I. Sinfonia (Overture)
- II. Serenata—
- IIIa. Scherzino—
 - b. Allegro—
 - c. Andantino
- IV. Tarantella—
- V. Toccata
- VI. Gavotta con due variazioni
- VII. Vivo
- VIIIa. Minuetto: Molto moderato—
 - b. Finale: Allegro assai

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

This concert is sponsored by **Bruce and Robyn Leto** and **Stradley Ronon**.

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The Philadelphia Orchestra

Yannick Nézet-Séguin Music Director

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The Philadelphia Orchestra

Yannick Nézet-Séguin

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Daniel Han

Julia Li

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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

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Kirsten Johnson, Associate Principal

Kerri Ryan, Assistant Principal

Judy Geist

Renard Edwards

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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
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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

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Percussion

Christopher Deviney, Principal
Angela Zator Nelson

Piano and Celesta

Kiyoko Takeuti

Keyboards

Davyd Booth

Harp

Elizabeth Hainen, Principal

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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**ealth, 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 nine celebrated releases 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.



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 nine releases 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 and composer **Aaron Diehl**, who is making his Philadelphia Orchestra debut, mystifies listeners with his layered artistry. At once temporal and ethereal, his expression transforms the piano into an orchestral vessel in the spirit of beloved predecessors Ahmad Jamal, Erroll Garner, Art Tatum, and Jelly Roll Morton. Following three critically acclaimed leader albums on Mack Avenue Records—and live appearances at historic venues from Jazz at Lincoln Center and the Village Vanguard to the New York Philharmonic and the Philharmonie de Paris—the American Pianist Association’s 2011 Cole Porter Fellow now focuses his attention on what it means to be present within himself. His forthcoming solo record promises an expansion of that exploration in a setting at once unbound and intimate.

Mr. Diehl conjures three-dimensional expansion of melody, counterpoint, and movement through time. Rather than choose one sound or another, he invites listeners into the chambered whole of his artistry. Born in Columbus, Ohio, he traveled to New York in 2003, following his success as a finalist in Jazz at Lincoln Center’s Essentially Ellington Competition and a subsequent European tour with Wynton Marsalis. Mr. Diehl’s love affair with rub and tension

prompted a years-long immersion in distinctive repertoire from Meredith Monk and Ravel to Gershwin and William Grant Still. Among other towering figures, Still in particular inspires his ongoing curation of Black American composers in his own performance programming, unveiled last fall at New York's 92nd St. Y.

Mr. Diehl has enjoyed artistic associations with Mr. Marsalis, Benny Golson, Jimmy Heath, Buster Williams, Branford Marsalis, Wycliffe Gordon, Philip Glass, and multi-GRAMMY award-winning artist Cecile McLorin Salvant. Mr. Diehl recently appeared with the New York Philharmonic and the Cleveland Orchestra as featured soloist. He holds a Bachelor of Music degree in Jazz Studies from the Juilliard School. A licensed pilot, he's likely in the air when not at the studio or on the road. Follow both his earthbound and aerial exploits via Instagram at www.instagram.com/aaronjdiehl.

Edward Kennedy Ellington, known as "Duke," won his first fame playing with his own band in Harlem's Cotton Club during the late 1920s. A few years later he wrote his jazz standard "Solitude," which we hear today in an arrangement by Morton Gould for string orchestra with harp and celesta.

The jazz impulse continues with George Gershwin's beloved *Rhapsody in Blue*, which caused a sensation at its 1924 premiere in New York's Aeolian Hall at a concert presented by the legendary bandleader Paul Whiteman. On that occasion Gershwin was the piano soloist and Whiteman conducted a jazz band of some two dozen musicians. The instrumentation was by Ferde Grofé, Whiteman's favorite arranger, based on suggestions from Gershwin. Since then the *Rhapsody* is most often performed in a version for full symphony orchestra, also by Grofé. The performance today offers a rare opportunity to hear the original instrumentation and discover details that often pass by unnoticed.

The concert concludes with Igor Stravinsky's look to the past in the suite from his ballet *Pulcinella*, which he wrote as a commission from the great impresario Sergei Diaghilev. It was a pioneering piece in the rise of Neo-classicism, in this case based on music from the early 18th century initially thought to have been composed by Giovanni Pergolesi. The ballet was choreographed and danced by Léonide Massine with sets and costumes by Pablo Picasso. It presents a set of comic episodes in the life of the title character, a Pierrot-like hero of the early Italian *commedia dell'arte* theater tradition.

