Dearest Friends

It is my sincerest pleasure to write this letter to invite you to join us once again at Symphony Hall for the Boston Symphony Orchestra’s 2020–21 season. As we are all enduring this turbulent time in our world’s history, my belief in the power of music to revitalize and energize our souls is stronger than ever. I am honored to be commencing my seventh season leading the wonderful musicians of the BSO, as well as the Tanglewood Festival Chorus who are celebrating their 50th anniversary in 2020. It is also the BSO’s 140th season, a milestone demonstrating that this outstanding orchestra has sustained its mission to provide the finest music-making no matter the state of world and local events, and it will continue to do so beyond the current circumstances.

From a joyful celebration of Beethoven—the one composer whose name graces the proscenium arch at Symphony Hall—to a collection of immersive multimedia performances, to one of the most controversial operas from Stalinist Russia, the 2020–21 BSO season bursts with electrifying works brought to life by groundbreaking artists. Legends like Renée Fleming, Lang Lang, and Yo-Yo Ma join rising stars like Lise Davidsen, Iwona Sobotka, and Klaus Mäkelä. With fourteen works by living composers—including seven premieres and recent compositions—this season presents a vibrant portrait of today’s symphonic world that no music fan should miss.

This season also marks the retirement of our devoted President and CEO, Mark Volpe, in February 2021. During his 20-plus years leading the BSO, Mark has overseen an unprecedented period of artistic, programmatic, community and financial growth that is fully realized in our 2020–21 programming. I am grateful to Mark for giving me the opportunity to lead this incredible group of musicians. His gracious and professional leadership has inspired our entire BSO both here at Symphony Hall and at Tanglewood to continue to build on his tremendous legacy.

You, our BSO subscribers, are the lifeblood of our organization. Since the inception of subscriptions in the early 1900s, being a BSO subscriber has been a special partnership. We are so very happy and truly grateful for your patronage, which plays a large role in the continued ongoing success of our orchestral mission.

Thank you for being a part of our symphonic family, and for your support of the BSO. I have missed looking out into the audience and seeing so many familiar faces each week. I look forward to seeing you all in the Fall.

With warm wishes,

Andris Nelsons
Ray and Maria Stata Music Director
Let There Be Light

Three not-to-be-missed multimedia programs will fill Symphony Hall with more than music this season. With a libretto comprising excerpts from the correspondence between painter Georgia O’Keeffe and photographer Alfred Stieglitz, American composer Kevin Puts’ *The Brightness of Light* premiered at Tanglewood in 2019 with soprano Renée Fleming and baritone Rod Gilfry, with Andris Nelsons conducting. These same vocalists recreate that stunning performance at Symphony Hall this October, accompanied by haunting projections from video artist Wendall Harrington.

In November, Giancarlo Guerrero conducts a semi-staged performance of Julia Wolfe’s new work for vocal ensemble and orchestra, *Her Story*. Co-commissioned by the BSO and performed by the all-female Lorelei Ensemble, *Her Story* celebrates the centenary of women’s suffrage in the United States. The season concludes with Alexander Scriabin’s *Prometheus: The Poem of Fire*, which features a “clavier à lumières,” an instrument invented by Scriabin that bathes the hall in shifting colors. Even during Scriabin’s lifetime, the piece was rarely performed with a full light display; this unique realization is based on a 2010 collaboration between the Yale Symphony Orchestra, lighting researcher Anna Gawboy, and lighting designer Justin Townsend.

Sound and Fury

Based on the novella by Nikolai Leskov, Dmitri Shostakovich’s opera *Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk* tells the tragic story of Katerina Izmailova, the wife of a provincial merchant who falls in love with one of her husband’s workers and resorts to murder to cover up the affair. The score—at times breathtakingly lyrical, at times raw, percussive, and elemental—ignited a general denunciation of Shostakovich’s music by the Communist Party, and the opera was banned in the Soviet Union for nearly thirty years. In this season’s concert performances of the original, unedited version, Maestro Nelsons leads the BSO, Tanglewood Festival Chorus, and a cast of renowned guest vocalists including soprano Kristine Opolais, tenor Brandon Jovanovich, bass Vladimir Vaneyev, tenor Andrey Popov, and bass-baritone Sir Willard White. These performances represent the dramatic climax of the BSO’s multi-year Shostakovich cycle, which has encompassed live recordings of the composer’s symphonic works released on Deutsche Grammophon.
Above All, Beethoven

The stage and balconies of Symphony Hall are decorated with gold plaques, all of which remain blank—except the highest place of honor above the stage. At the time of the hall’s opening in 1900, Beethoven was thought to be the only composer whose popularity would remain unchanged through the ages; his music has continued to form an integral part of the BSO’s history. The 2020–21 season opens with six all-Beethoven programs to celebrate the composer’s 250th birthday. Over three weeks, Andris Nelsons leads the BSO in all nine symphonies, as well as the Consecration of the House Overture and the Piano Concerto No. 2 performed by celebrated pianist Lang Lang. These concerts give subscribers a unique opportunity to experience the majesty and power of these orchestral masterpieces as a unified whole.

Deeper Dives

Join scholars and musicians for in-depth considerations of Beethoven’s legacy during the BSO’s annual “Leipzig Week” (September 25–October 3), with performances, panel discussions, and symposia presented in partnership with the Goethe-Institut and Boston University. In addition, the Tanglewood Learning Institute comes to Boston in 2020–21 to invite listeners to delve more deeply into the lives and legacies of Beethoven and Shostakovich, the role of musicians in human rights’ movements around the world, and much more.
Opening Night: All-Beethoven program with Lang Lang

Wednesday, September 16
Opening Night at Symphony Hall
Andris Nelsons, conductor
Lang Lang, piano
ALL-BEETHOVEN PROGRAM
Symphony No. 5
Piano Concerto No. 2

For Opening Night of the 2020–21 season, superstar Chinese pianist Lang Lang joins the BSO and Music Director Andris Nelsons in Beethoven’s Piano Concerto No. 2. an early work of Beethovenian wit, drama, and virtuosity. Conscious of his responsibility to the legacy of both Mozart and Haydn, Beethoven waited until he was thirty to complete his Symphony No. 1. Its freshness and vitality immediately won favor with Viennese audiences.

