Season 2000-2001
The Philadelphia Orchestra

Thursday, November 16, at 8:00

Wolfgang Sawallisch Conductor
Eugenia Zukerman Host
André Watts Piano
Sarah Chang Violin
Thomas Hampson Baritone

100th Birthday Gala Concert

Bach/orch. Stokowski Toccata and Fugue in D minor, BWV 565

Dukas *The Sorcerer’s Apprentice*

Rachmaninoff Piano Concerto No. 2 in C minor, Op. 18
   I. Moderato
   II. Adagio sostenuto
   III. Allegro scherzando

Sarasate Fantasy on Bizet’s *Carmen*, Op. 25, for violin and orchestra

Copland from Old American Songs:
   1. Simple Gifts
   2. The Little Horses
   3. The Golden Willow Tree
   4. The Boatmen’s Dance

Stravinsky Suite from *The Firebird* (1919 version)
   I. Introduction—The Firebird and its Dance
   II. The Princesses’ Round Dance
   III. Infernal Dance of King Kastcheï—
   IV. Berceuse—
   V. Finale
The Philadelphia Orchestra

Founded in 1900, The Philadelphia Orchestra has distinguished itself as one of the leading orchestras in the world through a century of brilliant performances, historic international tours, and best-selling recordings. It has stood at the forefront of classical music in America throughout its first 100 years, introducing an unprecedented number of important and popular 20th-century works as world or American premieres, including Barber’s Violin Concerto, Rachmaninoff’s Symphonic Dances, Schoenberg’s Gurrelieder, and Stravinsky’s The Rite of Spring.

Philadelphia boasts an extraordinary record of media firsts. It was the first symphonic orchestra to make electrical recordings (in 1925), the first to perform its own commercially sponsored radio broadcast (in 1929, on NBC), the first to perform on the soundtrack of a feature film (Paramount’s The Big Broadcast of 1937), the first to appear on a national television broadcast (in 1948, on CBS), the first American orchestra to record the complete Beethoven symphonies on compact disc (in 1988), and the first major orchestra to give a live cybercast of a concert on the Internet (in 1997).

The Philadelphia Orchestra has achieved prominence in part through an impressive and unbroken chain of visionary musical leadership. Only six conductors have served as music director during the ensemble’s first century, giving Philadelphia a unity of performance and musical guidance unprecedented among American symphony orchestras. Two Germans, Fritz Scheel (1900–07) and Carl Pohlig (1909–12), served as its first music directors, forming the ensemble and carrying it through its first 12 seasons. British-born Leopold Stokowski was appointed conductor in 1912 and quickly began leading the Orchestra toward new visions of musical excellence and excitement. Leading a series of major world and U.S. premieres, including works by Berg, Mahler, Rachmaninoff, Schoenberg, Scriabin, Sibelius, and Stravinsky, Stokowski firmly established Philadelphia’s prominence in American classical music. In addition to making widely acclaimed recordings with his ensemble, he instituted many other Philadelphia Orchestra traditions, including concerts created especially for children and symphonic tours throughout the country.

Hungarian-born Eugene Ormandy assumed the music directorship in 1936. For the next 44 years, he first maintained and then expanded upon the Orchestra’s unique artistry and musical excellence. Under Ormandy’s skilled hands, the Orchestra refined its famed “Philadelphia Sound” and traveled widely, touring throughout North America, Europe, Latin America, Japan, Korea, and China. Perhaps Ormandy’s most lasting legacy is a Philadelphia discography of nearly 400 recordings (including three best-selling Gold Records), many of which have been reissued on compact disc and are considered classics of the LP era.

Ormandy turned over the Orchestra’s leadership in 1980 to Riccardo Muti. The Italian-born conductor built upon the Orchestra’s tradition of versatility by introducing new and unfamiliar music from all periods. An advocate of contemporary music, Muti commissioned works by a wide range of composers and appointed the Orchestra’s first composer-in-residence. Muti also revived the Orchestra’s operatic tradition, presenting concert performances of operas by Verdi, Puccini, Wagner, and others.
In 1993 the Munich-born conductor Wolfgang Sawallisch took the reins as the Orchestra’s sixth music director, after serving 21 years as music director and general director of the Bavarian State Opera in Munich. His Philadelphia tenure has featured renewed recognition of Philadelphia’s unique standing as an ensemble, eight overseas tours, a year of special activities and concerts to celebrate the ensemble’s 100th anniversary, and construction of the Kimmel Center for the Performing Arts, the Orchestra’s new home set to open in December 2001.
Music Director