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.



1920

Stravinsky

Pulcinella

Music

Ravel

La Valse

Literature

Colette

Chéri

Art

Léger

The Tug Boat

History

League of Nations founded



1924

Gershwin

Rhapsody in Blue

Music

Berg

Chamber Concerto

Literature

Forster

A Passage to India

Art

Braque

Sugar Bowl

History

Lenin dies



1934

Ellington

"Solitude"

Music

Price

Piano Concerto in One Movement

Literature

Graves

I Claudius

Art

Dali

Cousine

History

Lindbergh baby kidnapped

"Solitude" (arranged by Morton Gould)



Edward Kennedy "Duke" Ellington
Born in Washington, D.C., April 29, 1899
Died in New York City, May 24, 1974

Duke Ellington, writing in his 1973 autobiography *Music Is My Mistress*, explains his skepticism about genre labels: "Categories are sometimes used by a person who feels that the one he's talking to doesn't know enough about the language in which he speaks. So he uses lines, boxes, circles, and pigeonholes to help the less literate one to a better understanding." Ellington was particularly unconvinced by arguments for the existence of a "borderline ... between classical music and jazz. I feel there is no boundary line, and I see no place for one if my own feelings tell me a performance is good." Ellington's critiques, written toward the end of his career, are no doubt the product of his lifelong struggles against racialized or elitist definitions of what it meant to be a "composer," as opposed to "jazz musician." He was reluctant to use the term "jazz" to describe his music, as he told audiences during lecture-concerts sponsored by the State Department in 1963: "We [Ellington and his ensemble] stopped using the word in 1943, and we much prefer to call [our music] the American Idiom, or the Music of Freedom of Expression."

Of course, Ellington was not unique in requesting that listeners approach his music with an open mind, unencumbered by the preconceptions that labels often impose. One need only think of Claude Debussy's resistance to the term "Impressionism" or Arnold Schoenberg's aversion to describing his music as "atonal" to be reminded that composers have often found conceptual categorizations or descriptions mystify as much as they reveal. Ellington's criticisms in this regard, perhaps not unlike Debussy's, were explicitly grounded in the authority of the listener's own experience: "when [music] sounds good, it is good."

What's in a Name?

The fact that Ellington frequently gave his music descriptive or

evocative titles suggests that, however democratic his ideals for musical taste, he nevertheless wished to provide his listeners with certain guidelines to shape their experience. Some of these titles identify explicitly imitative features, such as "Daybreak Express" (1933), a piece that includes experimental passages depicting the sounds of a train in motion and even includes a multi-part orchestration of a steam whistle. Other titles, such as "What Am I Here For?" (1942) or "Reflections in D" (1953), suggest a more abstract approach.

Lying between the two extremes of musical depiction and abstraction, "Solitude" (1934) is similar to Ellington's other so-called mood pieces like "Mood Indigo" (1930) and "In a Sentimental Mood" (1935). The score was written, according to Ellington, "in twenty minutes" during a recording session for Victor Records when he composed it "standing up, leaning against the studio's glass enclosure." After he and his band finished recording, Ellington noted that "everybody in the studio was moved emotionally," including the sound engineer who "had a tear in his eye." The piece's title was then given not by Ellington himself, but by trumpeter Artie Whetsol, who Ellington tells us "played [his part] so soulfully." Contrary, then, to the image of the solitary Romantic composer writing down music heard in his mind's ear, Ellington's account of how "Solitude" came to be presents a decidedly collaborative and even somewhat spontaneous process, up to and including the naming of the piece itself.

A Closer Look

The collaborations and reiterations of "Solitude" continued well after the original 1934 recording session. Irving Mills, the manager of Ellington's ensemble, partnered with lyricist Eddie DeLange to produce a new version the next year, and other artists such as John Coltrane (1958) and Billie Holiday (1946 and 1952) also recorded their own versions of the piece. Morton Gould's 1946 arrangement for Columbia Masterworks, then, stands in a long line of interpretive reimaginings of the initial version.