*Available for Choose Your Own Subscribers and Single Tickets purchases

Celebrating Beethoven’s 250th: Symphonies 1 & 2

Thursday, September 17
Andris Nelsons, conductor
ALL-BEETHOVEN PROGRAM
Overture, The Consecration of the House
Symphony No. 1
Symphony No. 2

Continuing their celebration of the 250th anniversary of Beethoven’s birth, Andris Nelsons and the BSO perform the first piece ever played by the orchestra at its first concert in October 1881. Beethoven’s Consecration of the House Overture. Published when he was thirty, Beethoven’s fresh and dramatic First Symphony established his place as the successor to his Viennese predecessors Haydn and Mozart. Although written in 1802 when Beethoven was just twenty, Beethoven’s Second and Third symphonies show the composer greatly expanding the scope of the Haydn/Mozart symphonic model. The Second is an innovative, bright, exuberant symphony written at a time when, ironically, the composer was in despair about his increasing hearing loss. From the start, the nearly hour-long, broadly expressive Symphony No. 3 marked a decided shift in Beethoven’s own career as well as in the genre’s history. Its nickname Eroica alludes to its original dedication to Napoleon, which the composer later rescinded.

Celebrating Beethoven’s 250th: Symphonies 2 & 3

Thursday, September 19
Tuesday, September 22
Andris Nelsons, conductor
ALL-BEETHOVEN PROGRAM
Symphony No. 2
Symphony No. 3, Eroica

Beethoven’s Second and Third symphonies show the composer greatly expanding the scope of the Haydn/Mozart symphonic model. The Second is an innovative, bright, exuberant symphony written at a time when, ironically, the composer was in despair about his increasing hearing loss. From the start, the nearly hour-long, broadly expressive Symphony No. 3 marked a decided shift in Beethoven’s own career as well as in the genre’s history. Its nickname Eroica alludes to its original dedication to Napoleon, which the composer later rescinded.

Celebrating Beethoven’s 250th: Symphonies 4 & 5

Thursday, September 24
Friday, September 25, 1:30pm
Andris Nelsons, conductor
ALL-BEETHOVEN PROGRAM
Symphony No. 4
Symphony No. 5

Beethoven’s Fourth and Fifth symphonies have strikingly different characters despite being composed at the same time. He began sketching the Fifth in 1804 but didn’t complete it until four years later. Its unprecedented intensity and drama are embodied in its four first notes—the most famous motif in classical music. In the period between the Fifth’s first sketches and its completion, Beethoven wrote some of his most lyrical music, including his opera Fidelio, his Violin Concerto, and the Fourth Symphony. The Fourth’s consistent high spirits contrast starkly with the struggle against fate represented by the Fifth.

Celebrating Beethoven’s 250th: Symphonies 6 & 7

Saturday, September 26
Tuesday, September 29
Andris Nelsons, conductor
ALL-BEETHOVEN PROGRAM
Symphony No. 6, Pastoral
Symphony No. 7

Beethoven’s Symphony No. 6, Pastoral, is his only symphony based explicitly on a narrative idea, tells the story of a day spent wandering in the countryside; the peacefulness of the outdoors, a babbling brook; cuckoos, quail, and a nightingale; shepherds and farmers, and a thunderstorm. The perennial favorite Seventh Symphony was composed and premiered in 1812, some four years after the Sixth. Its stately second movement Allegretto so appealed to its first audience that it called for, and received, an encore.

Celebrating Beethoven’s 250th: Symphonies 8 & 9 with the Tanglewood Festival Chorus

Thursday, October 1
Friday, October 2, 7:30pm
Saturday, October 3
Andris Nelsons, conductor
Amanda Majeski, soprano
Tamara Mumford, mezzo-soprano
Pavel Korniych, tenor
Kwangchul Youn, bass
Tanglewood Festival Chorus, James Burton, conductor
ALL-BEETHOVEN PROGRAM
Symphony No. 8
Symphony No. 9

The BSO and Andris Nelsons’ survey of the nine Beethoven symphonies comes to an uplifting conclusion with the last two, their period of composition separated by twelve years. Written just after the Seventh, the Eighth Symphony is Beethoven’s shortest and arguably the Wittiest and jolliest of his orchestral works. The Ninth Symphony still startling with its radical departures from symphonic tradition—most strikingly the inclusion of a chorus for the symphony’s final movement, a setting of the Friedrich Schiller poem “Ode to Joy.”

Multimedia performance featuring Renée Fleming and Rod Gilfry

Thursday, October 8
Friday, October 9
Saturday, October 10
Andris Nelsons, conductor
Thomas Rolfs, trumpet
Renée Fleming, soprano
Rod Gilfry, baritone

An American premiere and combined choral forces

Thursday, October 15
Friday, October 16, 1:30pm
Saturday, October 17
Tuesday, October 20
Andris Nelsons, conductor
Ildar Abdrazakov, bass
Men of the Tanglewood Festival Chorus and New England Conservatory Chorus, James Burton, conductor

This season Andris Nelsons and the BSO perform the final two symphonies in their multi-year survey of Shostakovich’s work: Symphony No. 3 in January and, this week, No. 13, Babi Yar (1901).

Celebrating Beethoven’s 250th: Symphonies 8 & 9 with the Tanglewood Festival Chorus

Augustin Hadelich is soloist in Benjamin Britten’s emotionally profound Violin Concerto, a reaction to the horrors of the Spanish Civil War. The theme of lament is also present in Joseph Haydn’s 1768 Symphony No. 26, Lamentatione, named for its use of Gregorian chant linked to the Lamentations of Jeremiah. Igor Strawinsky’s primal ballet score The Rite of Spring takes on the subject of ritual sacrifice in the service of the community. Soon after its riotous 1913 premiere the piece became a concert-hall staple despite—or because of—its sonic adventurousness.

*Open Rehearsal
Friday, October 30, 1:30pm
Saturday, October 31
English conductor Andrew Manze and Russian-born British violinist Alina Ibragimova join the BSO for Brahms's warm, powerful Violin Concerto. The composer's friend Joseph Joachim premiered it in Leipzig in 1879. Russian-Swedish violinist Victoria Borisova-Ollas wrote her celebrated, impressionistic fantasia Angelus for Munich's 80th anniversary in 2008. The piece was inspired by the city's church bells. Mozart's Haffner Symphony, written for a prominent Salzburg family, began life as a serenade, but the composer turned it into a symphony for a March 1783 Vienna concert of his own music attended by the Emperor.

