RI Phil ORCHESTRA

RUTH REINHARDT
MUSIC DIRECTOR

2026/27 SEASON



REINHARDT



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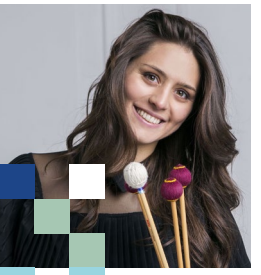

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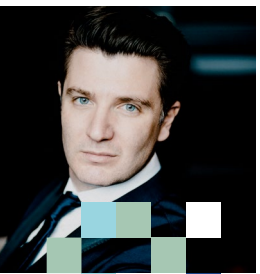



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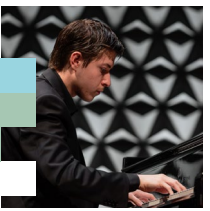

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Welcome to tonight's Rhode Island Philharmonic Orchestra Concert!

Whether you are experiencing this wonderful Orchestra for the first time, or are a longtime patron, we are thrilled you are here. For more than 80 years, the Rhode Island Philharmonic has inspired and empowered this community through its performances and education programs. Our phenomenal Orchestra shares the concert stage with some of the world's most talented soloists, composers and conductors to move and entertain you. We also recognize that you are musical too, and so is every child growing up in Rhode Island. Our dedicated Music School and community partnership faculty work with students of all ages and abilities so that we can both serve the audience of today, as well as build the audience, performers and teachers of the future.

During the 26/27 Season, Music Director Ruth Reinhardt builds on her exceptional 25/26 debut. Her concerts include the world premiere of Composer in Residence Eric Nathan's Violin Concerto, exciting concerti and guest artists like Vivi Vassileva performing Corigliano's Percussion Concerto, *Conjurer*, and major symphonies by Beethoven, Brahms, Tchaikovsky, Sibelius and Shostakovich. In January, Ruth will welcome members of our Youth Orchestra to the stage for a side-by-side performance of Chopin's Piano Concerto No.2. Principal Guest Conductor Robert Spano returns in April for a night of Italian Opera. On May 1, Ruth concludes the TACO Classical season with Beethoven's profound *Missa solemnis*, followed by a remarkable Gala on Sunday, May 23 with narration from F. Murray Abraham. Beethoven famously inscribed his *Missa solemnis* score "From the heart, may it go again to the heart." Indeed, we hope you will be moved by what you hear tonight.

We also hope you join Ruth and our Guest Artists for talkbacks after tonight's concert and ask them your burning questions. Subscribe to our email newsletters. Join the Conductor's Circle and gain access to behind-the-scenes tours, exclusive events, and even the chance to sit on stage! Inquire about volunteering for a committee or our Board of Directors. Become a student at the RI Philharmonic Music School! Find out how you can support our performances and education programs. There are many ways to engage your passion.

For now, enjoy tonight's concert! The dedication, enthusiasm and generosity of patrons like you is the foundation on which the RI Philharmonic was built. We are honored to continue building it with you.

A heartfelt thank you!



RUTH REINHARDT

Music Director

It is with tremendous joy that I welcome you to our 82nd season - my second season as Music Director of the Rhode Island Philharmonic Orchestra.

I am deeply grateful for the incredibly warm welcome I've received from our audiences, musicians, students, staff, and the entire Rhode Island community. This past year has been filled with so many inspiring musical and human encounters; I am eager to continue to get to know you and to create many more unforgettable musical experiences together.

Our 82nd season blends beloved masterworks, such as Tchaikovsky's Fifth Symphony and Beethoven's *Emperor* Concerto, with thrilling discoveries. We're delighted to welcome Providence-based composer Eric Nathan as our Composer in Residence for a three-year partnership, beginning with the world premiere of his violin concerto to open our season. I'm especially excited to share the appearance of the extraordinary percussionist Vivi Vassileva, who will perform John Corigliano's breathtaking *Conjurer* Concerto. She combines phenomenal virtuosity with infectious joy, charisma, and a kind of fearless athleticism that you don't want to miss! Later in the season, our beloved Principal Guest Conductor Robert Spano will return to lead a spectacular operatic program.

