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Saturday, October 10, 2026, at 6:30

SYMPHONY BALL

Klaus Mäkelä Conductor
Thomas Hampson Baritone
Chicago Symphony Chorus
Donald Palumbo Director

STRAVINSKY — *Petrushka*
The Shrovetide Fair
In Petrushka's Room
The Moor's Room
The Grand Carnival

WALTON — *Belshazzar's Feast*
THOMAS HAMPSON
CHICAGO SYMPHONY CHORUS

There will be no intermission.

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NORTHERN TRUST

IGOR STRAVINSKY

Born June 17, 1882; Oranienbaum, Russia
Died April 6, 1971, New York City

Petrushka



The Firebird was Stravinsky's first big hit, and it made him famous, almost literally overnight, at the age of twenty-eight. *Petrushka* is that most difficult of artistic creations—the follow-up. *The Firebird* had not only made Stravinsky the talk of Paris, then the capital of the international art world—capturing the attention of the city's biggest names, including Claude Debussy and Marcel Proust—but it also had scored a huge success for Sergei Diaghilev, who had taken a risk hiring the young, relatively unknown composer to write music for the Ballets Russes' 1910 season. Naturally, both men wanted another sensation for the next year.

Stravinsky already had an idea. While he was finishing the orchestration of *The Firebird,* he had dreamed about "a solemn pagan rite: wise elders, seated in a circle, watching a young girl dance herself to death. They were sacrificing her to propitiate the god of spring." These powerful images suggested music to Stravinsky, and he began to sketch almost at once. (Early in his career, most of Stravinsky's initial musical ideas were inspired by visual



COMPOSED
August 1910–May 26, 1911

reorchestrated, 1946–47

FIRST PERFORMANCE
June 13, 1911; Paris, France. Sergei Diaghilev's Ballets Russes, Pierre Monteux conducting (complete ballet)

INSTRUMENTATION
1947 version: 3 flutes (3rd doubling piccolo, 2 oboes and english horn, 3 clarinets (3rd doubling bass clarinet), 2 bassoons and contrabassoon, 4 horns, 3 trumpets, 3 trombones, tuba, percussion, timpani, harp, piano, celesta, strings

APPROXIMATE PERFORMANCE TIME
34 minutes

FIRST CSO PERFORMANCES
November 21 and 22, 1930, Orchestra Hall. Frederick Stock conducting (suite)

July 9, 1937, Ravinia Festival. Ernest Ansermet conducting (suite)

January 5 and 6, 1961, Orchestra Hall. Pierre Monteux conducting

July 9, 1977, Ravinia Festival. James Levine conducting

CSO PERFORMANCES, THE COMPOSER CONDUCTING
Between 1935 and 1964, Stravinsky conducted the CSO in selections from *Petrushka* on thirteen occasions at Orchestra Hall, the Pabst Theater in Milwaukee, and the Ravinia Festival.

MOST RECENT CSO PERFORMANCES
August 14, 1982, Ravinia Festival. Edo de Waart conducting (suite)

April 20, 22, and 23, 2023, Orchestra Hall. Fabien Gabel conducting

October 8 and 9, 2026, Orchestra Hall. Klaus Mäkelä conducting

CSO RECORDINGS
1969. Carlo Maria Giulini conducting. Angel (suite)

1977. James Levine conducting. RCA

1993. Sir Georg Solti conducting. London

imagery.) At first he thought of it as a symphony, but when he played parts of it at the piano for Diaghilev early that summer, the impresario immediately knew that this was music for dance. With Diaghilev's urging, Stravinsky continued working on the score that would eventually become their biggest sensation, *Le sacre du printemps—The Rite of Spring.* But, in the meantime, Stravinsky got sidetracked.

When Diaghilev visited Stravinsky in Switzerland at the end of the summer, he was stunned to discover that the composer had begun a completely different work instead. As Stravinsky recalled, Diaghilev "was much astonished when, instead of the sketches of the *Sacre,* I played him the piece which I had just composed and which later became the second scene of *Petrushka.*"

For the second time that year, one of Stravinsky's landmark ballet scores started out not as music to be danced, but as an unnamed abstract symphonic score. But unlike *The Rite of Spring, Petrushka* moved from sketch to stage without serious interruption. What had begun as just a detour from *The Rite* now became the main project of the year, and, at the same time, the score with which Stravinsky found his modernist voice—the voice that made *The Rite* possible. Musically, it had started innocently enough, almost as a kind of warm-up for *The Rite.* "I wanted to refresh myself," Stravinsky later explained, "by composing an orchestral piece in which the piano would play the most important part." The narrative and the title came later, although Stravinsky admitted that "in composing the music, I had in mind a distinct picture of a puppet, suddenly endowed with life." (Petrushka is a Russian version of the male half of the Punch and Judy puppets.) As with *The Rite of Spring,* it was Diaghilev who immediately saw the potential in Stravinsky's dazzling music for another dance classic:

> [Diaghilev] was so much pleased with it that he would not leave it alone and began persuading me to develop the theme of the puppet's sufferings and make it into a whole ballet. When he remained in Switzerland, we worked out together the general lines of the subject and the plot in accordance with ideas which I suggested . . . I began at once to compose the first scene of the ballet.

There were still a few details to be worked out, including Stravinsky's fee (1,000 rubles, something close to $20,000 today) and the selection of the painter Alexandre Benois to polish the scenario and to provide costumes and scenery. (Michel Fokine soon signed on as choreographer and Pierre Monteux agreed to conduct the premiere.) With this extraordinary team lined up, Stravinsky and Diaghilev now had their sights set on surpassing the success of *The Firebird.* Aside from Stravinsky's brush with nicotine poisoning in February 1911, work on *Petrushka* progressed smoothly. Rehearsals were a different story. The dancers and orchestral musicians, innocent of the terrors of *The Rite of Spring,* still no more than a pile of sketches, found the complexities of Stravinsky's score almost unmanageable.

Opening night, however, was a great triumph, crowned by Vaslav Nijinsky's brilliant dancing of the title role. Brash, bold, exciting, and in-your-face "modern," *Petrushka* was another overnight hit with the public. For the next two years, until the legendary premiere of *The Rite of Spring* set Paris afire with fresh controversy, *Petrushka* was the latest word in musical modernism.