Saturday, November 5
Friday, November 6, 1:30pm
Saturday, November 7
Giancarlo Guerrero, conductor
Iwona Sobotka, soprano
Lorelei Ensemble, soprano
Beth Willer, Artistic Director
Anne Kaufman, stage director
Jeff Sugg, scenic and lighting designer
Márion Talán, costume designer
GÖRÇEK Symphony No. 3
Symphony of Sorrows Songs
Julia Wolfe's "Her Story" with Lorelei Ensemble marks 100th anniversary of the 19th Amendment

Joining the BSO and Russian-born conductor Dima Slobodeniouk, esteemed English conductor Andrew Manze and Russian-born British violinist Alina Ibragimova join the BSO for Brahms's warm, powerful Violin Concerto. The composer's friend Joseph Joachim premiered it in Leipzig in 1879. Russian-Swedish violinist Victoria Borisova-Ollas wrote her celebrated, impressionistic fantasia Angelus for Munich's 80th anniversary in 2008. The piece was inspired by the city's church bells. Mozart's Haffner Symphony, written for a prominent Salzburg family, began life as a serenade, but the composer turned it into a symphony for a March 1783 Vienna concert of his own music attended by the Emperor.

Saturday, November 5
Friday, November 6, 1:30pm
Saturday, November 7
Giancarlo Guerrero, conductor
Iwona Sobotka, soprano
Lorelei Ensemble, soprano
Beth Willer, Artistic Director
Anne Kaufman, stage director
Jeff Sugg, scenic and lighting designer
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GÖRÇEK Symphony No. 3
Symphony of Sorrows Songs
Julia Wolfe's "Her Story" with Lorelei Ensemble marks 100th anniversary of the 19th Amendment

Thursday, November 12
Friday, November 13, 3:30pm
Saturday, November 14
Tuesday, November 17
Thursday, November 19, 10:30am*
Thursday, November 20, 2:30pm
Dina Slobodeniouk, conductor
Frank Peter Zimmermann, violin
MENDELSSOHN Violin Concerto
STRAVINSKY The Firebird (Complete)

The Pulitzer Prize-winning, New York-based composer Julia Wolfe's "Her Story," co-commissioned by the BSO and written for the Boston-based women's chorus Lorelei Ensemble, marks the 100th anniversary of the 19th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, which guaranteed a woman's right to vote. Semic elements enhance these performances of Her Story. Complementing Wolfe's piece is the Polish composer Henryk Górecki's acclaimed Symphony No. 3. Its theme of the separation of a mother and child is explored in music whose beauty transcends sorrow. Polish soprano Iwona Sobotka makes her BSO debut.

Both works performed with English superstities

Zimmermann performs MENDELSSOHN with STRAVINSKY'S "The Firebird"

BEETHOVEN, BARTÓK with Garrick Ohlsson, and NIELSEN's Third Symphony

Former New York Philharmonic music director Alan Gilbert leads the BSO and Garrick Ohlsson in Bartók's Piano Concerto No. 3. Bartók wrote this effervescent concerto for his wife, Ditta, to perform. The great Danish composer Carl Nielsen's vigorously lyrical Third Symphony dates from 1911, its nickname "expansivo" aptly evokes its sense of breadth. The second movement calls for soprano and baritone voices singing wordless solo parts. Beethoven wrote his vivid Egmont Overture as part of the incidental music for Goethe's play about a nobleman struggling against an oppressive ruler.

*Open Rehearsal
**Casual Friday

**Post-concert performance
RACHMANINOFF All-Night Vigil
Celebrating the 50th anniversary of the Tanglewood Festival Chorus

The BSO presents a concert to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the Tanglewood Music Festival Chorus, conducted by James Burton, with soprano Sarah Shafer and mezzo-soprano Sarah Shafer, and tenor and baritone. The program includes Rachmaninoff's All-Night Vigil, a work of reqat, an ancient religious text composed for chanting the series of prayers and psalms, and other works by Rachmaninoff, Shostakovich, and others. The concert will be held at Tanglewood, the festival's home in Lenox, Massachusetts. The program will feature the Tanglewood Festival Chorus and the Boston Symphony Orchestra under the direction of Andris Nelsons.

Concerts begin at 8pm unless otherwise noted
All programs and artists subject to change

BSO Assistant Conductor Anna Rakitina leads Thomas ADÉS, RACHMANINOFF, and ELGAR

Making her Symphony Hall debut, BSO Assistant Conductor Anna Rakitina leads the orchestra in BSO Artistic Partner Thomas Adès's sparkingly colorful orchestral work Polons. The program continues with one of the most popular piano concertos of all time, Rachmaninoff's Second. Israeli-American virtuoso Inon Barnatan is soloist in this soulful, challenging work, which the composer himself played with the BSO on several occasions. Elgar's orchestral tour-de-force Enigma Variations encompasses a remarkable expressive range, by turns poignant, charming, humorous, and stately.

BSO Music Director Andris Nelsons leads the orchestra in the first of three wide-ranging January programs. Phenomenal Russian pianist Daniil Trifonov is soloist in Prokofiev's Piano Concerto No. 1, an early work that contains the breathtaking virtuosic and sardonic wit of the composer's mature style. Alabama-born composer Brian Raymond Nabor grew up with jazz and gospel music, the flavors of which season his dynamic, optimistic orchestral score Pull. The astrological, mystical influence of the heavens, from peaceful Venus through warlike Mars, was Gustav Holst's inspiration for The Planets.

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HOLST'S "The Planets" and Daniil Trifonov playing PROKOFIEV

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HOLST'S "The Planets" and Daniil Trifonov playing PROKOFIEV

In the second of three January BSO concerts led by Music Director Andris Nelsons, the Austrian Rudolf Buchbinder plays Mozart's stormiest piano concerto, No. 20 in D minor, which shows the composer's unsurpassed sensitivity to operatic drama and emotion. Written in Vienna in 1785, this was one of the few Mozart pieces to remain in the repertoire throughout the Romantic era. More than 100 years later, the layered complexities of Mahler's first-movement violin sonata are reflected in the Fifth Symphony's rolling intensity, offset by its beautifully powerful Adagietto.