The 2000–01 season marks **Wolfgang Sawallisch**'s eighth year as Music Director of The Philadelphia Orchestra. Acclaimed as one of the greatest living exponents of the Germanic musical tradition, he has enriched and expanded upon the Orchestra’s century-old tradition of excellence. Mr. Sawallisch has re-affirmed The Philadelphia Orchestra’s commitment to new music through a series of ongoing new commissions. His vision for the Orchestra’s 100th anniversary season, made up exclusively from music written since the ensemble’s creation in 1900, resulted in record ticket sales and critical praise. His concert tours with the Orchestra have included performances on four continents, from Beijing to Birmingham, from Buenos Aires to Boston.

The current season under Mr. Sawallisch’s baton includes much-anticipated performances of Beethoven’s *Missa Solemnis* and of the complete cycle of Smetana’s *Má Vlast*. In October he conducted the winning entries in the Orchestra’s Centennial Composition Competition, presenting works by three emerging American composers for the audience’s final vote. He also leads two Neighborhood Concerts, continuing an initiative begun in June 2000 in which the Orchestra performs a series of annual free concerts in Philadelphia neighborhoods, introducing live classical music to thousands of area residents.

Mr. Sawallisch has encouraged the exploration of new ways to present music to American audiences. In April 1997 he led the Philadelphians in the first live Internet concert “cybercast” made by a major American orchestra, attracting listeners from more than 40 countries around the world. He has presented season-long focuses on the works of Haydn, Beethoven, and Brahms, and an ongoing overview of the works of Richard Strauss (including a concert presentation of the opera *Ariadne auf Naxos*). In February 1994, for a concert he was to conduct, he stepped in alone to replace the entire Orchestra (snowed-in at various points throughout the city) for an extraordinary evening of Wagnerian opera highlights, accompanying the scheduled soloists and chorus on piano.

Since becoming music director in 1993, Wolfgang Sawallisch has led The Philadelphia Orchestra each year in concerts outside Philadelphia, helping to build upon the ensemble’s long tradition of touring. They appear together annually in a series of concerts at Carnegie Hall and have performed in major concert halls throughout the world on seven international tours (three to Europe, three to Asia, and one to Central and South America). They return to Asia in May 2001 on a three-week tour. In November 2000 Mr. Sawallisch and the Orchestra embarked on a modern-day “Whistle-Stop” Tour of cities in the southeastern United States as prelude to the Orchestra’s 100th Birthday Concert at home.

**Wolfgang Sawallisch** was born in Munich and graduated from that city’s Academy of Music. He began his conducting career in 1947 at the Opera Theater of Augsburg, where he served as vocal coach, chorus master, and conductor of ballet, opera, and concert music. In 1953 he became the youngest conductor to lead the Berlin Philharmonic, an orchestra with which he is associated to this day. He next held successive music directorships in Aachen, Wiesbaden, and Cologne and appeared annually at the prestigious Bayreuth Festival. He was music director of the Vienna
Symphony from 1960–70, and also served as music director of the Hamburg Philharmonic from 1963–71. He served as artistic director of Geneva’s Orchestre de la Suisse Romande from 1973–80. In 1971 he was appointed music director of the Bavarian State Opera in Munich, beginning an exceptionally fruitful and long lasting relationship with that company. Working in Munich for more than two decades, he served concurrently as the Opera’s general manager during his last ten years there before coming to Philadelphia.

As a guest conductor, Mr. Sawallisch leads concerts each year with the Vienna Symphony and Tokyo’s NHK Orchestra. Other recent guest appearances include performances with the Vienna Philharmonic, the Orchestre de Paris, the Israel Philharmonic, London’s Philharmonia, and the Czech Philharmonic.

Mr. Sawallisch’s extensive discography includes a wide range of orchestral and opera recordings, both with The Philadelphia Orchestra and with a number of European ensembles. His recordings of Robert Schumann’s symphonies with the Dresden Staatskapelle on the EMI label are often considered a benchmark against which other conductors’ renditions are compared. His Philadelphia compact discs include works by Bruckner, Dvořák, Hindemith, and Tchaikovsky, as well as a special disc of orchestral transcriptions by Leopold Stokowski and a four-disc cycle of the orchestral works of Richard Strauss.