Gould—himself a boundary-blurring conductor, arranger, and composer—brings his own compositional voice to his arrangement by writing a short introduction as well as a brief coda to bookend the material he inherited from Ellington and his ensemble. While Gould's version is also purely instrumental, it substitutes a string orchestra timbral palette for Ellington's original, which was based on brass and winds. Gould's almost morose introduction gives way

to a lushly orchestrated rendition of the main melody, accompanied by delicate tremolos and subtle splashes of color from the harp and celesta. His experience as a radio and film composer can be heard most clearly in his effective use of the violin's upper register, which lends Ellington's melody a veneer of classic Hollywood pathos.

—Sean Colonna

"Solitude" was composed in 1934 and arranged by Gould in 1946.

The Philadelphia Orchestra first performed the song on a Pops Concert in May 1976, as part of a medley called Fantasy, conducted by William Smith.

The score calls for harp, celesta, and strings.

Performance time is approximately three minutes.

Rhapsody in Blue **(original jazz band orchestration by Ferde Grofé)**

George Gershwin

Born in Brooklyn, September 26, 1898

Died in Hollywood, July 11, 1937



George Gershwin's career is a great American success story, tempered (as with Mozart and Schubert) by early death in his 30s that cut it short. Born to Russian-Jewish immigrants in Brooklyn, he grew up in a poor household. As Aaron Copland, his slightly younger Brooklyn contemporary, also discovered, music offered opportunities. But while Copland went to study abroad as an American in Paris, Gershwin dropped out of school and started working his way up as a "song-plugger," playing Tin Pan Alley songs for perspective customers at a music store. Soon he was writing his own songs (his first big hit was "Swanee" in 1919) and enjoying success on Broadway.

An Experiment in Modern Music

The signal event of his early career came at age 25, on Tuesday afternoon, February 12, 1924, at a concert in New York's Aeolian Hall given by Paul Whiteman and his Palais Royal Orchestra. Billed as "An Experiment in Modern Music," it featured a variety of familiar pieces, including popular fare and comedy, as well as works by Edward MacDowell, Victor Herbert, and concluding with one of Edward Elgar's *Pomp and Circumstance* marches.

Whiteman explained that the purpose of the experiment was to highlight "the tremendous strides which have been made in popular music from the day of the discordant jazz, which sprang into existence about ten years ago from nowhere in particular, to the really melodious music of today which—for no good reason—is still being called jazz." The comment that the music came "from nowhere in particular" is striking. As music historian Richard Taruskin has keenly observed, this event was "in essence an attempt to sanitize contemporary popular music and elevate it in public esteem by divorcing it from its roots in African American improvised music

and securing endorsements from luminaries of the classical music establishment, many of whom were in attendance that evening." (Among those said to have been there were Sergei Rachmaninoff, Leopold Stokowski, Jascha Heifetz, and Fritz Kreisler.) It was not so much that the music was unusual but rather the idea of presenting performances by a jazz band in a concert hall. On the program today we have the rare opportunity to hear the original instrumentation of Gershwin's *Rhapsody in Blue* with which Whiteman's group accompanied the composer at the piano.

Gershwin had written the piece in the space of just a few weeks in a two-piano version that was quickly orchestrated by Whiteman's favored arranger, Ferde Grofé (1892–1972), best remembered today for his own composition *The Grand Canyon Suite*. Grofé was intimately familiar with the marvelous instrumental colors Whiteman's band could produce; he followed suggestions outlined in Gershwin's piano score, which were supplemented by almost daily meetings with the composer. The famous opening clarinet glissando was contributed by Ross Gorman, who asked permission to change a written-out scale to something more enticing.

The *Rhapsody* proved to be the highlight of the concert, an enormous success before a capacity audience, as well as with most of the critics. Deems Taylor said the piece "hinted at something new, something that had not hitherto been said in music." Gershwin, he believed, provided "a link between the jazz camp and the intellectuals." Even a grumpy voice from *Theatre Magazine* acknowledged that the wildly popular concert "was often vulgar, but it was never dull." Whiteman repeated the program a month later and then again at Carnegie Hall in April, as well as in Philadelphia and Boston. In June he and Gershwin made their first recording of the *Rhapsody*, which sold over a million copies. Over roughly the next decade performances, recordings, and sheet music earned the composer some \$250,000, an almost unimaginable sum at the time.