MUZIKANT: "The Planets" and Daniil Trifonov playing PROKOFIEV

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MOZART and MAHLER with pianist Rudolf Buchbinder

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SHOSTAKOVICH'S Third Symphony and Gil Shaham playing MOZART and Arvo PÄRT

Continuing their survey of the music of Dmitri Shostakovich, Andris Nelsons and the BSO give the orchestra's first-ever performances of his Symphony No. 3. The finale is a choral setting of a poem in praise of Mary Day, historically associated with Communism and worker's rights. In a different kind of tribute, Haydn wrote his brief Te Deum for chorus and orchestra late in his life at the request of the music-loving Marie Therese, Empress of the Holy Roman Empire. Violinist Gil Shaham is soloist in the other two pieces: Mozart's Violin Concerto No. 2 and Estonian composer Arvo Pärt's haunting Fratres in a version for solo violin, strings, and percussion.
An evening of American music featuring ELLINGTON, GERSHWIN and STILL

Thursday, January 28
Friday, January 29
Saturday, January 30

John Storgårds, conductor
Charlotte Blake Atkinson, narrator
ELLINGTON Three Black Kings (Jan 28 & 30)
GERSHWIN Second Rhapsody, for piano and orchestra
ELLINGTON Come Sunday, for narrator and orchestra
STILL Symphony No. 4, Autochthonous

*Casual Friday

SIBELIUS led by Oslo Philharmonic’s chief conductor Klaus Mäkelä

Thursday, February 4
Friday, February 5, 1:30pm
Saturday, February 6
Klaus Mäkelä, conductor
Alban Gerhardt, cello
SIBELIUS The Swan of Tuonela
Brett Dean Cello Concerto
SIBELIUS Symphony No. 1

The young Finnish conductor Klaus Mäkelä, chief conductor of the Oslo Philharmonic, makes his BSO debut leading the Australian composer Brett Dean’s 2018 virtuosic, characterful Cello Concerto, written for German cellist Alban Gerhardt. The program begins and ends with pieces by Mäkelä’s compatriot Jean Sibelius. The familiar tone poem The Swan of Tuonela, featuring solo English horn, was inspired by the Kalevala, the Finnish epic that provided subject matter for many a Sibelius score. The sound-world of the composer’s First Symphony was strongly influenced by Finnish folk music.

BSO Artistic Partner Thomas Adès leads his own Concerto for Piano and Orchestra with Kirill Gerstein

Thursday, February 11
Friday, February 12, 1:30pm
Saturday, February 13

Thomas Adès, conductor
Kirill Gerstein, piano
PROKOFIEV Autumn Sketch
RAVEL Piano Concerto for the left hand
Thomas Adès Concerto for Piano and Orchestra
JANÁČEK Torres Bulba

BSO Artists Partner Thomas Adès and pianist Kirill Gerstein reprise their highly acclaimed performances of Adès’s BSO-commissioned Concerto for Piano and Orchestra, premiered at Symphony Hall in February 2019. They have performed the piece dozens of times worldwide, and its BSO world premiere recording was issued on CD. In these concerts Kirill Gerstein also plays Ravel’s Piano Concerto for the Left Hand. Autumnal Sketch is a brief, atmospheric Prokofiev rarity never before played by the BSO. Concluding the concerts is Janáček’s three-part Torres Bulba, a vibrant musical response to Nikolai Gogol’s romantic novel about a Cossack soldier.

Finnish composer Outi TARKIAINEN’s “Midnight Sun Variations” with GRIEG, MARTINO, and SIBELIUS

Friday, February 18
Thursday, February 21

Finnish conductor John Storgårds returns to lead an intriguing program of works from Norway, Finland, and Czechoslovakia. In her BSO debut, Argentine cellist Sol Gabetta performs Czech composer Bohuslav Martinů’s attractive, neoclassical Cello Concerto No. 1. Paying tribute to the 18th-century Norwegian playwright Ludwig Holberg, Norwegian composer Edvard Grieg references Baroque music in his charming and familiar Holberg Suite. The young Finnish composer Outi Tarkiainen wrote her Midnight Sun Variations, “variations on the light when the sun never sets in the arctic summer night,” for the 2019 BBC Proms. Her great Finnish predecessor Jean Sibelius’s Third Symphony is one of his sunniest and most optimistic works.

Emanuel Ax performs MOZART’s Piano Concerto No. 17, plus BRAHMS and Bernard RANDS

Thursday, February 25
Friday, February 26, 1:30pm
Saturday, February 27

Juanjo Mena, conductor
Emanuel Ax, piano
Bardini RANDS Symphonic Fantasy
MOZART Piano Concerto No. 17 in G, K.453
BRAHMS Symphony No. 1

The eminent American-born Swedish conductor Herbert Blomstedt returns to Symphony Hall to lead two symphonic staples. Though it lacks a specific program, Sibelius’s Fourth Symphony draws on the same Finnish heritage that informed his symphonic poems and uses a similarly evocative approach to the orchestra. The Symphony was finished and premiered in 1911. Though composed in 1842, Mendelssohn’s Scottish Symphony was inspired by a trip to Scotland he had made more than a decade earlier, which had previously borne fruit in his equally Romantic Hebrides Overture.

An ALL-STRAUSS program with soprano Lise Davidsen

Thursday, March 4
Friday, March 5, 1:30pm
Saturday, March 6

Andris Nelsons, conductor
Bardini RANDS Cello Concerto No. 1
Lise Davidsen, soprano
ALL-STRAUSS PROGRAM
Don Juan
Death and Transfiguration
Symphonic Fantasy from Die Frau ohne Schatten
Four Last Songs

The eminent American-born Swedish conductor Herbert Blomstedt returns to Symphony Hall to lead two symphonic staples. Though it lacks a specific program, Sibelius’s Fourth Symphony draws on the same Finnish heritage that informed his symphonic poems and uses a similarly evocative approach to the orchestra. The Symphony was finished and premiered in 1911. Though composed in 1842, Mendelssohn’s Scottish Symphony was inspired by a trip to Scotland he had made more than a decade earlier, which had previously borne fruit in his equally Romantic Hebrides Overture.