Wolfgang Sawallisch is highly regarded as a chamber musician and accompanist. He has collaborated and recorded with such vocalists as Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau, Hermann Prey, Peter Schreier, and Margaret Price, as well as with the Munich Residenz Quartet. His most recent recordings as a pianist include Schubert’s Winterreise and Schumann songs with Thomas Hampson, and a disc of 20th-century works with trumpeter Ole Edvard Antonsen. He often performs with members of The Philadelphia Orchestra, appearing frequently on the Orchestra’s annual Chamber Music Series.

Mr. Sawallisch’s artistry has been recognized throughout his career with many awards and citations. He was given the Toscanini Gold Baton in recognition of his 35-year association with La Scala in Milan. His honorary degrees include a doctorate from the Curtis Institute of Music in Philadelphia.
Flutist Eugenia Zukerman is renowned worldwide for her elegant sound, lyrical phrasing, brilliant agility, and graceful stage presence. She appears regularly with orchestras, in solo and duo recitals, and in chamber music ensembles. She has performed as a soloist with such orchestras as the Moscow, English, Stuttgart, Israel, Prague, and Denver chamber orchestras; the Los Angeles and Royal philharmonics; the National Symphony; and the Minnesota Orchestra, among others. Her solo recital appearances are numerous, and her many collaborators include cellist Yo-Yo Ma, pianist Emanuel Ax, actress Claire Bloom, keyboardist Anthony Newman, harpist Yolanda Kondonassis, and the Shanghai Quartet. In 1998 Ms. Zukerman became artistic director of the Vail Valley Music Festival. Her festival appearances have included the Aspen, Angel Fire, Mostly Mozart, OK Mozart International, Ravinia, Tanglewood, Edinburgh, Gstaad, South Bank, Spoleto, and Schleswig-Holstein festivals, as well as the Vail Valley Music Festival.

Ms. Zukerman also enjoys careers as an author and television commentator. She has been the arts correspondent for CBS Sunday Morning since 1980 and has done over 300 artist profiles in her 20 years on the program. She has appeared as a guest on such programs, including PBS’s Charlie Rose Show, NBC’s Today, and A&E’s Breakfast with the Arts. As a writer Ms. Zukerman has been published in a number of periodicals, including the New York Times, Washington Post, Esquire, and Vogue. She has had three screenplays purchased—one by 20th Century Fox, a second by MGM, and a third commissioned by Universal Pictures. She has published two novels, Deceptive Cadence (Viking, 1981) and Taking the Heat (Simon & Schuster, 1991). For St. Martin’s Press (1997), she co-authored a non-fiction book, Coping with Prednisone, with her sister, Dr. Julie R. Ingelfinger.

Ms. Zukerman’s 2000–01 season includes orchestral appearances with the National, Colorado, Flint, and Modesto symphonies; the Lehigh Valley Chamber Orchestra; and the Hong Kong Philharmonic. She also appears in recitals collaborating with Ms. Bloom, Ms. Kondonassis, and soprano Arianna Zukerman.

Ms. Zukerman currently records exclusively for Delos, and has previously recorded for CBS Masterworks, Pro Arte, Vox Cum Laude, and Newport Classics. Her most recent recordings for Delos include a live recording of Lowell Liebermann’s Flute Concerto with the Dallas Symphony; Aria, a collection of opera favorites; and her successful solo flute recording, Incantation.

Born in Cambridge, Massachusetts, Ms. Zukerman entered Barnard College as an English major, but soon transferred to the Juilliard School, where she studied with Julius Baker. She is a past winner of the Young Concert Artists Award.
Soloist

Pianist André Watts made his Philadelphia Orchestra debut in 1957 as a 10-year-old winner of the Orchestra’s Children’s Student Competition and four years later he won the Junior Student Competition. He has returned to the Orchestra almost 50 times since, most recently this past summer in Saratoga. Mr. Watts burst upon the music scene at the age of 16, when Leonard Bernstein chose him to make his debut with the New York Philharmonic in its Young People’s Concerts, broadcast nationwide on CBS-TV. Only two weeks later, Bernstein asked him to substitute at the last minute for the ailing Glenn Gould in performances of Liszt’s E-flat Concerto, again with the Philharmonic. Today his performances with the world’s great orchestras and his sold-out recitals take him to every corner of the globe. He has made numerous television appearances, including 1976 and 1985 Live from Lincoln Center telecasts. Other television appearances include an internationally telecast United Nations Day concert with Eugene Ormandy and The Philadelphia Orchestra; BBC presentations with the London Symphony and in solo recital; two PBS telecasts with Seiji Ozawa and the Boston Symphony; and his 25th Anniversary concert from Lincoln Center, also on PBS. Most recently he appeared in an Emmy Award-nominated program on the A&E Network highlighting the 38th annual Casals Festival in Puerto Rico.