A Closer Look

Gershwin originally entitled the work *American Rhapsody*, perhaps to capitalize on the popularity of Liszt's *Hungarian Rhapsodies*, but his brother Ira suggested using something inspired by paintings of James McNeill Whistler, such as *Nocturne in Blue and Silver*.

The *Rhapsody* basically unfolds as a sequence of five Tin Pan Alley-like songs with virtuoso connecting passagework. The piece

has been criticized by some as a loose patchwork of relatively interchangeable parts (Gershwin's own early recordings made cuts so as to fit on one 78 disc), but Howard Pollack has observed that the work might be viewed as a "compressed four-movement symphony or sonata," along the lines of Schubert's "Wanderer" Fantasy. For his part, Gershwin said that he "wanted to show that jazz is an idiom not to be limited to a mere song and chorus that consumed three minutes in presentation," which meant putting the blues "in a larger and more serious form." Twelve years after its successful premiere he commented that the piece was "still very much alive," while if he had "taken the same themes and put them in songs they would have been gone years ago."

—Christopher H. Gibbs

Rhapsody in Blue was composed in 1924.

Roy Bary was the soloist in the first Philadelphia Orchestra performances of the Rhapsody, in November 1936; Paul Whiteman conducted. The last time the piece appeared on subscription was in March 2012, with pianist Stewart Goodyear and James Gaffigan conducting. The only previous Orchestra performances of the original jazz band instrumentation were in July 1984 at the Mann Center, with Michael Tilson Thomas conducting from the keyboard; in April 2002 on an Access Concert, with William Eddins conducting from the keyboard; and in October 2015, with pianist Jon Kimura Parker and conductor Marin Alsop.

The Orchestra has recorded the Rhapsody twice, both for CBS and both with Eugene Ormandy: in 1945 with Oscar Levant and in 1967 with Philippe Entremont.

Grofé's original instrumentation calls for three woodwind players doubling on a total of 17 different instruments (Reed 1: B-flat clarinet, E-flat clarinet, bass clarinet, oboe; Reed 2: alto saxophone, soprano saxophone, baritone saxophone; Reed 3: tenor saxophone, soprano saxophone), two horns, two trumpets, two trombones, tuba (doubling string bass), timpani, percussion (drum set, glockenspiel, gong, triangle), banjo, celesta, piano (in addition to the soloist), and eight violins.

Rhapsody in Blue runs approximately 16 minutes in performance.



Suite from *Pulcinella*

Igor Stravinsky

Born in Lomonosov, Russia, June 17, 1882

Died in New York, April 6, 1971

When impresario Sergei Diaghilev decided to reassemble his revolutionary Ballets Russes after the cultural diaspora of World War I, he was determined to repeat the controversial pre-war successes of such works as *The Firebird*, *Petrushka*, and *The Rite of Spring*—the last of which had caused a now-famous scandal at its first performance in 1913. Igor Stravinsky, who had provided the startling scores for those ballets, had begun to resign himself to a permanent exile in the West from his native Russia. As Diaghilev's company had been the agent for his rise to fame in Paris, the composer was eager to continue the collaboration, despite somewhat strained relations following his success in Switzerland with *L'Histoire du soldat* (*The Soldier's Tale*)—on which the impresario had not collaborated, and of which he displayed no little jealousy.

To woo Stravinsky back into his fold, Diaghilev suggested a score based on the 18th-century melodies that were believed to be the work of the Neapolitan composer Giovanni Battista Pergolesi (1710–36). Initially the idea found little resonance in the composer's imagination—until he heard the tunes Diaghilev had collected and was completely delighted with them. (Ironically, scholars have since shown that most of the melodies Stravinsky used are not by Pergolesi, but from misattributed works by a variety of 18th-century Italian composers.)

A Starry Line-Up

Stravinsky was further attracted by the prospect of working with the young Pablo Picasso, who was to design the sets and costumes for the new project, and with the choreographer and dancer Léonide Massine, who had scored a huge success in Paris with *The Good-Humored Ladies*, another recreation of the Baroque era. He began work on the score to *Pulcinella* in the latter part of 1919

and the ballet received its premiere the following year at the Paris Opera, billed as “music of Pergolesi arranged and orchestrated by Igor Stravinsky.” Audiences loved the work, and although some purists objected to Stravinsky’s composerly interpretation of the past, a younger generation of musicians embraced the work. Stravinsky soon fashioned a concert suite from the ballet, which was first performed by Pierre Monteux and the Boston Symphony in December 1922 and swiftly became a part of the orchestral repertory.