The scenario is in four scenes; the first and last are public, taking place in Admiralty Square in Saint Petersburg, in the 1830s; the middle ones are set in private rooms and focus on individual characters. *Petrushka* opens with a busy crowd scene, a kaleidoscopic panorama of street dancers, drummers, a magician playing a flute, a street musician with his hurdy-gurdy, and three puppets—Petrushka, a ballerina, and the Moor. Stravinsky shifts focus and shuffles events like a modern filmmaker: musical passages are cut and spliced, rhythmic patterns jostle one another. Finally, the solo flute charms the three puppets to life, and they join in a brilliant Russian dance.

The two middle scenes are more intimate, relying less on the full orchestra and built of more modestly scaled materials. In the first of these scenes, the spotlight falls on Petrushka,

alone in his room, pondering his grotesque appearance and despairing over his inability to win the love of the ballerina. This is the music Stravinsky had first played for Diaghilev, with a piano solo "exasperating the patience of the orchestra with diabolical cascades of arpeggios. The orchestra in turn retaliates with menacing trumpet blasts. The outcome is a terrific noise, which reaches its climax and ends in the sorrowful and querulous collapse of the poor puppet."

When he first began sketching *Petrushka,* Stravinsky was haunted by the image of a musician rolling two objects over the black and the white keys of the piano, which led him to the idea of a bitonal effect made by combining the white-note C major arpeggio with the black-note F-sharp major arpeggio. This double-sided sonority dominates Petrushka's scene (the first music Stravinsky wrote), and, as the work progressed, it came to represent the conflicting sides of his character—the human versus the puppet.

The Moor's scene builds to a romantic encounter with the ballerina (she enters to a dazzling high trumpet solo). The lovers dance to waltzes







PREVIOUS SPREAD, FROM TOP: Igor Stravinsky, portrait, ca. 1910

Supporters and members of the Ballets Russes: from left to right, Alexandra Botkina (1891–1985), Pavel Koribut-Kubitovitch (1865–1940), Tamara Karsavina (1885–1978), Vaslav Nijinsky (1889–1950), Igor Stravinsky, Alexandre Benois (1870–1960), Sergei Diaghilev (1872–1929), K. Harris, and Alexandra Vassilieva (foreground). Photo by Nicolas Besobrasov, photographer associated with the group, at Beausoleil, France, near Monte Carlo, April 1911

THIS PAGE: Set designs for *Petrushka* by Alexandre Benois: Shrovetide Fair, scenes 1 and 4; Petrushka's Room, scene 2; the Moor's Room, scene 3

borrowed, without apology, from Joseph Lanner, an Austrian composer who was a friend of Johann Strauss, Sr. They are interrupted by the jealous Petrushka.

The finale is another surging crowd scene, characterized by various kinds of music pushing and shoving against each other. Petrushka enters, pursued by the Moor, who strikes him with his saber. Petrushka falls and the crowd grows silent. But when the magician is summoned, he demonstrates that Petrushka is merely a puppet stuffed with sawdust. The square empties. Then, as the magician drags the puppet off, he sees Petrushka's ghost on the roof of the set, thumbing his nose. This, according to Stravinsky, "is the real Petrushka, and his appearance at the end makes the Petrushka of the preceding play a mere doll." *C*

WILLIAM WALTON

Born March 29, 1902; Oldham, Lancashire, England
Died March 8, 1983; La Mortella, Ischia, Italy

Belshazzar's Feast



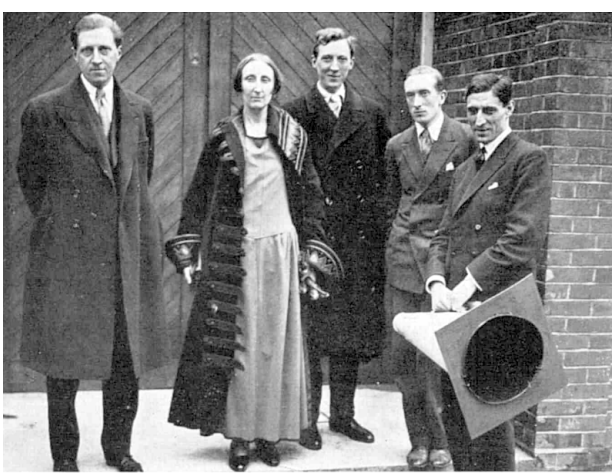
William Walton, who began his musical life as a choirboy in his father's chorus at St. John's Church in Werneth, one of England's oldest communities in the countryside outside Manchester, and then at Christ Church Cathedral in Oxford, grew up to become the enfant terrible of British music. He began to compose at the age of twelve—mostly unaccompanied choral music, a few piano and organ pieces. The earliest sign that he would rebel against a conventional upbringing couched in the grand British tradition was his decision to move in with Osbert and Sacheverell Sitwell, whom he had met at Oxford, as their "adopted or elected brother." (Walton had long feared that after his voice broke, bringing his choir days to an end, he would have to go back home.) The Sitwell boys, along with their sister Edith, gave him the new home he craved: a world of high culture and provocative ideas, artistic freedom and dream working conditions, and perhaps most of all, the unimaginable thrill of creative possibility.

The Sitwell family famously thrived on the very idea of modernity. They had developed a reputation as patrons of the avant-garde (although they were sometimes dismissed as poseurs compared to the innovative Bloomsbury Group that included Virginia Woolf and E.M. Forster). In their stimulating environment in 1923 Walton produced a watershed work, not just in his output but in the history of English music: *Façade,* a setting of twenty eccentric poetic texts by Edith, which she recited through a large papier-mâché megaphone (a sample line: "Beelzebub called for his syllabub in the hotel at Hell."). It was a quintessential Sitwell family production, with Osbert as the "presenter," Edith the soloist, and Sacheverell the "director," who came up with the idea of concealing Edith and the six musicians behind a painted curtain. But at the public premiere in 1923 the attention fell on the experimental, witty, and saucy score by Walton. He was just twenty-one.

From that point on, Walton was the new darling of the British music scene. Walton's passions at the time, however, were American popular music and jazz. He made arrangements of foxtrots for jazz bands at London's Savoy Hotel (they have been lost) and began to compose a fantasia concertante for two pianos, jazz band, and orchestra, a pioneering concoction that was withdrawn before it could be performed and has since disappeared. Although Walton composed a viola concerto that was premiered

by the composer and violist Paul Hindemith in 1929, suggesting that he was a serious composer interested in tackling the big classic forms, it was *Belshazzar's Feast,* which he started that year, that brought all these strands together and sealed his fame.