Working with the talented students of the Music School is always a highlight for me, and I'm delighted to welcome back Alessio Bax for Chopin's Second Piano Concerto in our annual side-by-side concert, where students from our Music School will join the Philharmonic musicians on stage in a celebration of mentorship and shared passion.

It is a privilege to be part of this extraordinary organization, and I am excited to continue to build on the work of those who have come before me. I can't wait to share another unforgettable season with you and celebrate the music that inspires, connects, and unites us all.



RI Phil ORCHESTRA
RUTH REINHARDT
MUSIC DIRECTOR

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RUTH REINHARDT

Music Director

The 2025/26 season marked the beginning of Ruth Reinhardt's term as Music Director of the Rhode Island Philharmonic, where she led five programs across the season. In the summer of 2025, she debuted with the Seoul Philharmonic and the São Paulo State Symphony Orchestra. Other significant debuts in 25/26 included the Staatskapelle Dresden, Philharmonia Orchestra in London, Hong Kong Philharmonic, Bruckner Orchester Linz, SWR Symphonieorchester, the Folkwang Kammerorchester in Essen and the Sinfonieorchester St. Gallen in Switzerland. She also had return engagements with the Warsaw Philharmonic, New Jersey Symphony Orchestra, Naples Philharmonic (FL) and the Orlando Philharmonic.

Programmatically, Reinhardt's interests have led her toward contemporary repertoire, with significant emphasis on women composers of the late 20th and early 21st centuries. Her programs often introduce new names and fresh faces to many orchestras, including Grażyna Bacewicz, Kaija Saariaho, and Dai Fujikura, to name some of the more familiar ones, and pairs them with stylistically contrasting or complementary pieces, whether core masterworks by Brahms, Rachmaninoff, or Dvořák, or with "classic moderns" such as works by Bartók, Stravinsky, Lutowslawski, Martinů, and Hindemith. Ruth is a frequent collaborator of many of today's foremost instrumentalists spanning several generations. Among them are pianists Emanuel Ax, Daniil Trifonov, and Eva Gevorgyan, violinists Augustin Hadelich and Vadim Gluzman, cellists Andrei Ioniță and Jean-Guihen Queyras, horn player Stefan Dohr, and saxophonist Steven Banks.

In past seasons, Reinhardt has appeared with many of the major North American Orchestras and as recently as last season has made debuts with the St. Louis and Charlotte Symphony Orchestras. Previously, she has appeared with the New York Philharmonic, Cleveland Orchestra (on four occasions), National Symphony Orchestra, and the symphony orchestras of San Francisco, Detroit, Houston, Seattle, and Baltimore. In Europe, she has appeared with Hague Residentie Orkestra, Netherlands Radio Philharmonic in Amsterdam, Orchestre National de France, Frankfurt Radio Symphony, RSO Berlin, Stockholm Philharmonic, and Tonkünstler Orchestra Wien, among many others.

German conductor Ruth Reinhardt is building a reputation for her keen musical intelligence, programmatic imagination, and elegant performances. Reinhardt served as Assistant Conductor of the Dallas Symphony for the final two seasons of Jaap Van Zweden's tenure as Music Director (2018-2020). She received her master's degree in conducting from the Juilliard School of Music in New York in 2017. She was a Dudamel Fellow of the Los Angeles Philharmonic (2017-2018), conducting fellow at both the Seattle Symphony (2015-2016) and Tanglewood Music Center (2015), and Taki Concordia associate conducting fellow (2015-2017). She currently makes her home in Switzerland.



ROBERT SPANO

Principal Guest Conductor

RI Phil Principal Guest Conductor Robert Spano is a conductor, pianist, composer, and teacher, known worldwide for the intensity of his artistry and distinctive communicative abilities, creating a sense of inclusion among musicians and audiences. Music Director of the Fort Worth Symphony Orchestra since August 2022, Spano will continue there through July 2031, shaping the artistic direction of the orchestra and driving its continued growth. He is Music Director of the Washington National Opera, and after 20 seasons as Music Director of the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra, he now serves as its Music Director Laureate. He is also Principal Guest Conductor of the Rhode Island Philharmonic Orchestra & Music School, where he previously served as Principal Conductor. As Music Director of the Aspen Music Festival and School, he oversees the programming of more than 300 events for young performers; he also directs the Aspen Conducting Academy.