Pulcinella was not just a sensation in Paris, it was a crucial step in the development of Stravinsky’s musical style and career. Having “taken the plunge” into what was later to be called Neo-Classicism, he was to continue this process of assimilation and reconfiguration of the musical language of earlier centuries over the next three decades. For Stravinsky’s iconoclastic pre-war music had left him in a kind of stylistic quandary; his renewed interest in “Classicism”—which ultimately embraced music of the Baroque, Classical, and Romantic periods—provided a new sense of rootedness. “*Pulcinella* was my discovery of the past,” he later wrote, “the epiphany through which the whole of my late work became possible. It was a backward look, of course—the first of many love affairs in that direction—but it was a look in the mirror, too.”

A Closer Look

Stravinsky’s decision to score the work for a chamber orchestra of 33 players caused some consternation among his collaborators, who had initially conceived the work on a grand scale. He argued that the work was to be an *action dansante*—a theater work with accompaniment of preexisting tunes—rather than a ballet, and ultimately his will triumphed. He based the work on a set of comic episodes in the life of Pulcinella, the Pierrot-like hero of the early Italian *commedia dell’arte* theater tradition.

In the Diaghilev-Massine version, Pulcinella is a local Romeo who has all the girls in love with him. When their boyfriends plot against him, he trades places with Fourbo, who pretends to die under the blows of the jealous lovers. Pulcinella, disguised as a magician, brings his double back to life, then reappears as himself. Thinking Pulcinella to be magically resuscitated, the lovers all succumb to his plan to pair them off, and he takes the delicate Pimpinella as his own wife.

In adapting the 18th-century source material, Stravinsky for the

most part retained the bass lines and melodies, but added his own distinctive harmonies, rhythmic ideas, and instrumental timbres. Stravinsky's original ballet score contained vocal parts for soprano, tenor, and bass, as several of the tunes had been drawn from operas. For the concert suite arranged around 1922, the composer selected 11 of the original 22 movements, transferring the vocal parts to instruments in Nos. II and VIIIa.

—Paul J. Horsley/Christopher H. Gibbs

Stravinsky composed Pulcinella from 1919 to 1920.

Otto Klemperer conducted the first Philadelphia Orchestra performances of the Pulcinella Suite, in February 1935. The score was last played on subscription concerts in May 2018, with Nicholas McGegan.

Stravinsky scored the Suite for two flutes (II doubling piccolo), two oboes, two bassoons, two horns, trumpet, trombone, solo string quintet, and strings.

The work runs approximately 23 minutes in performance.

GENERAL TERMS

Atonality: Music that is not tonal, especially organized without reference to key or tonal center

Chord: The simultaneous sounding of three or more tones

Chromatic: Relating to tones foreign to a given key (scale) or chord

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

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

Gavotte: A French court dance and instrumental form in a lively duple-meter popular from the late 16th century to the late 18th century

Glissando: A glide from one note to the next

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

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

Nocturne: A piece of a dreamily romantic or sentimental character, without fixed form

Rhapsody: Generally an instrumental fantasia on folksongs or on motifs taken from primitive national music

Scale: The series of tones which form (a) any major or minor key or (b) the chromatic scale of successive semi-tonic steps

Scherzino: A short instrumental piece of a light, piquant, humorous character

Serenata: An instrumental composition imitating an "evening song"

Sinfonia: A short introductory instrumental piece

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

Tarantella: A Neapolitan dance in rapid triple time

Timbre: Tone color or tone quality

Toccata: Literally "to touch." A piece intended as a display of manual dexterity, often free in form and almost always for a solo keyboard instrument.

Tonality: The orientation of melodies and harmonies toward a specific pitch or pitches

Tonic: The keynote of a scale

Tremolo: In bowing, repeating the note very fast with the point of the bow

THE SPEED OF MUSIC (Tempo)

Allegro: Bright, fast

Andantino: Slightly quicker than walking speed

Moderato: A moderate tempo, neither fast nor slow

Vivo: Lively, intense

TEMPO MODIFIERS

Assai: Much

Molto: Very