Belshazzar's Feast began with a commission from the BBC in 1929 for a modest choral piece with one vocal soloist and no more than fifteen instruments. With characteristic cheek, Walton delivered a blockbuster oratorio on a biblical narrative, scored for baritone soloist, double choruses, and a massive orchestra with a full army of percussion including a whip and anvil, as well as piano and organ. The BBC quickly bowed out and passed the premiere on to the Leeds Festival headed by the great Sir Thomas Beecham. Walton later claimed that Beecham, who was appalled by the gargantuan score he had inherited, said to him, "As you'll never hear the thing again, my boy, why not throw in a couple of brass bands?" Walton did just that, adding two ensembles of seven players each, one placed to the left and one to the right of the conductor. (There were extra brass players on hand for the festival's performance of Berlioz's Requiem.) Rehearsals apparently were rough going, particularly for a chorus not used to Walton's spiky harmonies and jazzy rhythms. (The women also objected to singing the word "concubine.") The premiere, in October 1931, led not by Beecham but by Sir Malcolm Sargent, was a great public and critical success but also something of a scandal: the Church of England said the work was unsuitable for performance in cathedrals and the venerable Three Choirs Festival refused to perform it until 1957.



COMPOSED
1931, revised 1948, 1959

FIRST PERFORMANCE
October 8, 1931; Leeds Triennial Festival, England

INSTRUMENTATION
2 flutes and piccolo, 2 oboes, 3 clarinets (doubling E-flat clarinet and bass clarinet), alto saxophone, 2 bassoons and contrabassoon, 4 horns, 3 trumpets, 3 trombones, tuba, timpani, percussion (triangle, tambourine, castanets, side drum, tenor drum, cymbals, suspended cymbal, bass drum, gong, xylophone, glockenspiel, wood block, slapstick anvil), 2 harps, organ, piano, strings, 2 antiphonal brass bands (each consisting of 3 trumpets, 3 trombones, tuba)

APPROXIMATE PERFORMANCE TIME
36 minutes

FIRST CSO PERFORMANCES
March 30, 1952, University Auditorium, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign; April 3 and 4, 1952, Orchestra Hall. Nelson Leonard as soloist, University of Illinois Choir and Men's Glee Club (Paul Young, director), University of Illinois Women's Glee Club (John Bryden, director), University of Illinois Brass Bands (Lyman Starr and Haskell Sexton, directors), Rafael Kubelík conducting

July 24, 1976, Ravinia Festival. Sherrill Milnes as soloist, Scottish National Orchestra Chorus (John Currie, director), André Previn conducting

MOST RECENT CSO PERFORMANCES
November 4, 5, and 6, 1976, Orchestra Hall; November 8, 1976, Carnegie Hall. David Ward as soloist, Chicago Symphony Chorus (Margaret Hillis, director), Sir Georg Solti conducting

CSO RECORDINGS
1952. Nelson Leonard as soloist, University of Illinois Choir and Men's Glee Club (Paul Young, director), University of Illinois Women's Glee Club (John Bryden, director), University of Illinois Brass Bands (Lyman Starr and Haskell Sexton, directors), Rafael Kubelík conducting. CSO

1976. David Ward as soloist, Chicago Symphony Chorus (Margaret Hillis, director), Sir Georg Solti conducting. CSO

COMMENTS

Walton turned to his housemate Osbert Sitwell to assemble a text, drawn largely from the Bible, that depicts the events that take place during the great feast of Belshazzar, king of Babylon: his scandalous use of golden vessels plundered from the First Temple in Jerusalem to praise pagan gods; the mysterious hand that writes a message on the palace wall prophesying doom; the murder of Belshazzar and the celebration of the enslaved Israelites as they embrace their new freedom. Despite the assurance of the finished score, Walton's progress on *Belshazzar's Feast* was slow and difficult. The section where the king and his subjects extol their gods brought Walton to a complete standstill: "I got landed on the word gold," Walton said. "I was there from May to December, perched, unable to move either right or left or up or down."

The score for *Belshazzar's Feast* mirrors Walton's own personality as a man of many contradictions. (He was a fierce critic of British traditions, yet he wrote brilliant ceremonial music for the royal coronations of 1937 and 1953.) Like Francis Poulenc, whose *Gloria* famously pulses with the bold rhythms of secular music, or Leonard Bernstein, whose entire career negotiated his love for everything from Broadway to the synagogue, Walton was a master at making a coherent whole out of his disparate passions: the rhythms and colors of American jazz, the great English choral tradition of a cappella writing, the standard-bearer classical forms, the shock of the new. *Belshazzar's Feast* is, among other things, a musical self-portrait: it is as if Walton found himself painting this great canvas, and that is a moment that stands out in any artist's creative life. Though he lived and worked another half century, Walton never did anything more persuasive and powerful.

Belshazzar's Feast unfolds as a single expanse of music, but it is divided into three sections like one of the grand triptychs of art history. The baritone soloist links the three with unaccompanied solos, like the great declamatory recitatives of the oratorio tradition. The first panel addresses Elijah's prophecy about the enslavement of the Jews and the loss of Jerusalem. The second section depicts the lavish feast, the parade of gods that froze Walton at the word "gold," and the Jews' outrage at the desecration of their holy vessels. The following recitative is spine chilling in its depiction of the writing on the wall and the death of Belshazzar (the celebrated shout from the chorus, "Slain!" is one of Walton's masterstrokes). The final section is a song of praise celebrating the fall of Babylon, intercut with a lament for its passing, concluding with a triumphant "Alleluia."

For a work so rich in incident and drama and one that deals with issues of exile, decadence, the impermanence of civilization, and the downfall of empires, *Belshazzar's Feast* moves with the lightning speed of a short story rather than the majestic pace of a novel. Walton drives urgently from one moment to the next—this is no stately oratorio, with its lineup of separate arias and choruses. (He referred to his score as a choral symphony, avoiding altogether the comparison with sacred cantatas and oratorios. His biographer Michael Kennedy said it was "a human drama, not a religious experience.") The drama itself is rendered in flashes of bold colors. Walton has the sure hand of a dramatist in the way he knows what can be delivered briskly and what is worth stopping for reflection—a skill, oddly, that eluded him when he finally turned to writing the

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PREVIOUS SPREAD: William Walton, portrait, 1949. Photo by Universal History Archive/Universal Images Group via Getty Images | Walton, second from right, with the Sitwells: Osbert (1892–1969), Edith (1887–1964), and Sacheverell (1897–1988); and Neil Porter (1895–1944), actor of the Old Vic Theatre, London, standing far right, holding the papier-mâché megaphone used in performances of Walton and Edith Sitwell's *Façade: An Entertainment*, 1926 | OPPOSITE PAGE: *Belshazzar's Feast*, oil on canvas, ca. 1636–38, by Rembrandt van Rijn (1606–1669). In an episode from the book of Daniel, King Belshazzar of Babylon and his court feast from sacred vessels taken from the temple in Jerusalem by his predecessor Nebuchadnezzar. As they praise their gods of gold, silver, bronze, iron, wood, and stone, a disembodied hand inscribes on the palace wall *Mene, mene, tekel upharsin*—a message Daniel interprets as divine judgment: the king's days are numbered; he has been weighed in the balance and found wanting.



opera *Troilus and Cressida* thirty years later.