During the 2000–01 season, Mr. Watts performs with the Chicago, National, Seattle, Dallas, Indianapolis, Colorado, Phoenix, and Oregon symphonies. His recital appearances include stops in Chicago, San Francisco, Atlanta, Houston, Sarasota, Naples, and Newark. This season he premieres the Fantasie concertante for Piano and Orchestra, a transcription of Schubert’s four-hand Fantasie in F minor, arranged by Andy Stein. The work, commissioned by Mr. Watts, will be performed with the National, Dallas, and New York Chamber symphonies.

An active recording artist, Mr. Watts’s latest release features both Liszt piano concertos and MacDowell’s Concerto No. 2, on the Telarc label. Other recordings for Telarc include Tchaikovsky’s Concerto No. 1 and Saint-Saëns’s Concerto No. 2. Additionally his discography of solo recordings includes The Chopin Recital and The Schubert Recital, both on Angel/EMI. He is also included in the recently released Philips series, Great Pianists of the 20th Century.

In 1988 Mr. Watts was awarded the Avery Fisher Prize. He is the youngest person ever to receive an Honorary Doctorate from Yale University, and in 1984 the Peabody Conservatory honored him with its Distinguished Alumni Award; in 1997 the school presented him with an Honorary Doctorate. He has also received honorary degrees from the University of Pennsylvania, Miami University of Ohio, Albright College, Brandeis University, Trinity College, and Juilliard. Beginning this season, Mr. Watts is artist-in-residence at the University of Maryland.
Soloist

Violinist Sarah Chang is recognized as one of the world’s most captivating and gifted artists. Appearing in all the music capitals, she has collaborated with nearly every major orchestra, including the Berlin Philharmonic, the Boston Symphony, the Chicago Symphony, the Cleveland Orchestra, the Leipzig Gewandhaus Orchestra, the London Philharmonic, the London Symphony, the Los Angeles Philharmonic, the New York Philharmonic, the Orchestre National de France, the Pittsburgh Symphony, the Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra, the San Francisco Symphony, and the Vienna Philharmonic. Her Philadelphia Orchestra debut was in January 1991 at an Academy of Music Anniversary Concert. Since then she has performed 14 times with the Orchestra at the Academy, the Mann Center, and Saratoga; most recently, she appeared this past summer at Saratoga. Ms. Chang’s 2000–01 season is highlighted by return engagements with the Bavarian State Orchestra, the Dallas Symphony, the Danish National Symphony, the Helsinki Philharmonic, the Los Angeles Philharmonic, the Monte Carlo Philharmonic, the Montreal Symphony, the New York Philharmonic, London’s Philharmonia, the San Francisco Symphony, the Tonhalle Orchestra, and the Toronto Symphony. She also tours the United States and Spain with the London Symphony and visits China for appearances at the Beijing Music Festival.

Ms. Chang records exclusively for EMI Classics and has released three albums of virtuoso pieces: Debut, Simply Sarah, and Sweet Sorro; Paganini’s Concerto No. 1 and works of Saint-Saëns with Wolfgang Sawallisch and The Philadelphia Orchestra; the Tchaikovsky Concerto with Colin Davis and the London Symphony; Lalo’s Symphonie espagnole and Vieuxtemps’s Concerto No. 5 with the Royal Concertgebouw and Philharmonia orchestras, led by Charles Dutoit; and the Mendelssohn and Sibelius concertos with Mariss Jansons and the Berlin Philharmonic. Her latest releases are a Richard Strauss album, featuring his Violin Concerto and Violin Sonata, recorded with Wolfgang Sawallisch both at the piano and conducting the Bayerische Rundfunk Orchestra, and the Goldmark Violin Concerto with James Conlon and the Gürzenich Orchestra.

