

# Season 2019-2020

Wednesday, September 18,  
at 7:00

## The Philadelphia Orchestra

### Opening Night Concert

**Yannick Nézet-Séguin** Conductor

**Adela Zaharia** Soprano

**Audra McDonald** Soprano

**Strauss** Suite from *Der Rosenkavalier*

**Verdi** “È strano! ... Ah, fors'è lui ... Sempre libera,” from  
*La traviata*

**Oliveros** “The Tuning Meditation,” from Four Meditations  
for Orchestra  
*First Philadelphia Orchestra performance*

Ms. McDonald in performance with The Philadelphia Orchestra

*Andy Einhorn, piano*

*Mark Vanderpoel, bass*

*Gene Lewin, drums*

This program runs approximately 1 hour, 30 minutes, and will be performed without an intermission.

We thank the musicians of The Philadelphia Orchestra and Music Director Yannick Nézet-Séguin for graciously donating their services in support of this event and The Philadelphia Orchestra.

The new conductor's podium, constructed by E.B. Mahony Builders, Inc., makes its debut at tonight's concert, with thanks to Elizabeth and Edwin Mahoney.

This concert is part of The Philadelphia Orchestra's WomenNOW celebration.

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

# *Opening Night 2019*

The Philadelphia Orchestra extends a very special thank you to our 2019 Opening Night Gala Co-Chairs, Richelle Rabenou, Peter Shaw, and Yumi Kendall; the Opening Night Gala Committee and the Volunteer Association President Nancy Galloway and Immediate Past President Lisa Yakulis; Volunteer Committees; Board Chairman Richard B. Worley; the Board of Directors; and our many generous sponsors and benefactors for all their hard work, support, and dedication in creating a spectacular evening to celebrate our upcoming season!

# The Philadelphia Orchestra

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 eighth 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.

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 Play!Ns, 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 four 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 [www.philorch.org](http://www.philorch.org).

# Music Director

Jessica Griffin



Music Director **Yannick Nézet-Séguin** will lead The Philadelphia Orchestra through at least the 2025–26 season, an extraordinary and significant long-term commitment. Additionally, he became the third music director of New York's Metropolitan Opera in August 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, paired with a fresh approach to programming, have been heralded by critics and audiences alike. The *New York Times* has called him "phenomenal," adding that under his baton, "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 summer 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 has conducted critically acclaimed performances at many of the leading opera houses.

Yannick signed an exclusive recording contract with Deutsche Grammophon (DG) in 2018. Under his leadership The Philadelphia Orchestra returned to recording with four CDs on that label (a fifth will be released in October). His upcoming recordings will include projects with The Philadelphia Orchestra, the Metropolitan Opera, the Chamber Orchestra of Europe, and the Orchestre Métropolitain, with which he will also continue to record for ATMA Classique. Additionally, he has recorded with the Rotterdam Philharmonic on DG, EMI Classics, and BIS Records, and the London Philharmonic for the LPO label.

A native of Montreal, Yannick studied piano, conducting, composition, and chamber music at Montreal's Conservatory of Music and continued his studies with renowned conductor Carlo Maria Giulini; he also studied choral conducting with Joseph Flummerfelt at Westminster Choir College. Among Yannick's honors are an appointment as Companion of the Order of Canada; an Officer of the Order of Montreal; *Musical America's* 2016 Artist of the Year; the Prix Denise-Pelletier; and honorary doctorates from the University of Quebec in Montreal, the Curtis Institute of Music, Westminster Choir College of Rider University, McGill University, the University of Montreal, and the University of Pennsylvania.

To read Yannick's full bio, please visit [philorch.org/conductor](http://philorch.org/conductor).