From the opening blast from the trombones, the score sweeps through an entire landscape of music. One page calls for no more than quiet unaccompanied choral singing in four parts, another page is black with ink: thirty-some separate instrumental lines, including the two extra "Beecham" antiphonal brass bands, plus the eight parts of two mixed choruses. Walton's use of the orchestra is lavish and opulent, sometimes outdoing even notorious scores such as Strauss's *Salome* or *Elektra*. But it is also very specific in detail and precise in its sound world. Walton knew choral singing intimately from his youth, but the demands of *Belshazzar's Feast* surpass anything he had sung. Here Walton's choir appears in various configurations—as a single big chorus or as two split choruses or smaller "semi-choruses." The choral writing encompasses harsh dissonances, quicksilver swerves from loud to soft, passages that mirror the rhythms of speech, constantly shifting time signatures, tricky syncopations, and—entirely new to a Leeds Festival chorus—the swinging world of American pop. Walton's score thrives on the powerful juxtaposition of disparate sound worlds: the deep, languorous sorrows of "By the waters of Babylon," the jazz band music of praise, the quietude of unaccompanied voices, the thrill of the entire cast in full voice.

The heart of the score is Belshazzar's bacchanal itself, introduced by lightning bolts that slice through the entire orchestra, leading to music of pointed extravagance and excess. The celebration of the pagan gods is keenly orchestrated: the metallic sparkle of the glockenspiel and flutes for the God of Silver, the clanging anvil for the God of Iron, the brilliance of the scattered trumpets and trombones to honor the God of Brass. What then follows is high drama: against the ominous hush of cymbal strokes and the death rattle of castanets, the baritone reads the words the ghostly hand has written on the wall behind the king: *Mene, mene, tekel upharsin*—Thou art weighed in the balance and found wanting. And then, in a thunderclap, Belshazzar is slain. The rest is celebration and the unimaginable joy of the Israelites' freedom. *C*

Phillip Huscher has been the program annotator for the Chicago Symphony Orchestra since 1987. His history of the Orchestra, Passing the Baton: The Chicago Symphony Orchestra and the Music Directors Who Shaped Its Greatness, *has just been published by The University of Chicago Press.*

COMMENTS

BELSHAZZAR'S FEAST

Thus spake Isaiah: — *Osbert Sitwell*

Thy sons that thou shalt beget,
They shall be taken away
And be eunuchs
In the palace of the King of Babylon. — Isaiah 39:7
Howl ye, howl ye, therefore:
For the day of the Lord is at hand. — Isaiah 13:6

By the waters of Babylon,
There we sat down: yea, we wept
And hanged our harps upon the willows. — Psalm 137:1–2

For they that wasted us
Required of us mirth;
They that carried us away captive
Required of us a song.
"Sing us one of the songs of Zion."

How shall we sing the Lord's song
In a strange land? — Psalm 137:3–4

If I forget thee, O Jerusalem,
Let my right hand forget her cunning.
If I do not remember thee,
Let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth;
Yea, if I prefer not Jerusalem above my chief joy. — Psalm 137:5–6

By the waters of Babylon,
There we sat down: yea, we wept. — Psalm 137:1

O daughter of Babylon, who art to be destroyed,
Happy shall he be that taketh thy children
And dasheth them against a stone. — Psalm 137:8–9
For with violence shall that great city Babylon be thrown down,
And shall be found no more at all. — Revelation 18:21

Babylon was a great city, — O. Sitwell
Her merchandise was of gold and silver,
Of precious stones, of pearls, of fine linen,
Of purple, silk, and scarlet,
All manner vessels of ivory,
All manner vessels of most precious wood,
Of brass, iron, and marble,
Cinnamon, odors, and ointments,
Of frankincense, wine, and oil,
Fine flour, wheat, and beasts,
Sheep, horses, chariots, slaves,
And the souls of men. — Revelation 18: 12–13 (abbrev.)

In Babylon — O. Sitwell
Belshazzar the King
Made a great feast,
Made a feast to a thousand of his lords,
And drank wine before the thousand.

Belshazzar, whiles he tasted the wine,
Commanded us to bring the gold and silver vessels:
Yea! the golden vessels, which his father, Nebuchadnezzar,
Had taken out of the temple that was in Jerusalem.

He commanded us to bring the golden vessels
Of the temple of the house of God,
That the King, his Princes, his wives,
And his concubines might drink therein. — Daniel 5:1–3

Then the King commanded us:
"Bring ye the cornet, flute, sackbut, psaltery,
And all kinds of music." They drank wine again,
Yea! drank from the sacred vessels.
And then spake the King: — Daniel 3:5 & O. Sitwell

"Praise ye
  The God of Gold.
Praise ye
  The God of Silver.
Praise ye
  The God of Iron.
Praise ye
  The God of Wood.
Praise ye
  The God of Stone.
Praise ye
  The God of Brass.
Praise ye the Gods!" — Daniel 5:4 (adapted)

Thus in Babylon, the mighty city, — O. Sitwell
Belshazzar the King made a great feast,
Made a feast to a thousand of his lords
And drank wine before the thousand.

Belshazzar, whiles he tasted the wine,
Commanded us to bring the gold and silver vessels
That his Princes, his wives, and his concubines
Might rejoice and drink therein. — Daniel 5:1–2

(Please turn the page quietly.)