In his fifth season as music director of the Fort Worth Symphony Orchestra, Spano leads six weeks of symphonic programs. With Washington National Opera, Spano leads the company premiere of John Adams's *Nixon in China* and a new production of Mozart's *Idomeneo*, as well as the one-night concert event *We the People*. Other highlights of the season include the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra, featuring a world premiere by Adam Schoenberg, and a week with the Rhode Island Philharmonic. As guest conductor, he appears with the Kansas City Symphony, the KBS Symphony Orchestra (Seoul), and the Prague Symphony Orchestra.

Robert Spano made his Metropolitan Opera debut in 2019, leading the US premiere of Nico Muhly's *Marnie*. Recent concert highlights include several world-premiere performances, including *The Sacrifice of Isaac* by Jonathan Leshnoff with the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra; Steven Mackey's *Aluminum Flowers* and James Ra's *Te Deum* with the Curtis Symphony Orchestra; Jake Heggie's *Earth 2.0* with the Fort Worth Symphony Orchestra; and a new production of *Fidelio* with the Washington National Opera.

Spano has garnered four Grammy™ Awards and eight nominations with the Atlanta Symphony. Spano's latest recording as a pianist and composer is "Songs of Orpheus" with mezzo-soprano Kelley O'Connor.

Spano is on faculty at Oberlin Conservatory and has received honorary doctorates from New England Conservatory of Music, Bowling Green State University, the Curtis Institute of Music, Emory University, and Oberlin. Maestro Spano is a recipient of the Georgia Governor's Award for the Arts and Humanities and is one of two classical musicians inducted into the Georgia Music Hall of Fame.

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TROY QUINN

Principal Pops Conductor

Emmy-nominated conductor Troy Quinn has quickly established himself as one of his generation's most versatile young artists. Lauded for his energetic and riveting conducting, charismatic stage presence, and genre-defying programs, Quinn is in his tenth season as Music Director of the Owensboro Symphony in Kentucky. He is also in his ninth season as Music Director of the Venice Symphony in Florida and serves concurrently as the Pops Conductor of both the Rhode Island Philharmonic and the Santa Rosa Symphony in California. Quinn's engagements have included performances with many prestigious orchestras in the United States, including the Boston Pops, Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra, Rochester Philharmonic Orchestra, and the Chamber Orchestra of Philadelphia.

Equally at home in the pops and commercial world, Quinn has performed and recorded with some of the most popular artists of our time, including The Rolling Stones, The Beach Boys, Barry Manilow, Lee Greenwood, Josh Groban, Jennifer Hudson, Michael Feinstein, Sutton Foster, Tower of Power, Rockapella, Cypress Hill, The Indigo Girls, and Nas. As an accomplished vocalist, Quinn has also collaborated with such renowned composers as Alan Menken, Hans Zimmer, Alan Silvestri, and Alexandre Desplat while performing under prominent maestros, including Helmuth Rilling, Larry Rachleff, Carl St. Clair and Dan Saunders of the Metropolitan Opera. In addition to his concert work, Quinn has worked extensively in the television and recording industry, earning an Emmy nomination for the PBS special *A Night at the Oscars with the Owensboro Symphony*. He has made appearances on such hit television shows as Fox's *GLEE*, NBC's *The Voice* and *The Tonight Show with Jay Leno* while recording on films like *The Call of the Wild* and *Indiana Jones and the Kingdom of the Crystal Skull*. He has also appeared at many of the world's major music centers and at such famed venues as the Hollywood Bowl, Walt Disney Concert Hall, and Tanglewood.

A native of Connecticut, Quinn pursued a Bachelor of Arts degree from Providence College where he was the recipient of the Leo S. Cannon award for superior achievement in the music field. He went on to earn his master's degree with honors from the Manhattan School of Music, studying conducting with David Gilbert and voice with highly acclaimed Metropolitan Opera singer Mark Oswald. He completed his doctorate in conducting at the University of Southern California's Thornton School of Music, where he studied with Larry Livingston and Jo-Michael Scheibe and was named the outstanding doctoral graduate of his class. He has been mentored by such renowned conductors as Benjamin Zander and Neil Varon. Quinn serves on the conducting faculty at the University of Southern California's Thornton School of Music and has previously served as a faculty member at Providence College, where he was also awarded an honorary doctorate.