# Soloist



Klaudina Tedy

Romanian soprano **Adela Zaharia** makes her Philadelphia Orchestra debut with tonight's performance. After launching the Orchestra's season, she performs a concert of Mozart arias with the Camerata Salzburg at Zaryadye Hall in Moscow. Another highlight of her season is the world premiere of *7 Deaths of Maria Callas*, conceived by Serbian performance artist and filmmaker Marina Abramović. Opening in April 2020 at the Bavarian State Opera in Munich, the production will tour to the Maggio Musicale Fiorentino, the Greek National Opera, and other venues next season. She returns to her home theater, the Deutsche Oper am Rhein in Düsseldorf, to sing Violetta in Verdi's *La traviata*, as well as Elvira in a new production of Bellini's *I puritani* mounted especially for her. In the spring of 2020 she also makes both house and role debuts at the Berlin State Opera as Adina in Donizetti's *The Elixir of Love*. She ends the season by reprising Angelica in Haydn's *Orlando paladino* with conductor Ivor Bolton at the Bavarian State Opera.

In the 2018–19 season, Ms. Zaharia added *La traviata* and the title role in Donizetti's *Maria Stuarda* to her repertory while also performing Konstanze in Mozart's *The Abduction from the Seraglio*, Gilda in Verdi's *Rigoletto*, and the title role of Marius Felix Lange's *The Snow Queen* in Europe and North America. Concert highlights included her BBC Proms debut singing the world premiere of Iain Bell's *Aurora* with the Liverpool Philharmonic as well as tours to Moscow and Barcelona as soloist with the Deutsche Oper am Rhein. Previously, she was a member of the Komische Oper Berlin and toured with the company to the Gran Teatre del Liceu in Barcelona, the Bolshoi Theater, the Edinburgh International Festival, and the Shanghai Grand Theater. In 2017 she won first prize and the Zarzuela prize at Plácido Domingo's Operalia competition held that year in Astana, Kazakhstan. She is also the recipient of the Grand Prix of the Hariclea Darclée International Voice Competition in 2012.

Ms. Zaharia studied voice and piano at the Gheorghe Dima Music Academy in Romania. Her concert repertoire includes Orff's *Carmina burana*, Handel's *Messiah*, Bach's St. Matthew Passion, and Mozart's Requiem.

# The Philadelphia Orchestra

Yannick Nézet-Séguin Music Director

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**Photo: Jessica Griffin**

# Soloist

Allison Michael Orenstein



**Audra McDonald** made her Philadelphia Orchestra debut in 1999. The winner of a record-breaking six Tony Awards, two Grammy Awards, and an Emmy Award, she was named one of *Time* magazine's 100 most influential people of 2015 and received a 2015 National Medal of Arts—America's highest honor for achievement in the arts—from President Barack Obama. In addition to her Tony-winning performances in *Carousel*, *Master Class*, *Ragtime*, *A Raisin in the Sun*, *The Gershwins' Porgy and Bess*, and *Lady Day at Emerson's Bar & Grill*—the role that also served as the vehicle for her 2017 debut on London's West End—she has appeared on Broadway in *The Secret Garden*, *Marie Christine* (Tony nomination), *Henry IV*, *110 in the Shade* (Tony nomination), *Shuffle Along*, or, *The Making of the Musical Sensation of 1921 and All that Followed*, and *Frankie and Johnny in the Clair de Lune*.

A Juilliard-trained soprano, Ms. McDonald's opera credits include Poulenc's *La Voix humaine* and the world premiere of Michael John LaChiusa's *Send* at Houston Grand Opera, and Weill's *Rise and Fall of the City of Mahagonny* at Los Angeles Opera. On television she was seen by millions as the Mother Abbess in NBC's *The Sound of Music Live!* and played Dr. Naomi Bennett on ABC's *Private Practice*. She won an Emmy Award for her role as host of PBS' *Live from Lincoln Center* and has received nominations for *Wit*, *A Raisin in the Sun*, and *Lady Day at Emerson's Bar & Grill*. Having first appeared as Liz Lawrence on CBS' *The Good Wife*, she can now be seen on CBS All Access' *The Good Fight*, which launches its fourth season in 2020. On film she has appeared in *Seven Servants*, *The Object of My Affection*, *Cradle Will Rock*, *It Runs in the Family*, *The Best Thief in the World*, *She Got Problems*, *Rampart*, *Ricki and the Flash*, Disney's live-action *Beauty and the Beast*, and the movie-musical *Hello Again*.