COMMENTS

After they had praised their strange gods,	
The idols, and the devils,	
False gods who can neither see nor hear,	
Called they for the timbrel and the pleasant harp	
To extol the glory of the King.	
Then they pledged the King before the people,	
Crying, "Thou, O King, art King of Kings:	mostly O. Sitwell
O King, live forever" . . .	Daniel 3:9
And in that same hour, as they feasted,	
Came forth fingers of a man's hand	
And the King saw	
The part of the hand that wrote.	Daniel 5:5 (abbrev.)
And this was the writing that was written;	
"MENE, MENE, TEKEL UPHARSIN"	Daniel 5:25
"Thou art weighed in the balance	
and found wanting."	Daniel 5:27
In that night was Belshazzar the King slain	Daniel 5:30
And his Kingdom divided.	Daniel 5:28
Then sing aloud to God our strength:	
Make a joyful noise unto the God of Jacob.	
Take a psalm, bring hither the timbrel.	
Blow up the trumpet in the new moon,	Psalm 81:1–3 (abbrev.)
Blow up the trumpet in Zion,	Joel 2:1
For Babylon the Great is fallen.	Revelation 14:8
Alleluia!	
Then sing aloud to God our strength:	
Make a joyful noise unto the God of Jacob,	Psalm 81:1–3 (abbrev.)
While the Kings of the Earth lament	
And the merchants of the Earth	
Weep, wail, and rend their raiment.	
They cry, "Alas, Alas, that great city,	
In one hour is her judgement come."	
The trumpeters and pipers are silent,	
And the harpers have ceased to harp,	
And the light of a candle shall shine no more.	Revelation 18:9–11, 22–23 (adapted)
Then sing aloud to God our strength:	
Make a joyful noise unto the God of Jacob.	Psalm 81:1
For Babylon the Great is fallen.	Revelation 14:8
Alleluia!	

Selected and arranged from the Bible by Osbert Sitwell

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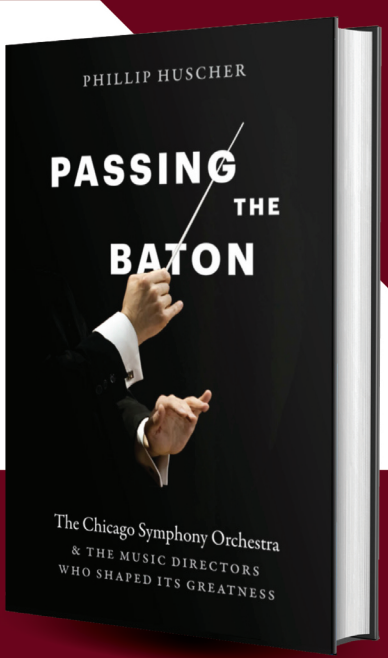
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In ***Passing the Baton: The Chicago Symphony Orchestra and the Music Directors Who Shaped Its Greatness***, longtime CSO program annotator Phillip Huscher traces the Orchestra's remarkable history through the music directors who helped build, challenge and transform the ensemble — from its founding years to the modern eras of Fritz Reiner, Sir Georg Solti, Riccardo Muti and beyond.



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Klaus Mäkelä
Zell Music Director Designate



Finnish conductor Klaus Mäkelä has been music director of the Orchestre de Paris since September 2021, and he served as chief conductor of the Oslo Philharmonic from 2020 to 2026. He assumes the title of chief conductor of the Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra Amsterdam in September 2027 and, in the same season, begins his tenure as Zell Music Director of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra.

Mäkelä's final season as music director of the Orchestre de Paris marks the culmination of a seven-year artistic partnership, with programs centered on large-scale choral and symphonic repertoire, including Berlioz's *Romeo and Juliet* and Mahler's symphonies nos. 3 and 8. This season also includes the world premiere of a new work by Thomas Larcher; Beethoven's *Triple* Concerto with Martha Argerich, Renaud Capuçon, and Gautier Capuçon; and a gala concert at Philharmonie de Paris featuring Stravinsky's *The Rite of Spring,* a work that has become a defining thread of his collaboration with the orchestra.

Season highlights with the Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra include Beethoven's *Missa solemnis,* Mahler's Symphony no. 7, Schumann's Symphony no. 1, Bartók's *Bluebeard's Castle,* Lotta Wennäkoski's *Flounce,* and the world premiere of a new work for orchestra by Magnus Lindberg. In December, Mäkelä conducts the Amsterdam Christmas Matinee for the fifth time and leads the orchestra on tours to France, Germany, Austria, Hungary, and Spain before returning to the Baden-Baden Easter Festival for the second installment of the orchestra's annual residency, where they present three programs.

With the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, Mäkelä opens the season with a three-week residency. In January 2027 he leads the Orchestra on its first international tour under his direction, with concerts in eight cities across Europe.

The season also includes an all-Finnish program pairing Sibelius's Symphony no. 1 with works by Lindberg in May and concludes with Beethoven's Symphony no. 9 and Boulez's rarely performed *Le soleil des eaux* in June. Mäkelä is an exclusive Decca Classics artist whose discography includes works by Stravinsky, Debussy, Berlioz, and Ravel with the Orchestre de Paris, as well as symphonies by Sibelius and Shostakovich with the Oslo Philharmonic. His most recent recording, Mahler's Symphony no. 8, was captured live with the Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra at the Mahler Festival 2025.

In the 2026–27 season, Klaus Mäkelä appears as guest conductor with the Vienna Philharmonic, Berlin Philharmonic, Orchestra del Teatro alla Scala in Milan, London Symphony Orchestra, Bavarian Radio Symphony Orchestra, and the Munich Philharmonic. As a cellist, he partners with members of the Orchestre de Paris, Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra, and Chicago Symphony Orchestra for chamber music performances.

"Friday was nothing less than a virtuoso display of the freedom and mutual trust that first sparked his CSO partnership."

Chicago Tribune, on Mäkelä's debut performances at the Ravinia Festival

Todd Rosenberg Photography

Thomas Hampson Baritone

FIRST CSO PERFORMANCES
July 10, 1987, Ravinia Festival. Mahler's Symphony no. 8, James Levine conducting

September 17, 18, 19, and 22, 1992, Orchestra Hall. Brahms's *A German Requiem,* Daniel Barenboim conducting

MOST RECENT CSO PERFORMANCES
July 25, 2007, Ravinia Festival. Mahler's *Songs of a Wayfarer,* Christoph Eschenbach conducting

January 10, 11, and 12, 2019, Orchestra Hall. Ives's At the River from Five Songs (orchestrated by John Adams); Copland's Simple Gifts, The Boatman's Dance, and The Golden Willow Tree from *Old American Songs;* Damrosch's Danny Deever (orchestrated by Bramwell Tovey); Daugherty's Letter to Mrs. Bixby from *Letters from Lincoln;* and Corigliano's One Sweet Morning from *One Sweet Morning;* Bramwell Tovey conducting

October 8 and 9, 2026, Orchestra Hall. Walton's *Belshazzar's Feast,* Klaus Mäkelä conducting



Long recognized as one of the most innovative musicians of our time, American baritone Thomas Hampson has received countless international honors for his singular artistry and cultural leadership. His operatic repertoire comprises more than eighty roles, and his discography includes more than 170 albums, with multiple nominations and wins of the Grammy Award, Edison Award, and the Grand Prix du Disque.