Born in Philadelphia to Korean parents, Ms. Chang began to study the violin at age four and within a year had performed with several orchestras in the Philadelphia area. At age eight she auditioned for Riccardo Muti and Zubin Mehta, which led to immediate engagements with The Philadelphia Orchestra and the New York Philharmonic. She graduated in 1999 from high school in Cherry Hill, New Jersey, and from the pre-college program at Juilliard, where she has been a student of Dorothy DeLay. Last year Ms. Chang received the Avery Fisher Prize, and she is a past recipient of the Avery Fisher Career Grant, as well as a special Gramophone award as Young Artist of the Year, Germany’s Echo Schallplattenpreis, and Newcomer of the Year honors at the International Classical Music Awards in London.
Soloist

One of the world's leading baritones, Thomas Hampson has been recognized for his versatility and breadth of achievement in opera, song, recording, research, and pedagogy. He made his Philadelphia Orchestra debut in 1995, in Hindemith's *When lilacs last in the dooryard bloom'd* although he had appeared with Wolfgang Sawallisch on the Orchestra's Chamber Music Series the year before. Since his debut, he has appeared with the Orchestra in Brahms's Requiem and Mendelssohn's *Elijah*, and he performed Schubert's *Winterreise* with Wolfgang Sawallisch in a special Chamber Music Benefit Concert. Born in Spokane, Washington, Mr. Hampson studied with Marietta Coyle, Elisabeth Schwarzkopf, Martial Singher, and Horst Günther. His career has taken him to the world's greatest stages and concert halls, including the Metropolitan Opera, the Vienna Staatsoper, and Covent Garden. His operatic roles span a wide range of repertoire, from Rossini to Verdi and Puccini, and from Monteverdi to Britten and Henze. Among his recent portrayals have been the title roles in Rossini's *Guillaume Tell*, Tchaikovsky's *Eugene Onegin*, Thomas's *Hamlet*, and the rarely heard baritone version of Massenet's *Werther*; Père Germont in *La traviata*, the Marquis of Posa in the original French version of Verdi's *Don Carlos*; Wagner's *Tannhäuser*; Busoni's *Dr. Faustus*; and Szymanowski's *King Roger*. The year 2000 featured reprises of Rossini's *Il barbiere di Siviglia* and *La traviata* in New York, *Hamlet* in Paris, and *Eugene Onegin*, *Guillaume Tell*, Lehár's *Die lustige Witwe*, and *Linda di Chamounix* in Vienna.

A highly regarded recitalist, Mr. Hampson has conceived and performed programs that explore the rich diversity of song idioms, languages, and styles. He has furthered his commitment to song not only by teaching, but by designing multi-media projects like *Voices from the Heart*, a documentary on the music of Stephen Foster for the Hessischer Rundfunk/Arte network, or *I Hear America Singing*, a program about the cultural contexts of American song, for WNET's *Great Performances*.

A prolific and award-winning recording artist, Mr. Hampson's discs have appeared on eight major labels, among them Angel/EMI, with which, since 1993, he has an exclusive commitment for the solo repertoire; in 1997 he was named Artist of the Year by EMI. His recordings have been awarded six Grammy nominations, two Edison prizes, three 1994 Gramophone awards, the 1992 Grand Prix de la Nouvelle Académie du Disque, the Grand Prix du Disque, the 1994 Charles Cros Académie du Disque Lyrique, and the Toblacher Prize, among others. With Mr. Sawallisch he has recorded Schubert's *Winterreise* and Schumann's *Dichterliebe* for EMI Classics. Mr. Hampson has also been awarded *Musical America*'s 1992 Vocalist of the Year, the Music Academy of the West's first Distinguished Alumni Award, and the Merola Distinguished Alumni Award. He has also received honorary membership in London's Royal Academy of Music, honorary doctorates from the San Francisco Conservatory and Whitworth College, and the title of *Kammersänger* in Vienna.
The Music

Toccata and Fugue in D minor, BWV 565 (orchestrated by Leopold Stokowski)

Johann Sebastian Bach
Born in Eisenach, March 21, 1685
Died in Leipzig, July 28, 1750

Since its world premiere in Philadelphia in 1926, this rendering of Bach’s well-known Toccata and Fugue in D minor has become the stuff of legends. It became an important part of Disney’s 1940 animated feature Fantasia, which opens with a striking image of Leopold Stokowski conducting the piece with the help of a well-known mouse. The orchestra providing the work’s soundtrack in the film was none other than The Philadelphia Orchestra, which Stokowski had led for more than a quarter century.