Ms. McDonald has released five solo albums on the Nonesuch label and recently released *Sing Happy* with the New York Philharmonic on Decca Gold. She also maintains a major career as a concert artist, regularly appearing on the great stages of the world and with leading international orchestras. Of all her many roles, her favorites are the ones performed off stage: passionate advocate for equal rights and homeless youth, wife to actor Will Swenson, and mother.

# Framing the Program

## Parallel Events

**1853**

**Verdi**

*La traviata*

**Music**

Schumann

Violin Concerto

**Literature**

Hawthorne

*Tanglewood*

*Tales*

**Art**

Courbet

*The Bathers*

**History**

Crimean War

begins

**1910**

**Strauss**

*Der*

*Rosenkavalier*

**Music**

Stravinsky

*The Firebird*

**Literature**

Forster

*Howard's End*

**Art**

Modigliani

*The Cellist*

**History**

Du Bois founds

NAACP

**1971**

**Oliveros**

"The Tuning

Meditation"

**Music**

Musgrave

Horn Concerto

**Literature**

Blatty

*The Exorcist*

**Art**

Hockney

*Mr. and Mrs.*

*Clark and Perry*

**History**

Cigarette ads

banned from

U.S. TV

Yannick Nézet-Séguin and The Philadelphia Orchestra open the 120th season with the rousing Suite from Richard Strauss's *Der Rosenkavalier*. Something like the teasing trailer to a movie, this festive and waltz-infused piece offers selected highlights from Strauss's great opera.

The concert continues with the young Romanian soprano Adela Zaharia singing the dazzling aria that concludes the first act of Giuseppe Verdi's *La traviata*. The courtesan Violetta has just met Alfredo and finds herself strangely attracted to the earnest young man—perhaps he is the one for whom her soul mysteriously longs. But she rejects this “folly” and declares herself “Sempre libera”—Forever free!

The American experimental composer Pauline Oliveros wrote her imaginative “Tuning Meditation” in 1971. The piece is not traditionally notated, but rather consists of a set of instructions for performers. They are told to start playing a pitch they imagine in their mind and then listen to another player's pitch and begin to match it as closely as possible. A gentle and luminous sound unfolds during this meditative experiment in “deep listening.”

The concert concludes with the electrifying Audra McDonald singing selections of music by George Gershwin, Stephen Sondheim, Richard Rodgers, and others.

The Philadelphia Orchestra is the only orchestra in the world with three weekly broadcasts on SiriusXM's *Symphony Hall*, Channel 76, on Mondays at 7 PM, Thursdays at 12 AM, and Saturdays at 4 PM.

# The Music

## Suite from *Der Rosenkavalier*



**Richard Strauss**  
**Born in Munich, June 11,**  
**1864**  
**Died in Garmisch-**  
**Partenkirchen,**  
**September 8, 1949**

“Light, flowing tempi,” wrote Richard Strauss of the manner in which one should approach the performance of his opera *Der Rosenkavalier*, “without compelling the singers to rattle off the text. In a word: Mozart, not Lehár.” Indeed Strauss’s incomparable opera has a uniquely lyrical quality that for many listeners is more serious than comic—perhaps the 18th-century term “semi-seria” should be called into service here, a word that was used to describe comic opera with a foundation of profundity. It is not coincidental that Mozart’s “semi-serious” opera *The Marriage of Figaro* comes to mind, for it clearly served as a model for *Rosenkavalier* in a number of respects. Strauss composed his opera from 1909 to 1910, working closely with his librettist, the great poet Hugo von Hofmannsthal; it was the second of their six splendid collaborations, and from an artistic standpoint it was the most successful. Already lionized by the German public—partly as a result of the immense popularity of his salacious shocker *Salome* (1905)—Strauss was surprised to see the success of *Rosenkavalier* nearly surpass that of his earlier tragedy. First performed at the Dresden Court Theater in January 1911, it was gobbled up by the public and snatched up immediately by theaters all over Europe. To this day it remains Strauss’s most popular opera.