In the 2025–26 season, Hampson sang the title role in Adams's *Nixon in China* at the Paris Opera under the baton of Kent Nagano and returned to the role later in the season, singing excerpts with the Boston Symphony Orchestra and Andris Nelsons at Boston Symphony Hall, Carnegie Hall, and the Tanglewood Festival. He was also featured in a Christmas Night opera gala at Carnegie Hall with Francesco Lanzillotta. In 2026–27, he reprises the role of Richard Nixon with the Washington National Opera in a reimagined production conducted by Robert Spano.

Further appearances on the concert stage included Hampson joining the NHK Symphony Orchestra Tokyo and Ryan Bancroft for Mahler's *Des Knaben Wunderhorn,* the Danish National Symphony Orchestra led by Fabio Luisi in Schoenberg's *Ode to Napoleon Buonaparte,* and the Zurich Chamber Orchestra and the Essen Philharmonic Orchestra led by Daniel Hope. Following their highly successful tour in the 2024–25 season at venues such as the Royal Concertgebouw Amsterdam, Konzert Theater Coesfeld, and Beethoven-Haus Bonn, Hampson returned to Europe for a second tour of Schubert's *Winterreise* with accordionist Ksenija Sidorova at Verbier Festival, Bergen Festival, Kings Place London, and Tonhalle Zürich. He resumed his collaboration with pianist Wolfram Rieger with a program of Mahler's lieder on tour in China; the duo also performed *Winterreise* at Baden-Baden Festspiele Haus. Later in the season, Hampson appeared at Aspen Music Festival for an all-American program.

Thomas Hampson is an honorary professor of philosophy at the University of Heidelberg and an honorary member of London's Royal Academy of Music. In addition to holding several honorary doctorates, he is a Kammersänger of the Wiener Staatsoper, a Commander of the Order of Arts and Letters of the French Republic, and an honorary artist of the Guangzhou Opera House. In 2017 he received the Hugo Wolf Medal, together with Wolfram Rieger. He is the cofounder and artistic director of the Lied Academy Heidelberg, and in 2003 he founded the Hampsong Foundation, through which he uses the art of song to promote intercultural dialogue and understanding. His international master class schedule is a continuing online resource of Medici.tv, the Manhattan School of Music, and the Hampsong Foundation livestream channel. He also serves as an advisor for Opera for Peace.

Photo © Marshall Light Studio

Chicago Symphony Chorus



The Chicago Symphony Chorus regularly performs with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra in Orchestra Hall and at the Ravinia Festival.

The history of the Chorus began in 1957, when sixth music director Fritz Reiner invited Margaret Hillis to establish a chorus to equal the quality of the Orchestra. Hillis accepted the challenge, and the Chicago Symphony Chorus debuted in March and April 1958, in Mozart's Requiem under Bruno Walter and Verdi's Requiem under Reiner. Hillis served the Chorus for thirty-seven years. In 1994 ninth music director Daniel Barenboim appointed Duain Wolfe, who served as the Chorus's director and conductor until his retirement in 2022. Donald Palumbo was appointed as the Chorus's third director in 2025.

The Chorus first performed in Carnegie Hall in 1967 in Henze's *Muses of Sicily* and Ravel's *Daphnis and Chloe* under seventh music director Jean Martinon, and most recently in 2015 with Riccardo Muti for Scriabin's *Prometheus* and Prokofiev's *Alexander Nevsky*. Touring internationally with the Orchestra, the Chorus traveled to London and Salzburg in 1989 with Sir Georg Solti for performances of Berlioz's *The Damnation of Faust* and to Berlin in 1999 with Barenboim for Brahms's *A German Requiem* and Pierre Boulez for Schoenberg's *Moses und Aron*.

World premieres featuring the Chorus have included Ned Rorem's *Goodbye My Fancy,* John Harbison's Four Psalms, and Bernard Rands's *apókryphos*. With visiting orchestras, the Chorus has collaborated with the Berlin Philharmonic under Claudio Abbado, the Boston Symphony Orchestra and Seiji Ozawa, the Israel Philharmonic Orchestra with Zubin Mehta, and the Staatskapelle Berlin under Barenboim.

Since first recording commercially in 1959—Prokofiev's *Alexander Nevsky* under Reiner—the Chorus has amassed a discography that includes hallmarks of the choral repertoire and several complete operas. The Chorus most recently received a 2010 Grammy Award for Best Choral Performance for Verdi's Requiem, led by Riccardo Muti on CSO Resound. The Chorus has received an additional nine Grammy awards for Best Choral Performance for Verdi's Requiem, Beethoven's *Missa solemnis,* Brahms's *A German Requiem,* Berlioz's *The Damnation of Faust,* Haydn's *Creation,* and Bach's Mass in B minor with Solti; Brahms's Requiem and Orff's *Carmina Burana* with James Levine; and Bartók's *Cantata profana* with Boulez.

The Chorus also has appeared on two movie soundtracks with the Orchestra: *Fantasia 2000* led by Levine, and John Williams's score for *Lincoln* conducted by the composer. Recordings on CSO Resound featuring the Chorus include Mahler's Second and Third symphonies, Poulenc's *Gloria,* and Ravel's *Daphnis and Chloe* under Bernard Haitink; and Berlioz's *Lélio,* Verdi's *Otello,* Schoenberg's *Kol Nidre,* choruses by Verdi and Boito's Prologue to *Mefistofele,* Shostakovich's Symphony no. 13 *(Babi Yar),* and most recently Mascagni's *Cavalleria rusticana* under Riccardo Muti.

Todd Rosenberg Photography

Donald Palumbo Chorus Director



Donald Palumbo was born in Rochester, New York, and received a bachelor of arts degree from Boston University. His career was launched in the 1980s at the Dallas Opera, where he served as assistant to Roberto Benaglio, the renowned Italian chorus master of Teatro alla Scala in Milan. Following a sixteen-year tenure as chorus director at the Lyric Opera of Chicago from 1991 to 2007, Palumbo assumed the same position at the Metropolitan Opera. There he was responsible for the Met Chorus's participation in more than twenty productions each season, and his work was honored with seven Grammy awards for Best Opera Recording. After stepping down from his position at the Met in June 2024, he returned to the theater in the following season to prepare the chorus in a new production of Verdi's *Aida*.