An afternoon with Yo-Yo Ma performing HAYDN and STRAUSS

Sunday, March 21, 3pm*

CELLO HAYDN Cello Concerto No. 1 in C
CELLO STRAUSS Symphonic Fantasy from Die Frau ohne Schatten
STRAUSS Death and Transfiguration
STRAUSS Romance for cello and orchestra
HAYDN Cello Concerto No. 1 in C

Cellist Yo-Yo Ma joins Andris Nelsons and the BSO for this one-time-only Sunday-afternoon concert, performing Haydn’s high-spirited Cello Concerto No. 1 and Richard Strauss’s early lyrical, single-movement Romance, written when the composer was just nineteen. A meditation on the death of an artist, Death and Transfiguration is the most inward-looking of Strauss’s series of tone poems composed in his twenties and thirties. The Symphonic Fantasy from Die Frau ohne Schatten is Strauss’s own lush, one-movement orchestral suite from his 1917 opera.

*Available for Choose Your Own Subscribers and Single Tickets purchases
A world premiere by American composer Julia ADOLPHE with Paul Lewis playing MOZART

Thursday, March 25, 10:30am*  
Thursday, March 25  
Andris Nelsons, conductor  
Paul Lewis, piano  
Julia ADOLPHE. New work (world premiere; BSO co-commission)  
MOZART Piano Concerto No. 27 in B-flat, K.595  
DVORÁK Symphony No. 7  

Reprise of American composer Julia ADOLPHE’s New Work plus Paul Lewis playing MOZART

Andris Nelsons leads the BSO and the outstanding English pianist Paul Lewis in Mozart’s final piano concerto, a stately work with which Mozart made his last concert appearance as a soloist. Opening the program is the world premiere of a BSO-commissioned orchestral work by New York City-born Julia Adolphe, one of the most vibrant and accomplished young composers in the U.S. Among Dvořák’s symphonies, the darkly majestic, masterful Symphony No. 7 is closest to the Germanic tradition and to the music of his onetime mentor Brahms.

*Open Rehearsal

SHOSTAKOVICH’s “Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk” with Kristine Opolais and the Tanglewood Festival Chorus

Tuesday, April 6, 7:30pm  
Thursday, April 8, 7:30pm  
Saturday, April 10, 7:30pm  
Andris Nelsons, conductor  
Kristine Opolais, soprano (Katerina Izmailova)  
Brandon Jovanovich, tenor (Sergei)  
Sergei Skorokhodov, tenor (Zinovy Izmailov)  
Vladimir Yanveyev, bass (Boris Izmailov)  
Vasilisa Berzhanskaya, mezzo-soprano (Sonyetka)  
Miranda Keys, soprano (Female Convict)  

double bass, soloists (both 1909) were both frequently performed during Serge Koussevitzky's years as BSO music director. The Enchanted Lake is a piece for piano, chorus, and orchestra. The Enchanted Lake’s music, which originally called for a “color organ” invented by the composer. The radiated colors correspond to, and are notated as part of the music in Scriabin’s musically rich score. Opening the program is Stravinsky’s Petrushka (1911), a brilliant depiction of a life-sized puppet during a Russian Shrovetide Fair. Anatoli Liadov’s contrasting, highly colorful tone poems Prometheus and Kikimora (both 1910) were both frequently performed during Serge Koussevitzky’s years as BSO music director.

Andris Nelsons leads the BSO and the outstanding English pianist Paul Lewis in Mozart’s final piano concerto, a stately work with which Mozart made his last concert appearance as a soloist. Opening the program is the world premiere of a BSO-commissioned orchestral work by New York City-born Julia Adolphe, one of the most vibrant and accomplished young composers in the U.S. Among Dvořák’s symphonies, the darkly majestic, masterful Symphony No. 7 is closest to the Germanic tradition and to the music of his onetime mentor Brahms.

*Available for Choose Your Own Subscribers and Single Tickets purchases

Joan TOWER’s “Chamber Dance” plus Mitsuko Uchida in BEETHOVEN

Consuomately elegant pianist Mitsuko Uchida joins Andris Nelsons and the BSO to perform Beethoven’s First and Third piano concertos in a single program, the start of a three-year cycle of Beethoven concertos featuring Ms. Uchida with Maestro Nelsons and the BSO. Beethoven’s Piano Concerto No. 1 is a robustly elegant work with which the composer made his name in mid-1790s Vienna. The grandly scaled, powerful Piano Concerto No. 3 looks back to Mozart and forward to the composer’s “heroic” style. Joan Tower’s lively Chamber Dance, written in 2006, is a kind of concerto for orchestra exploring the interplay among orchestral sections.

*Casual Friday

Andris Nelsons leads a multimedia program of Four Russian works with pianist Yefim Bronfman

For the final subscription program of the season, Andris Nelsons leads four highly colorful Russian works from the same era. In these concerts, special lighting design attempts to recreate Scriabin’s original conception for his 1910 multimedia symphony Prometheus, The Poem of Fire, which originally called for a “color organ” invented by the composer. The radiated colors correspond to, and are notated as part of the music in Scriabin’s musically rich score. Opening the program is Stravinsky’s Petrushka (1911), a brilliant depiction of a life-sized puppet during a Russian Shrovetide Fair. Anatoli Liadov’s contrasting, highly colorful tone poems The Enchanted Lake and Kikimora (both 1909) were both frequently performed during Serge Koussevitzky’s years as BSO music director.

*Open Rehearsal

This page contains text relevant to the events of this week. All programs and artists subject to change.
BSO Subscriptions: Flexibility, Value, Convenience

A Choose Your Own (CYO) Subscription is a convenient, flexible way to become a part of the BSO family. Curate a BSO experience that’s uniquely yours, choosing any genre, any date, and any seating area in Symphony Hall. As a CYO subscriber, you are entitled to the full menu of subscriber benefits, including the ability to easily exchange your tickets for a different date at any time. Choose a minimum of three (3) concerts to become a CYO subscriber; the series cost will be calculated based on the number of concerts selected and the seating areas chosen.