**Part Bedroom Farce, Part Bourgeois Satire** Set in the mid-18th-century Vienna of Empress Maria Theresa, *Rosenkavalier* is permeated with waltzes—even though, strictly speaking, the waltz as genre did not come into being until later, and thus its appearance here was somewhat anachronistic. The work is part bedroom farce on the scandalous order of Mozart’s *Figaro*, part archetypal bourgeois satire in the Molière vein. Adapted from a French novel by Louvet de Couvray (a contemporary of Beaumarchais, on whose work Mozart and Lorenzo Da Ponte based *Figaro*), it is a tale as full of intrigues and subplots as any 18th-century comedy. On the surface it is simply a story of bourgeois manners surrounding love, marriage, and alliances of noble families created through arranged (and often loveless) marriages; beneath the froth, however, are serious musings on the nature of fidelity, kinship, aging, and altruism.

At the center of the drama is the Marschallin Marie Thérèse, who at the opening of the opera (and of the Suite

heard on tonight's concert) is engaged in a love-tryst with the strapping young Count Rofrano (Octavian) while her husband, the Field Marshal, is away on duty. Later that same day her cousin, the oafish Baron von Ochs, comes to visit, announcing that he would like to marry Sophie, the young daughter of the Faninal family; he aims to propose to her by presenting her with a silver rose. The Marschallin suggests sending young Octavian as envoy to present the rose, and Ochs agrees. In the second act, when the young man presents the rose to the lovely Sophie, the two fall immediately in love. (It is Octavian, then, who is the "rose-knight," or *Rosenkavalier*. Because of his youth, his is a "trousers role," sung by a mezzo-soprano.) Octavian and Ochs duel for Sophie's love, and the younger man wounds Ochs's arm. The third act begins with a typical farce designed to "teach Ochs a lesson," complete with an attempted seduction by Octavian, dressed in drag as "Mariandel." At the scene's culmination, in which policemen are called in to shame the Baron, the wise and authoritative Marschallin breaks in to restore order. Renouncing her own dalliance with the young man (she knows he will ultimately leave her for a younger woman anyway), the worldly Marie Thérèse gives Sophie and Octavian her blessing, content with the knowledge that the couple will marry for love and not—as in her own case—for reasons of expediency.

**A Closer Look** The music of *Rosenkavalier* is full of wistful romance, with a palpable undercurrent of sadness, an awareness of life's brevity. Several orchestral suites have been spawned from this glorious music, including a background score for a silent-film version of the opera prepared in 1926 by film assistants and conducted (rather reluctantly) by Strauss himself. The composer arranged a set of waltzes from the opera for concert performance, but was never moved to gather a more broadly encompassing suite of the most important moments of the work. In 1944 the conductor Artur Rodzinski prepared an orchestral suite for performance with the New York Philharmonic, which was possibly approved by Strauss and quickly became a favorite of Eugene Ormandy and of Philadelphia Orchestra audiences. (Rodzinski's authorship of this arrangement is subject to dispute. Ormandy's own score of the Suite has been inscribed with the following: "Opera score made into a suite. [Arr. by] Rodzinski?, Ormandy?, Dor[at]i?") This score includes paste-ins and written-out transitions, suggesting that it had been used in modular fashion by guest conductors, each of whom altered it according to his own taste.)

Der Rosenkavalier was composed from 1909 to 1910.