Born in London in 1883 of a Polish father and an Irish mother, Leopold Anthony Stokowski was destined to become one of the most original musicians of his generation. While still in his 20s, he emigrated to the United States to take up the post of organist at St. Bartholomew’s Church in New York City, and in 1912 he accepted an offer to take over the music directorship of the relatively new Philadelphia Orchestra. For the next quarter century he brought the Orchestra to a level of unsurpassed excellence, establishing a tradition of virtuosity and brilliantine sonority that continues to this day.

Among Stokowski’s favorite activities during his tenure with the Philadelphians was to transform music he loved into lush, vibrantly colored orchestrations of his own. The sources of these “recompositions” range widely, from cantatas and organ works of J.S. Bach to operatic arias, from ancient plainchant to piano music of Chopin and Debussy.

Bach’s Toccata and Fugue was a composition that Stokowski felt strongly about. “It is among the freest in form and expression of Bach’s works,” he wrote. “It probably began as an organ improvisation in the church of St. Thomas in Leipzig. In this lengthy, narrow, high church the thundering harmonies must have echoed long and tempestuously, for this music has a power and majesty that is cosmic. Of all Bach’s creations this is one of the most original. Its inspiration flows unendingly. Its spirit is universal ... it will always be contemporary and have a direct message for all.”

Stokowski’s chronology was a bit skewed (the piece most likely dates not from Bach’s Leipzig period, but from much earlier, probably before 1708), but he was certainly correct in his analysis of the work’s power and drama. His transcription, which uses a gigantic orchestra, brings the drama of this piece decisively into the present age.
The Music

The Sorcerer’s Apprentice

Paul Dukas  
Born in Paris, October 1, 1865  
Died there, May 17, 1935

When hearing The Sorcerer’s Apprentice, Philadelphia Orchestra audiences may think first of Disney’s Fantasia, for which their Orchestra provided the soundtrack (for every number except Dukas’s famous work). But the story of the Sorcerer’s Apprentice came to life long before the music and in fact has high-flown literary origins.

The legend on which this musical piece is based crops up as early as the second century. The Classical writer Lucian relates the story of a lazy apprentice who tries to charm a broom into doing his work for him. (In the original myth the magic stick is actually a “pestle” or large club; it was Disney’s cartoonists who devised the piquantly whimsical image of broomsticks with arms and legs.) When the boy orders the rapidly multiplying brooms to carry water for him, he finds that his knowledge of wizardry does not extend far enough to permit him to “turn off” the spell. As most of us know, the Sorcerer returns to find that the enchanted broomsticks have flooded the house.

Many serious readers will know this story through Goethe’s telling of it, in his 1797 poem Der Zauberlehrling. But American audiences are probably most familiar with the version in Disney’s 1940 film. The Parisian composer Paul Dukas doubtless knew Lucian’s tale, but he based his 1897 programmatic tone poem on Goethe’s telling.

Although he was prolific composer of cantatas, symphonies, ballet scores, and several operas, Dukas was forced to come to terms with the fact that—even during his lifetime—the latter part of his career was shaped largely by the popularity of one ten-minute piece. And for a century now The Sorcerer’s Apprentice has maintained its position as one of the most popular works in the orchestral repertory.

Dukas called the piece The Sorcerer’s Apprentice, Symphonic Scherzo after a Ballad of Goethe. And it is indeed a classical scherzo, complete with the humor and rhythmic spice typical of the genre, combined with spiky, racing excitement and bright orchestral colors. Completed only days before its premiere in Paris in May 1897, The Sorcerer’s Apprentice was an immediate success. Half a century later, the inspired retelling by Disney’s artists would soon become a part of America’s national “pop” mythology.
The Music

Piano Concerto No. 2 in C minor, Op. 18

Sergei Rachmaninoff
Born in Semyonovo, Russia, April 1, 1873
Died in Beverly Hills, California, March 28, 1943

Although born and educated in Russia, Sergei Rachmaninoff spent the final two decades of his life in the United States and died an American citizen. He also became closely associated with The Philadelphia Orchestra, both as a guest soloist and as a composer. The Philadelphians gave the world premiere of four of Rachmaninoff’s major works for orchestra and the United States premieres of two other large-scale compositions. He dedicated his Symphonic Dances of 1940 to The Philadelphia Orchestra, which he described as “the finest orchestra the world has ever heard.”