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• Subscriber loyalty program offers in the Symphony Café
• Ability to donate unused tickets for a BSO contribution tax credit
• Special subscriber thank-you gift
SUBSCRIPTION PACKAGES

Tuesday

TUESDAY-B (6 Concerts)
$640, $524, $414, $292, $244, $220, $190

Tuesday, September 29
Nelsons
ALL-BECHTOVEN PROGRAM

Tuesday, October 20
Nelsons, Abdrazakov, choruses
GUBAIDULINA, SHOSTAKOVICH

Tuesday, November 24
Rakitina, Barnatan
ADÈS, RACHMANINOFF, ELGAR

Tuesday, January 19
Nelsons, Buchbinder
MOZART, MAHLER

Tuesday, March 2
Mena, Ax
RANDS, MOZART, BRAHMS

Tuesday, March 23
Nelsons, Davidsen
ALL-STRAUSS PROGRAM

TUESDAY-C (5 Concerts)
$545, $446, $352, $268, $208

Tuesday, September 29
Nelsons
ALL-BECHTOVEN PROGRAM

Tuesday, November 17
Slobodenjiuk, Zimmermann
MENDELSSOHN, STRAVINSKY

Tuesday, January 12
Nelsons, Trifonov, chorus
NAIORS, PROKOFIEV, HOLST

Tuesday, April 6, 7, 30p
Nelsons, singers, chorus
SHOSTAKOVICH

Tuesday, April 27
Nelsons, Uchida
TOWER, BEETHOVEN

TUESDAY-F (3 Concerts)
$320, $262, $207, $146, $122,
$110, $95

Tuesday, September 29
Nelsons
ALL-BECHTOVEN PROGRAM

Tuesday, November 24
Rakitina, Barnatan
ADÈS, RACHMANINOFF, ELGAR

Tuesday, March 23
Nelsons, Davidsen
ALL-STRAUSS PROGRAM

Tuesday, April 6, 7, 30p
Nelsons, singers, chorus
SHOSTAKOVICH

Tuesday, October 20
Manze, Ibragimova
BRAHMS, BORISOVA-OLLAS, MOZART

Tuesday, November 19
Gilbert, Ohlsson, Redpath, Brancy
BEETHOVEN, BARTOK, NIELSEN

Tuesday, January 14
Nelsons, Buchbinder
MOZART, MAHLER

Tuesday, March 18
Nelsons, Davidsen
ALL-STRAUSS PROGRAM

TUESDAY-G (3 Concerts)
$320, $262, $207, $146, $122,
$110, $95

Tuesday, September 29
Nelsons
ALL-BECHTOVEN PROGRAM

Tuesday, November 12
Slobodenjiuk, Zimmermann
MENDELSSOHN, STRAVINSKY

Tuesday, January 28
Wilkins, Diehl, Akston
ELLINGTON, GERSHWIN, STILL

Tuesday, February 18
Stångards, Gabetta
SIBELIUS

Tuesday, March 25
Nelsons, Buchbinder
MOZART, MAHLER

Tuesday, April 29
Nelsons, Inkinen, chorus
SHOSTAKOVICH

TUESDAY-D (5 Concerts)
$609, $511, $408, $288, $232,
$203, $175

Thursday, September 17
Nelsons
ALL-BECHTOVEN PROGRAM

Thursday, October 8
Nelsons, Fleming, Cathy
MENDELSSOHN, STRAVINSKY

Thursday, November 12
Slobodenjiuk, Zimmermann
MENDELSSOHN, STRAVINSKY

Thursday, January 7
Nelsons, Shaham, chorus
HAYDN, MOZART, PART

Thursday, January 21
Nelsons, Shaham, chorus
HAYDN, MOZART, PART

Thursday, January 28
Wilkins, Diehl, Akston
ELLINGTON, GERSHWIN, STILL

Thursday, February 4
Mäkelä, Gerhardt
SIBELIUS

Thursday, February 25
Mena, Ax
RANDS, MOZART, BRAHMS

Thursday, April 8, 7, 30pm
Nelsons, singers, chorus
SHOSTAKOVICH

THURSDAY-A (7 Concerts)
$866, $717, $568, $398, $321,
$292, $227

Thursday, September 17
Nelsons
ALL-BECHTOVEN PROGRAM

Thursday, October 8
Nelsons, Fleming, Cathy
MENDELSSOHN, STRAVINSKY

Thursday, November 12
Slobodenjiuk, Zimmermann
MENDELSSOHN, STRAVINSKY

Thursday, January 7
Nelsons, Shaham, chorus
HAYDN, MOZART, PART

Thursday, January 21
Nelsons, Shaham, chorus
HAYDN, MOZART, PART

Thursday, January 28
Wilkins, Diehl, Akston
ELLINGTON, GERSHWIN, STILL

Thursday, February 4
Mäkelä, Gerhardt
SIBELIUS

Thursday, February 25
Mena, Ax
RANDS, MOZART, BRAHMS

Thursday, April 8, 7, 30pm
Nelsons, singers, chorus
SHOSTAKOVICH

THURSDAY-C (7 Concerts)
$897, $737, $586, $410, $333,
$293, $242

Thursday, September 17
Nelsons
ALL-BECHTOVEN PROGRAM

Thursday, October 8
Nelsons, Fleming, Cathy
MENDELSSOHN, STRAVINSKY

Thursday, November 12
Slobodenjiuk, Zimmermann
MENDELSSOHN, STRAVINSKY

Thursday, January 7
Nelsons, Shaham, chorus
HAYDN, MOZART, PART

Thursday, January 21
Nelsons, Shaham, chorus
HAYDN, MOZART, PART

THURSDAY-A (7 Concerts)
$866, $717, $568, $398, $321,
$292, $227

Thursday, September 17
Nelsons
ALL-BECHTOVEN PROGRAM

Thursday, October 8
Nelsons, Fleming, Cathy
MENDELSSOHN, STRAVINSKY

Thursday, November 12
Slobodenjiuk, Zimmermann
MENDELSSOHN, STRAVINSKY

Thursday, January 7
Nelsons, Shaham, chorus
HAYDN, MOZART, PART

Thursday, January 21
Nelsons, Shaham, chorus
HAYDN, MOZART, PART

Thursday, January 28
Wilkins, Diehl, Akston
ELLINGTON, GERSHWIN, STILL

Thursday, February 4
Mäkelä, Gerhardt
SIBELIUS

Thursday, February 25
Mena, Ax
RANDS, MOZART, BRAHMS

Thursday, April 8, 7, 30pm
Nelsons, singers, chorus
SHOSTAKOVICH

THURSDAY-D (5 Concerts)
$609, $511, $408, $288, $232,
$203, $175

Thursday, September 17
Nelsons
ALL-BECHTOVEN PROGRAM

Thursday, October 8
Nelsons, Fleming, Cathy
MENDELSSOHN, STRAVINSKY

Thursday, November 12
Slobodenjiuk, Zimmermann
MENDELSSOHN, STRAVINSKY

Thursday, January 7
Nelsons, Shaham, chorus
HAYDN, MOZART, PART

Thursday, January 21
Nelsons, Shaham, chorus
HAYDN, MOZART, PART

Thursday, January 28
Wilkins, Diehl, Akston
ELLINGTON, GERSHWIN, STILL

Thursday, February 4
Mäkelä, Gerhardt
SIBELIUS

Thursday, February 25
Mena, Ax
RANDS, MOZART, BRAHMS

Thursday, April 8, 7, 30pm
Nelsons, singers, chorus
SHOSTAKOVICH

See the full schedule listing beginning on page 6 for program details.
**SUBSCRIPTION PACKAGES**