*Eugene Ormandy conducted the first Philadelphia Orchestra performances of the Suite, in February 1945, although the entire opera had been performed in November/December 1934 with Fritz Reiner conducting. The first time the Orchestra performed any music from the opera was in October 1911, when Carl Pohlig conducted a waltz on subscription concerts. The Suite's most recent appearance on subscription concerts was in December 2014, with Yannick Nézet-Séguin on the podium.*

*The Philadelphians recorded the work four times, all with Ormandy: in 1947, 1958, and 1964 for CBS, and in 1974 for RCA. A live recording from 2014 with Nézet-Séguin is also available by digital download.*

*The score calls for three flutes (III doubling piccolo), three oboes (III doubling English horn), three clarinets (III doubling E-flat clarinet), bass clarinet, three bassoons (III doubling contrabassoon), four horns, three trumpets, three trombones, tuba, timpani, percussion (bass drum, cymbals, glockenspiel, ratchet, snare drum, tambourine, triangle), two harps, celesta, and strings.*

*The Suite runs approximately 20 minutes in performance.*

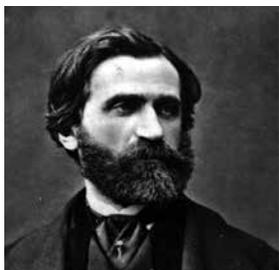
In the version published by Boosey & Hawkes in 1945, the *Rosenkavalier* Suite comprises much of the Prelude to Act I; the presentation of the silver rose (accompanied by the striking and justly famous chromatic chords consisting of piccolo, flutes, celesta, harp, and solo violins); the arrival of Baron von Ochs in Act II; the second-act waltzes; and finally the duet (the "Ist ein Traum" culmination of the love drama—possibly the opera's most beautiful music); the trio; and the big waltz from Act III.

—Paul J. Horsley

# The Music

“È strano! ... Ah, fors'è lui ... Sempre libera,”

from *La traviata*



**Giuseppe Verdi**

**Born in Roncole, near  
Busseto, October 9 or 10,  
1813**

**Died in Milan, January 27,  
1901**

The early 1850s saw Giuseppe Verdi produce a trio of enormously popular operas in rapid succession: *Rigoletto* (1851), *Il trovatore* (The Troubadour; 1853), and *La traviata* (The Fallen Woman, 1853). He had already composed more than a dozen during what he called his “galley years,” a reference to his being a slave to the demands of opera houses in Italy and abroad. Verdi and his librettist, Francesco Maria Piave, based *La traviata* on *La Dame aux camélias* (The Lady of the Camélias), a play by Alexandre Dumas the younger (1824–95), about a beautiful young courtesan named Violetta.

That *La traviata* is Verdi’s most intimate opera may be because the work mirrored actual events touching deeply personal chords in the lives of both the writer and the composer. Dumas’s play was adapted from his own earlier novel, which was largely autobiographical—he had been in love with Marie Duplessis (1824–47), the real-life Violetta. (Franz Liszt was also in love with her—just about everybody was.) As for Verdi, he was living in Paris at the time with Giuseppina Strepponi, a former singer, and some of his family and friends disapproved of their relationship. (They eventually married.)

**A Closer Look** The plot concerns the love of Violetta (Marie/Giuseppina) for Alfredo Germont (Dumas/Verdi), whose imperious father objects to their relationship. “È strano! ... Ah, fors’è lui ... Sempre libera” is the stunning extended final scene of the first act in which Violetta muses on her strange and unexpected attraction to Alfredo, whom she has just met at a party. After the opening recitative, a slow section conveys her ambivalence as she realizes that she may actually be in love. “Madness,” she declares, and in the virtuoso concluding section affirms that she must “always be free” even as the off-stage Alfredo continues to woo her with strains from their earlier love duet.

As is often the case in grand opera, all does not end happily. Violetta and Alfredo leave Paris to live together in the country but his father, Giorgio, convinces her to give him up as their relationship threatens his daughter’s marriage prospects. Later, Alfredo humiliates Violetta in front of her

friends. Giorgio tells Alfredo of Violetta's sacrifice and he rushes to her side. But it is too late. They declare their love as she dies from tuberculosis as the curtain falls.