While Rachmaninoff’s Second Piano Concerto is among his most popular works, it very nearly didn’t get written at all. In 1897 the premiere of his First Symphony was so disastrously received that the 26-year-old composer stopped writing altogether. “When the indescribable torture of the performance had at last come to an end, I was a different man,” Rachmaninoff wrote of the premiere. “Sergei kept gloomily silent, lying for days on end on a couch,” wrote his friend Sofia Satina, “showing almost no reaction either to consolation or attempts to persuade him that he must pull himself together.”

Only after seeking medical intervention did Rachmaninoff begin to pull himself around. He sought out a Dr. Nikolai Dahl, who specialized in the relatively new use of hypnosis as a therapeutic technique. The treatment consisted of repetitive sessions of auto-suggestion to create an atmosphere of productivity. “My family and friends had told Dr. Dahl that he must at all costs cure me of my apathetic condition,” Rachmaninoff later wrote, “and they hoped that through such results I would begin to compose again. I heard the same hypnotic formula repeated day after day. ... It was always the same, without interruption. Although it may sound incredible, this cure really helped me.”

After five months of daily sessions, Rachmaninoff began to show improvement. “I felt that Dahl’s treatment had strengthened my nervous system to a miraculous degree,” the composer wrote, “and out of gratitude I dedicated my Second Piano Concerto to him.” When the new concerto was premiered in Moscow in November 1901 (Alexander Siloti conducted and the composer played the piano), it was a huge success and quickly entered the repertoire as a showpiece for orchestras and pianists alike.
The Music

Fantasy on Bizet’s Carmen, Op. 25, for violin and orchestra

Pablo Sarasate
Born in Pamplona, Spain, March 10, 1844
Died in Biarritz, September 20, 1908

While Pable Sarasate may be best known today as the author of such delightfully piquant and virtuosic violin pieces as Zigeunerweisen, Spanische Tänze, and the Carmen Fantasy, during his lifetime his reputation lay chiefly as a performer. Indeed he was widely recognized among the handful of great violin virtuosos of the latter half of the 19th century.

Sarasate embarked on his first tours of Europe and the Americas at the age of 15, and audiences were quickly thrilled by the charismatic prodigy’s “aesthetic moderation, euphony, and technical perfection,” in the words of one contemporary critic. Another writer described him as “a completely new type of violinist,” an artist (to paraphrase the thrust of the review) concerned with dazzling virtuosity and, at the same time, gorgeousness and breadth of tone.

In Germany Sarasate was compared (often unfavorably) to the “serious” approach of Joseph Joachim, which all but eschewed virtuosity. Despite such views, Sarasate charmed audiences with sheer musicality, and they lionized him. The list of works dedicated to him by leading composers is itself quite telling, including Bruch’s Second Concerto, Saint-Saëns’s First and Third concertos, Joachim’s Variations for Violin and Orchestra, Lalo’s Symphonie espagnole, and Wieniawski’s Second Concerto.

If there was one thing that 19th-century audiences knew and loved, it was opera. Theater music was the one genre that nearly everyone agreed on. Like Liszt (and Beethoven and many others) before him, Sarasate managed to exploit this enthusiasm in a series of “concert fantasies” based on operas as wide-ranging as Mozart’s Don Giovanni, Weber’s Der Freischütz, and Verdi’s La forza del destino. These “fantasies” are pieces in which tunes from the operas—which had already become familiar melodies outside the opera house—are “worked out,” varied, and improvised upon.

The Fantasy heard this evening is a free improvisation on Bizet’s classic Carmen, which was first heard in Paris in 1875. (The opera was given its American premiere three years later, here in Philadelphia’s Academy of Music.) Published in 1883, Sarasate’s multi-movement Fantasy was probably composed for his own concert tours of the 1880s and ‘90s. While touching upon the opera’s tuneful highlights, it also exquisitely exploits the violin’s unique pyrotechnic possibilities.
The Music

Selections from *Old American Songs*

Aaron Copland
Born in Brooklyn, November 14, 1900
Died in North Tarrytown, New York, December 2, 1990

Who better to adapt traditional American songs in the middle of the 20th century than the reigning “Dean” of American composers, Aaron Copland. The international stature he enjoyed at the time came not only from the artistic quality of his music, but also from the distinctively American qualities contained within so many of his compositions.