**Friday Afternoon**

| FRIDAY FALL-A (5 Concerts) | $544, $458, $362, $264, $126, $191, $169 |
| FRIDAY FALL-B (5 Concerts) | $544, $458, $362, $264, $126, $191, $169 |
| FRIDAY, October 23, 1:30pm | Nelsons, Hadelich |
| FRIDAY, November 6, 1:30pm | Guerrera, Sololet Ensemble |
| FRIDAY, November 13, 1:30pm | Blomstedt |
| FRIDAY, January 2, 1:30pm | Nelsons, singers, chorus |
| FRIDAY, January 15, 1:30pm | Nelsons, Buchbinder |
| FRIDAY, January 29, 1:30pm | Wilkins, Diehl, Alston |
| FRIDAY, February 9, 1:30pm | Storgårds, Gabetta |
| FRIDAY, February 19, 1:30pm | Malek, Gerhardt, Sibelius, Dean |
| FRIDAY, March 5, 1:30pm | Blomstedt, Sibelius, Mendelssohn |
| FRIDAY, March 26, 1:30pm | Nelsons, Lewis, Adolphe, Mozart, Dvorak |
| FRIDAY, April 23, 1:30pm | Nelsons, Uchida |

**Casual Fridays**

4 Friday evenings at 8pm

| $236, $200, $144 |

**Saturday**

6 Saturday evenings at 8pm

| $936, $780, $628, $447, $372, $322, $252 |

**FRIDAY FALL-B (5 Concerts)**

| $544, $458, $362, $264, $126, $191, $169 |
| FRIDAY, October 7 | $390, $340 |
| FRIDAY, October 14 | $544, $458, $362, $264, $216, $191, $169 |

**FRIDAY FALL-A (5 Concerts)**

| $544, $458, $362, $264, $126, $191, $169 |
| FRIDAY, February 19 | $1105, $925, $730, $535, $440, $390, $340 |

**FRIDAY FALL-C (7 Concerts)**

| $936, $780, $628, $447, $372, $322, $252 |

**FRIDAY FALL-D (5 Concerts)**

| $544, $458, $362, $264, $126, $191, $169 |

**FRIDAY FALL-E (5 Concerts)**

| $544, $458, $362, $264, $216, $191, $169 |

**FRIDAY SPRING-A (5 concerts)**

| $561, $467, $368, $271, $224, $199, $171 |

**FRIDAY SPRING-B (5 Concerts)**

| $544, $458, $362, $264, $126, $191, $169 |

**FRIDAY SPRING-C (5 Concerts)**

| $544, $458, $362, $264, $126, $191, $169 |

**FRIDAY SPRING-D (5 Concerts)**

| $544, $458, $362, $264, $126, $191, $169 |

All programs and artists subject to change.
“Leipzig Week in Boston,” September 25–October 3

This fourth year of “Leipzig Week in Boston” marks the multi-dimensional alliance between the Boston Symphony Orchestra and the Gewandhaus Orchestra (GHO) of Leipzig, of which BSO Music Director Andris Nelsons became Gewandhauskapellmeister in February 2018. This season’s “Leipzig Week in Boston,” which comes at the close of the BSO’s cycle of Beethoven’s symphonies (celebrating the 250th anniversary of that composer’s birth), will consider the historical connections between Beethoven, the City of Leipzig, and the Gewandhaus orchestra itself. Among the additional “Leipzig Week” events will be two talks that are free and open to the public (September 29, 30).

Friday, Sept 25: 6–8pm (Exhibit opening)
Goethe-Institut, 170 Beacon Street, Boston. “Image & Interview: Wer ist Leipzig?”
The black and white photographic portraits and text interviews in “Image & Interview: Wer ist Leipzig?” illuminate today’s Leipzig, in the faces and words of twenty people. While a visiting artist in 2019, Cambridge photographer Carol Moses sat with a group of Leipzigers of different ages, occupations, origins, and life experiences. The project peels the layers of history lived in Leipzig, from the Eastern Bloc days to the turbulence of Die Wende (the turning point), and lands in the present with the climate crisis. Exhibition on view September 25–October 16.

Tuesday, September 29: 5:30–7pm
Goethe-Institut, 170 Beacon Street, Boston. “Beethoven at the Gewandhaus” will be hosted by Christoph Wolff, the Adams University Professor at Harvard University, former director (2001– 2013) of the Bach Archive in Leipzig, and artistic advisor to the BSO/GHO Alliance.

Wednesday, September 30: 5:30–7pm
Boston University’s Center for Integrated Life Sciences & Engineering 610 Commonwealth Avenue, Boston. A panel discussion entitled “Performing Beethoven’s Symphonies,” features BSO Music Director Andris Nelsons, scholar-performer Lewis Lockwood, and Dr. Jens Dufner of the Beethoven-Haus in Bonn, editor of the authoritative Beethoven edition. The event will be moderated by Jeremy Yudkin, Professor of Music and Director of the Center for Beethoven Research at Boston University.

BSO 101—A Free Adult Education Series on Selected Wednesday Evenings at Symphony Hall from 5:30–7PM

BSO 101 returns in 2020–21, again offering the opportunity to increase your enjoyment of BSO concerts. These free Wednesday sessions with the BSO’s Robert Kirzinger, who is joined by members of the orchestra, are designed to enhance your listening experience and appreciation of music by focusing on upcoming BSO repertoire. In addition, each session is followed by a free tour of Symphony Hall. Topics to be covered in 2020–21 will include “BSO 101 and Beethoven 101”; “Accents of the World: National Voices in Orchestral Music from Russia to the U.S.”; “The Concerto in Modern Music from Gershwin to Adès”; “Evolution of the Orchestra From Haydn to Strauss”; and “Shostakovich’s Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk and the BSO’s History of Opera in Concert.” Dates and more information will be provided in your Subscription ticket package, and at bso.org in the fall.