Palumbo's appointment as the third chorus director of the Chicago Symphony Chorus was announced in June 2025, and he began an initial three-year tenure on July 1, 2025. As director, he works with the Chorus each year to prepare multiple programs across the Chicago Symphony Orchestra's downtown season and the annual summer residency at the Ravinia Festival.

Palumbo was music director of the Chorus pro Musica of Boston and has also served as chorus master of the Canadian Opera Company, Dallas Opera, Banff School for the Arts Summer Opera Program, the Opera Company of Boston, and Opera Theatre of Saint Louis. In Europe, he has held chorus master positions at Opéra de Lyon, the Aix-en-Provence Festival, the Théâtre du Châtelet, and the Teatro Massimo in Palermo. From 1999 to 2001, Palumbo was chorus director of the Salzburg Festival, the first American to hold that position.

He has worked extensively at the Théâtre du Châtelet in Paris, preparing the chorus for the Berlioz Festival in 1990—Requiem, *The Damnation of Faust, Romeo and Juliet*—and performances of Britten's *Peter Grimes* and Janáček's *Jenůfa.* Palumbo has conducted the Radio France Chorus in several a cappella choral concerts and prepared Britten's *War Requiem.*

Palumbo has been a vocal coach for the Apprentices of the Santa Fe Opera since 2014 and a faculty member of the Marcus Institute for Vocal Arts at the Juilliard School in New York since 2016.

In 2022 and 2023, he joined the Chicago Symphony Orchestra as guest chorus master for performances of Verdi's *Un ballo in maschera* and Beethoven's *Missa solemnis,* both works conducted by Riccardo Muti. Shortly after his appointment in June 2025, he was guest chorus master for performances of Verdi's Requiem, also led by Muti.

In June 2024 he prepared the choral forces for a concert performance of Puccini's *La bohème* for the Philadelphia Orchestra under Yannick Nézet-Séguin and returned for Wagner's *Tristan and Isolde* in June 2025. In March 2025 he prepared the chorus for Verdi's *La traviata* staged in Kyoto and Tokyo for the Seiji Ozawa Music Academy.

Donald Palumbo returned to the Lyric Opera of Chicago in May 2025 to prepare and conduct a program of scenes with the artists of the Ryan Opera Center.

Todd Rosenberg Photography

Chicago Symphony Chorus

Donald Palumbo Director

SOPRANOS
Michele Agpalo**
Alicia Monastero Akers*, **
Nicole Besa
Anna Joy Buegel
Laura Bumgardner
Anastasia Cameron Balmer**
Anna Donnelly
Katarzyna Dorula
Mary Lutz Govertsen
Nida Grigalaviciute**
Kimberly Gunderson**
Ashlee Hardgrave
Megan Hendrickson**
Betsy Hoats
Marissa Howard
Alexandra Ioan**
Alison Kelly**
Lisa Kotara Horwitz
Susan Krout
Rosalind Lee**
Amanda Compton LoPresti*, **
Suzanne Ma-Ebersole
Allison Mann
Lillian Murphy**
Brianna Murray
Máire O'Brien
Cari Plachy**
Elvira Ponticelli
Angela Presutti Korbitz**
Margaret Quinnette**
Alexia Rivera
Emlynn Shoemaker**
Meaghan Smallwood
Rachel Sparrow
Heidi Jo Stirling

ALTOS
Melissa Arning**
Diane Busko Bryks**
Magaly Cordero
Sandra Cross
Leah Dexter**
Stacy Eckert**
Elizabeth Frey
Kirsten Fyr-Searcy
Liana German**
Jennifer Gingrich
Ruth Ginelle Heald
Miya Higashiyama**
Carla Janzen Norton**
Zoë Kales
Robin A. Kessler
Thereza Lituma
Kathleen Madden
Laura Polevoy**
Sarah Ponder**
Emily Price*, **
Bridget Skaggs
Jaime Smith
Cassidy Smith*, **
Alannah Spencer
Gabrielle Timofeeva López
Elizabeth Vaughan**
Debra Wilder**
Megan Wilhelm

TENORS
Geoffrey Agpalo**
Justin Berkowitz
Madison Bolt**
Michael Brauer**
Matthew Callahan
Joseph Cloonan*
Micah A. Dingler**
Nicholas Falco**
Andrew Fisher
W. Ryan Frenk
Ace T. Gangoso**
Klaus Georg*, **
Tejas Gururaja
Jianghai Ho
Garrett Johannsen**
John Lynch
Stephen Mollica**
Keith A. Murphy
Stephen D. Noon
Nathan S. Oakes**
Marcos Ochoa**
Wha Shin Park**
Steven Michael Patrick
Brett Potts**
Cole Seaton
Silfredo Serrano
Brian Skoog
Michael St. Peter
Alan Taylor**
Paul W. Thompson

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Michael Boschert**
Evan Bravos**
Matthew Brennan*, **
Conor Broaders
Terry L. Bucher
Michael Cavalieri**
Timothy Christopoulos
Stephen Clark
Ryan J. Cox**
Chris DiMarco**
William Esch
Christopher Filipowicz**
Dimitri German**
David Govertsen**
Kevin Michael Hall
Adam Lance Hendrickson
Jess Koehn
Lee Lichamer*
Bill McMurray
Eric Miranda
Ian Morris
Ian Murrell**
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Ian R. Prichard
Leo Radosavljevic**
Stephen Richardson
Joseph Smith
Scott Uddenberg**
Vince Wallace**
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Jonathon Weller
Peter Wesoloski**

CHORUS MANAGER
Melissa Hilker

CHORUS LIBRARIAN AND ASSISTANT CHORUS MANAGER
Olive Haugh

REHEARSAL PIANISTS
John Goodwin Principal
Chuck Foster

The Chorus was prepared for these performances by Donald Palumbo.

**Section leader / **Semi chorus*

CHICAGO SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

Now in its 136th season, the Chicago Symphony Orchestra is a global artistic leader, hailed as one of the most esteemed ensembles in classical music.