—Christopher H. Gibbs

**“È strano! ... Ah, fors'è lui ... Sempre libera,”  
from *La traviata*  
(Francesco Maria Piave)**

<i>È strano! È strano! In core scolpiti ho quegli accenti! Saria per me sventura un serio amore? Che risolvi, o turbata anima mia? Null'uomo ancora t'accendeva. O gioia ch'io non conobbi, esser amata amando! E sdegnarla poss'io per l'aride follie del viver mio?</i>	How strange! How strange! His words are burned upon my heart! Would a real love be a tragedy for me? What decision are you taking, oh my soul? No man has ever made me fall in love. What joy, such as I have never known— loving, being loved! And can I scorn it for the arid nonsense of my present life?
<i>Ah, fors'è lui che l'anima solinga ne' tumulti godea sovente pingere de' suoi colori occulti! Lui, che modesto e vigile all'egre soglie ascese, e nuova febbre accese destandomi all'amor! A quell'amor ch'è palpito dell'universo intero, misterioso, altero, croce e delizia al cor! Ah!</i>	Ah, perhaps he is the one whom my soul, lonely in the tumult, loved to imagine in secrecy! Watchful, though I never knew it, he came here while I lay sick, awakening a new fever, the fever of love. Love that is the very breath of the universe itself— mysterious, noble, both cross and ecstasy of the heart. Ah!
<i>Follie! Delirio vano è questo! Povera donna, sola, abbandonata in questo popoloso deserto che appellano Parigi. Che spero or più? Che far degg'io!</i>	Folly! This is mad delirium! A poor woman, alone, lost in this crowded desert known to men as Paris. What can I hope for? What should I do?

La traviata was composed in 1853.

Flora Wilson was the soloist in the Orchestra's first performance of the aria (although without the introductory *È strano*), at the New National Theatre in Washington, D.C., in February 1910 with Carl Pohlig. Most recently, Angela Meade performed the piece at the Orchestra's 2015 New Year's Eve concert with Yannick Nézet-Séguin.

The score calls for solo soprano, piccolo, flute, two oboes, two clarinets, two bassoons, four horns, two trumpets, three trombones, tuba, harp, and strings.

Performance time is approximately nine minutes.

*Gioire, di voluttà nei vortici  
perir!  
Gioire!*

*Sempre libera degg'io  
folleggiare di gioia in gioia,  
vo' che scorra il viver mio,  
pei sentieri del  
piacer  
nasca il giorno, o il giorno  
muoia,  
sempre lieta ne' ritrovi,  
a diletti sempre  
nuovi  
dee volare il mio pensier.*

*Follie! follie! follie!  
Gioire! gioire!*

*Sempre libera degg'io  
(ecc.)*

Revel in the whirlpool of  
earthly pleasures.  
Revel in joy!

Forever free, I must pass  
madly from joy to joy;  
my life's course shall be  
forever in the paths of  
pleasure  
whether it be dawn or  
dusk,  
I must always live  
gaily in the world's gay  
places,  
ever seeking newer joys.

Folly! Folly! Folly!  
From joy to joy!

Forever free, I must pass  
(etc.)

English translation by Darrin T. Britting

# The Music

## “The Tuning Meditation,” from Four Meditations for Orchestra



**Pauline Oliveros**  
**Born in Houston, Texas,**  
**May 30, 1932**  
**Died in Kingston, New**  
**York, November 24, 2016**

In the middle decades of the 20th century a wave of experimental composers, many of them American, created pieces that fundamentally challenged conceptions of what music is and does. Indeed, these works were often *conceptual*, not notated in the conventional manner that stretches back many centuries. John Cage's *4'33"* (1952)—subtitled “Tacet for any instrument or instruments”—is perhaps the most notorious: The performer(s) are instructed not to make a sound for 4 minutes and 33 seconds. Cage's “silent piece,” of course, is not silent—be it snickering from audience members or the ambient noise of the performance space, sounds are heard, which makes one question what a piece of music really is. Earle Brown, Morton Feldman, and other avant-garde figures also challenged ideas about the nature of musical compositions.