Tanglewood Learning Institute in Boston

Launched in 2019 at the Linde Center for Music and Learning on the Tanglewood campus in Lenox, MA, the Boston Symphony’s Tanglewood Learning Institute (TLI) offers engaging programs that provide meaning and context for music, the arts, and the human spirit.

Beginning Fall 2020, TLI expands to Boston with programming that explores:

- Music and revolution from the 18th century to the present day
- The role that music and musicians have played in support of human rights movements throughout history and around the world
- Music, musicians, and myth-making in film and the visual arts
- Jewels in the Crown: the symphonies of Ludwig van Beethoven and Dmitri Shostakovich
- Shostakovich’s opera Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk

TLI will also present programming at the Linde Center for Music and Learning on the Tanglewood campus from Fall 2020 through Spring 2021. Event details will be finalized this summer.

For more information about purchasing tickets to these events, please visit tli.org or bso.org and look for the TLI In Boston information.

“What I Hear”—Concerts & Conversations with Composers at New England Conservatory

A collaboration between the Boston Symphony Orchestra and New England Conservatory, “What I Hear” is a series of free hour-long events meant to introduce audiences to composers working with the BSO. These composer-curated chamber music programs feature performances by NEC students and include conversations between the composers and BSO Assistant Artistic Administrator Eric Valliere.

All events take place at 6pm at New England Conservatory’s Williams Hall:
- Thursday, November 5, featuring Julia Wolfe
- Thursday, February 25, featuring Bernard Rands
- Thursday, April 22, featuring Joan Tower

Admission is free, but RSVP is suggested. Visit bso.org for more details.
Family Concerts

The BSO’s Family Concert Series provides fun and engaging orchestral concert experiences for children and their families. Designed around universal themes, each program encourages an appreciation for live performance, orchestral music and Symphony Hall. More information may be found at bso.org in the fall.

3-Concert Series: $60 per adult; children 18 and under free
(limit four per family, $10 per ticket for more than 4 children)

Performed by the Boston Symphony Orchestra

Saturday, November 14, 2020, 12noon
Boston Youth Symphony Orchestras (BYSO)
Adrian Szymczyk, conductor
PROROKOVENIE Peter and the Wolf

Saturday, April 24, 2021, 12noon
Marta Jurad, conductor
Matt Roberts, magician

Sunday, March 28, 2021, 12noon
with Inon Barnatan, piano
GLINKA Trio pathétique in D minor
for clarinet, bassoon, and piano
Sofia GUBAIDULLINA Sonata
for double bass and piano
Elena LANGER Reflections on Water, for ensemble
SHOSTAKOVICH Piano Quintet in G minor, Op. 57

Open Rehearsals

Experience a BSO concert in the making. BSO Open Rehearsals offer audience members a unique perspective on the creative dynamic between orchestra and conductor. Gain a better understanding of how the orchestra strives to refine its performance by occasionally repeating passages or focusing on a particular movement. Please note that all seats for Open Rehearsals are ticketed rather than general seating, to provide a better experience for our patrons.

4 Thursday mornings at 10:30am, $120, $96, $72

Thursday, October 22, 10:30am
Andris Nelsons, conductor
Augustin Hadelich, violin
HAYDN Symphony No. 26, Lamentatione
BRITTEN Violin Concerto
STRAVINSKY The Rite of Spring

Thursday, November 19, 10:30am
Alan Gilbert, conductor
Garrick Ohlsson, piano
Liv Redman, soprano
John Brancy, baritone
BEETHOVEN Egmont Overture
BARTÔK Piano Concerto No. 3
NIELSEN Symphony No. 3, Sinfonia espansiva

Thursday, March 25, 10:30am
Andris Nelsons, conductor
Paul Lewis, piano
Julia ADOLPHE New work
(world premiere; BSO co-commission)
MOZART Piano Concerto No. 27 in B-flat, K.595
DVORÁK Symphony No. 7

Thursday, April 29, 10:30am
Andris Nelsons, conductor
Yefim Bronfman, piano
Anna Gawboy, lighting research
Justin Townsend, lighting designer
Tanglewood Festival Chorus, James Burton, conductor
STRAVINSKY Petrushka
IUADOV The Enchanted Lake and Kikimora
SCRIABIN Prometheus, The Poem of Fire,
for piano, chorus, color organ, and orchestra

Boston Symphony Chambers Players

Founded in 1964, the Boston Symphony Chamber Players combine the talents of BSO principal players and renowned guest artists to explore the full spectrum of chamber music repertoire. The ensemble’s four-concert series takes place on Sunday afternoons at New England Conservatory’s Jordan Hall.

4 Sunday afternoons at 3pm, $132, $95, $75

Sunday, November 6, 2020, 3pm
Jennifer HIGDON Autumn Music,
for wind quintet
Marti EPSTEIN Komorebi,
for oboe, clarinet, and violin
Shulamit RAN Lyre of Orpheus,
for string sextet
FARRENC Nonet for winds and strings

Sunday, February 21, 2021, 3pm
with Alessio Bax, piano
Sophia Burgos, soprano
John Brancy, baritone
BARTÓK Contrasts, for clarinet, violin,
and piano
Michael GANDOLFI Cantata, for soprano,
baritone, and ensemble
DVORÁK String Quintet in G, Op. 77

Sunday, March 28, 2021, 3pm
with Inon Barnatan, piano
CLINKA Trio pathétique in D minor
for clarinet, bassoon, and piano
Sofia GUBAIDULLINA Sonata
for double bass and piano
Elena LANGER Reflections on Water, for ensemble
SHOSTAKOVICH Piano Quintet in G minor, Op. 57

Sunday, April 25, 2021, 3pm
HINDEMITH Octet for winds and strings
Yehudi WYNER Concord 7, for flute, oboe,
clarinet, violin, viola, cello, and piano
MOZART String Quintet in D, K.593
How to Subscribe
Select a series and choose a seat location (Orchestra, First Balcony, or Second Balcony). Ticket prices are listed with each series. New subscriber requests will be handled on a first-come, first-served basis, after renewing patrons. The deposit of your check or charge does not guarantee seating. If you have any questions, please contact the Subscription Office at 617-266-7575 or 888-266-7575.

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