The ensemble's history began in 1889, when Theodore Thomas, the leading conductor in America and a recognized music pioneer, was invited by Chicago businessman Charles Norman Fay to establish a symphony orchestra. Thomas's aim to build a permanent orchestra of the highest quality was realized at the first concerts in October 1891 in the Auditorium Theatre. Thomas served as music director until his death in January 1905, just three weeks after the dedication of Orchestra Hall, the Orchestra's permanent home designed by Daniel Burnham.

Frederick Stock, recruited by Thomas to the viola section in 1895, became assistant conductor in 1899 and succeeded the Orchestra's founder. His tenure lasted thirty-seven years, from 1905 to 1942. Stock founded the Civic Orchestra of Chicago—the first training orchestra in the U.S. affiliated with a major orchestra—in 1919, established youth auditions, organized the first subscription concerts especially for children, and began a series of popular concerts.

Three conductors headed the Orchestra during the following decade: Désiré Defauw was music director from 1943 to 1947, Artur Rodziński in 1947–48, and Rafael Kubelík from 1950 to 1953. The next ten years belonged to Fritz Reiner, whose recordings with the CSO are still considered hallmarks. Reiner invited Margaret Hillis to form the Chicago Symphony Chorus in 1957. For five seasons, from 1963 to 1968, Jean Martinon held the position of music director.

Sir Georg Solti, the Orchestra's eighth music director, served from 1969 until 1991. His arrival launched one of the most successful musical partnerships of our time. The CSO made its first overseas tour to Europe in 1971 under his direction and released numerous award-winning recordings. Beginning in 1991, Solti held the title of music director laureate and returned to conduct the Orchestra each season until his death in September 1997.

Daniel Barenboim became ninth music director in 1991, a position he held until 2006. His tenure was distinguished by the opening of Symphony Center in 1997, appearances with the Orchestra in the dual role of pianist and conductor, and twenty-one international tours. Appointed by Barenboim in 1994 as the Chorus's second director, Duain Wolfe served until his retirement in 2022.

In 2010 Riccardo Muti became the Orchestra's tenth music director. During his tenure, the Orchestra deepened its engagement with the Chicago community, collaborated with visionary musicians and composers, and realized many notable performances of operas in concert. In September 2023, Muti became music director emeritus for life.

In April 2024, conductor Klaus Mäkelä was announced as the Orchestra's eleventh music director and will begin an initial five-year tenure as Zell Music Director in September 2027. In July 2025, Donald Palumbo became the third director of the Chicago Symphony Chorus.

Carlo Maria Giulini was named the Orchestra's first principal guest conductor in 1969, serving until 1972; Claudio Abbado held the position from 1982 to 1985. Pierre Boulez was appointed as principal guest conductor in 1995 and was named Helen Regenstein Conductor Emeritus in 2006, a position he held until his death in January 2016. From 2006 to 2010, Bernard Haitink was the Orchestra's first principal conductor. Pianist Jean-Yves Thibaudet is the CSO's artist-in-residence for the 2026–27 season.

The Orchestra first performed at Ravinia Park in 1905, later helped to inaugurate the Ravinia Festival in 1936, and has been in residence nearly every summer since. Listeners enjoy the weekly CSO Radio Broadcast series as well as releases from the ensemble's extensive commercial discography. Recordings by the Chicago Symphony Orchestra and Chorus have earned sixty-five Grammy awards from the Recording Academy.

The musicians of the Orchestra are deeply involved in the Chicago Symphony Negaunee Music Institute, which reaches students, families, and early-career musicians through free and low-cost programming and world-class training.

Chicago Symphony Orchestra

Klaus Mäkelä Zell Music Director Designate ■ **Riccardo Muti** Music Director Emeritus for Life
Jean-Yves Thibaudet Artist-in-Residence

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The Ling Z. and Michael C. Markovitz Chair
Yuan-Qing Yu*
Assistant Concertmaster
So Young Bae
Cornelius Chiu §
Gina DiBello
Kozue Funakoshi
Russell Hershow
Qing Hou
Youngji Kim
Gabriela Lara
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Simon Michal
Sando Shia
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Rong-Yan Tang

Baird Dodge Principal
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Ni Mei
Hermine Gagné
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VIOLAS

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Jennifer Gunn
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Lora Schaefer
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ENGLISH HORN

Scott Hostetler

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Principal
John Bruce Yeh
Assistant Principal
The Governing Members Chair
Gregory Smith
Pavel Vinnitsky

E-FLAT CLARINET

John Bruce Yeh

BASS CLARINET

Pavel Vinnitsky

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The Adolph Herseth Principal Trumpet Chair, endowed by an anonymous benefactor
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The Bleck Family Chair
Tage Larsen

TROMBONES

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The Lisa and Paul Wiggin Principal Trombone Chair
Michael Mulcahy
Acting Assistant Principal
Charles Vernon

BASS TROMBONE

Charles Vernon

TUBA

Gene Pokorny Principal
The Arnold Jacobs Principal Tuba Chair, endowed by Christine Querfeld

TIMPANI

David Herbert Principal
The Clinton Family Fund Chair
Vadim Karpinos
Assistant Principal

PERCUSSION

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Chair sponsored by an anonymous benefactor
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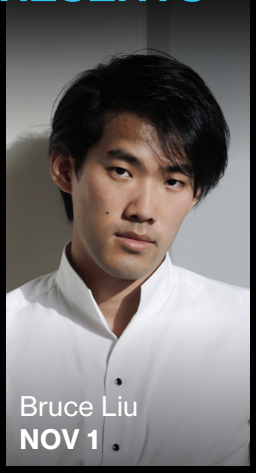
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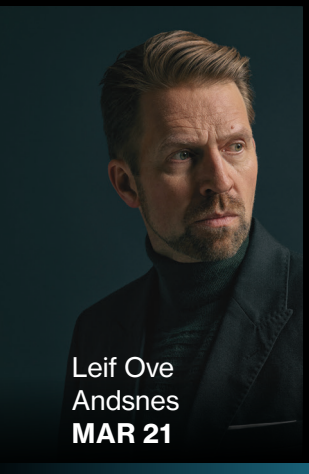






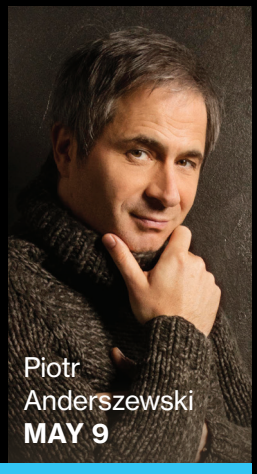
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