**Rethinking Music** Pauline Oliveros, slightly younger than the rest, was another experimental pioneer in her use of improvisation, tape, and electronics. She was also an accomplished accordionist, initially trained in her native Texas before moving to San Francisco for further studies. Oliveros went on to teach for many years at the University of California in San Diego and at other institutions. By the end of her life—she died in 2016 at age 84—she had founded and ran the Deep Listening Institute in Kingston, New York.

On tonight's concert we hear one of her *Four Meditations for Orchestra*, which she wrote between 1971 and 1997. “The Tuning Meditation” is the earliest of the set, but placed second. The others, “From Unknown Silences” (1996), “Interdependence” (1997), and “Approaches and Departures” (1995), likewise are not traditionally notated but rather a text consisting of a set of instructions (“recipe-like” she calls them) for performance by vocal or instrumental ensembles: “There is no melody, no harmony and no metrical rhythm . . . all performers' attention can be given to sound and invention.” The aim, Oliveros states, is that “the boundary between composer and performer is greatly diminished. . . . The creative process is shared.”

*"The Tuning Meditation" was composed in 1971.*

*This is the first Philadelphia Orchestra performance of the work, and the first time the Orchestra has performed any work by the composer.*

*"The Tuning Meditation" is a conceptual piece that can be performed with an ensemble of any size or complement.*

*Performance time is approximately 10 minutes.*

*"The Tuning Meditation"*  
*Pauline Oliveros ©1971*  
*Permission from the Pauline Oliveros Trust and the Ministry of Maât*  
*Members ASCAP*

**A Closer Look** The recipe for "The Tuning Meditation" is as follows:

Begin by playing a pitch that you hear in your imagination. After contributing your pitch, listen for another player's pitch and tune in unison to the pitch as exactly as possible. Listen again and play a pitch that no one else is playing. The duration of pitches is determined by the duration of a comfortable breath or bow. The dynamic level is soft throughout the piece. Brass players use mutes.

Oliveros instructs the players that the piece should unfold by alternating between "playing a new pitch of your own that no one else is playing, just listening, [and] tuning in unison to the pitch of another player." The performers are to "introduce new pitches at will and tune to as many different players as are present. Although the dynamic level is soft make your tones available to others. Play warmly with variations in tone quality."

Oliveros also provides a brief commentary on the overall effect she wants to achieve in this surprising and luminous experience: "The Tuning Meditation is not difficult technically for the players since there is no metrical demand. However concentration is necessary and the ability to match pitch. If the instructions are followed carefully then a beautiful texture arises with common tones threading through the cloud of sound."

—Christopher H. Gibbs

# Musical Terms

## GENERAL TERMS

**Aria:** An accompanied solo song (often in ternary form), usually in an opera or oratorio

**Cadence:** The conclusion to a phrase, movement, or piece based on a recognizable melodic formula, harmonic progression, or dissonance resolution

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

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

**Diatonic:** Melody or harmony drawn primarily from the tones of the major or minor scale

**Dissonance:** A combination of two or more tones requiring resolution

**Grand opera:** An ornate and elaborate style of opera that was developed in France in the 19th century that involved no spoken dialogue

**Harmonic:** Pertaining to chords and to the theory and practice of harmony

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

**Intonation:** The treatment of musical pitch in performance

**Legato:** Smooth, even, without any break between notes

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

**Mute:** A mechanical device used on musical instruments to muffle the tone

**Op.:** Abbreviation for opus, a term used to indicate the chronological position of a composition within a composer's output. Opus numbers are not always reliable because they are often applied in the order of publication rather than composition.

**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.

**Polyphony:** A term used to designate music in more than one part and the style in which all or several of the musical parts move to some extent independently

**Recitative:** Declamatory singing, free in tempo and rhythm

**Scale:** The series of tones which form (a) any

major or minor key or (b) the chromatic scale of successive semi-tonic steps

**Suite:** During the Baroque period, an instrumental genre consisting of several movements in the same key, some or all of which were based on the forms and styles of dance music. Later, a group of pieces extracted from a larger work, especially an opera or ballet.

**Tempo:** The speed of music

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

**Timbre:** Tone color or tone quality

**Tonic:** The keynote of a scale

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