Despite the inherent “American-ness” of Copland’s music, any one of us might have some difficulty pinpointing exactly what makes it so American. In some cases the answer is as simple as the melodies he incorporated within instrumental compositions. For example, *Appalachian Spring*, the celebrated ballet Copland wrote for Martha Graham in 1944, uses the Shaker tune “Simple Gifts” (which we hear this evening in his later vocal arrangement).

During the winter of 1950 Copland adapted five traditional American songs for voice and piano, a set that tenor Peter Pears and composer-pianist Benjamin Britten premiered during the summer at the Aldeburgh Festival in England. The enthusiastic first response led Copland to adapt five more songs. He and baritone William Warfield premiered the Second Set at Ipswich, Massachusetts, in July 1953.

In these 10 pieces Copland recast a variety of types of song, drawn from theater, religion, folk culture, and political satire. He got some of his source materials from recordings and others from written collections. He made small alterations in the melodic line, sometimes changed words, and created his own inventive accompaniments. At this evening’s gala concert we hear four songs, two from each set, in orchestrations he later fashioned to give them greater public exposure.

“Simple Gifts” is a favorite song of the Shakers, which dates from 1837–47. Copland adapted the melody and words from Edward D. Andrews’s book of Shaker rituals, songs, and dances, entitled *The Gift to Be Simple*. “The Little Horses” is a children’s lullaby of unknown date originating in the South. Copland’s adaptation is founded in part on John A. and Alan Lomax’s version in *Folk Song U.S.A.* “The Golden Willow Tree” is a variant of the well-known Anglo-American ballad, more commonly known as “The Golden Vanity.” Copland’s setting is based on a recording issued by the Library of Congress from its collection of the Archive of American Folk Song. “The Boatsmen’s Dance” was first published in Boston in 1843 as an “original banjo melody” for a minstrel show by Daniel Decatur Emmett, who later composed “Dixie.”
The Music

Suite from *The Firebird* (1919 version)

Igor Stravinsky
Born in Lomonosov, Russia, June 17, 1882
Died in New York City, April 6, 1971

Music from Stravinsky’s celebrated *Firebird* ballet has become one of The Philadelphia Orchestra’s most requested signature pieces. As an orchestral showpiece, it is among the most often played works in the Orchestra’s concert history and has been performed in well over half of the Orchestra’s seasons (not a single year was missed from 1962 to 1990). It first appeared on a Philadelphia program in 1917 (utilizing the composer’s original Suite from 1911). With performances at home and on tour surrounding the Orchestra’s Centennial Celebration, *The Firebird* is approaching its 500th performance by this Orchestra. The music has been recorded by the Philadelphians eight times, a number matched—but not exceeded—by only a handful of other compositions.

Igor Stravinsky left his native Russia in 1911, settling first in Paris and later in the United States, and finally becoming for all practical purposes a citizen of the world. Yet something of the Russian spirit and character remained with him throughout his long and fruitful life. This spirit sprang in part from an enormous knowledge and large repertoire of folk tunes and tales, along with sheer musical adventurousness. And the result permeates so much of Stravinsky’s music that one could identify many works blind.

Young Stravinsky’s veneration of Russian folklore was manifested early on, in the loving care with which he set to music the fairy-tale of the Firebird in 1909. Written on commission from the great dance impresario Sergei Diaghilev, the ballet *Firebird* was composed for the first Parisian season of the exiled Ballets Russes. Its enormous success at the Paris Opéra premiere in June 1910 proclaimed Stravinsky as the most promising of Europe’s young composers. *Petrushka* and *The Rite of Spring*, both composed for Diaghilev, followed in rapid succession. Igor Stravinsky, aged 27, had arrived.

The tale of the *Firebird* is simple. An enchanted bird guides Crown Prince Ivan, who is lost in the woods, to the castle of Kastcheï the Deathless. The evil Kastcheï, who holds 13 princesses captive, would ordinarily turn Ivan to stone, as he has all the other knights who have attempted to free the princesses. But Ivan is more valiant, and he has a magic bird on his side. Aided by the Firebird, who tells him the secret of Kastcheï’s immorality (that Kastcheï’s soul is in the form of an egg kept in a casket), the Prince defeats the evil forces, the magic castle vanishes, all the knights come back to life to comfort the freed princesses, and Ivan makes away with the most beautiful princess, who becomes his bride as the dark woods fill with light and everyone dances to the familiar finale-music.

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