ERIC NATHAN

Composer in Residence

Eric Nathan (b. 1983) has been described as writing music that is "as diverse as it is arresting," with a "constant vein of ingenuity and expressive depth *(San Francisco Chronicle)* and a marvel of musical logic" (*Boston Classical Review*).

Nathan has written extensively for orchestra, receiving three commissions from the Boston Symphony Orchestra, including *the space of a door*, released on Naxos, and Concerto for Orchestra, which opened the BSO's 2019-20 season under Andris Nelsons. His orchestral work *Opening*, co-commissioned by the Milwaukee Symphony Orchestra and the Serge Koussevitzky Music Foundation, received a nationally broadcast premiere on PBS with Ken-David Masur. His recent flute concerto, *The Seas Between Us*, was commissioned by a consortium of five orchestras in the U.S. and México for flutist Alejandro Escuer.

Nathan has received additional commissions from the New York Philharmonic, Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center, the Barlow Endowment, and Fromm Music Foundation. His music has been presented at Carnegie Hall, Wigmore Hall, the New York Philharmonic Biennials, Tanglewood, Aspen, Aldeburgh, and Cabrillo festivals, and the Library of Congress. A recipient of the Rome Prize and a Guggenheim Fellowship, he has also received a Goddard Lieberson Fellowship from the American Academy of Arts and Letters, as well as fellowships from MacDowell, Civitella Ranieri, Copland House, and Yaddo.

Recent premieres include the piano trio *Dream Scenes* at Tonhalle Düsseldorf and The Black Diamond Copenhagen. His Double Concerto No. 2 was commissioned by Yellow Barn, The Juilliard School, and New York Classical Players for violists Hsin-Yun Huang and Misha Amory, and the Parker, Ariel, and Jupiter Quartets. It received its China premiere in April 2026 at the Tianjin Juilliard School, performed by the QingXin Ensemble and with the composer conducting.

Nathan's Violin Concerto ("The Mountains We Climb") was commissioned by a consortium of eight orchestras across the U.S. including the Rhode Island Philharmonic Orchestra and The Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra, for world premiere in 2026 by conductor Ruth Reinhardt and violinist Yevgeny Kutik, with additional premieres by a consortium of violinists including Curtis Stewart and Stefan Jackiw through 2028-29. Additional recent and upcoming works include a new string quartet for the Balourdet Quartet and *What Is Home?*, commissioned by Eighth Blackbird, Collage New Music, and Left Coast Chamber Ensemble.

Nathan is Artistic Director of Collage New Music in Boston, Composer in Residence of the Rhode Island Philharmonic Orchestra & Music School, and Associate Professor of Music at Brown University. He previously served as Composer in Residence of the New England Philharmonic for six seasons. He holds degrees from Cornell, Indiana University, and Yale. His compositions are published by Just a Theory Press. Learn more at www.ericnathanmusic.com.

RI Phil ORCHESTRA & MUSIC SCHOOL

OUR COMMITMENT TO MUSIC FOR ALL



The RI Philharmonic Orchestra & Music School's mission is to enrich and transform Rhode Island and our region through great live symphonic performances and music education. To further this mission, we offer concerts and education programs of exceptional quality that are relevant and accessible to all. We believe that our work can help achieve a more just and equitable society and have worked for many years to use music as a tool to further equity and opportunity in our community.

We work with many partners to further our efforts to expand access, including the Papitto Opportunity Connection (POC), the Rhode Island Foundation, Rhode Island State Council on the Arts, as well as mayors, school superintendents, principals, teachers, and many other organizations and individuals who share our vision.

On our stages, in our classrooms, and with our partners, we are committed to harnessing music's power to inspire, transform, educate and unify, including within our own organization. As such, we:

- Ensure that the Orchestra performs a significant number of works each season written by exceptional living composers, and composers with diverse backgrounds and voices;
- Perform free concerts throughout Rhode Island;
- Work to keep quality high, and ticket prices and tuition affordable;
- Create pathways for students through free and subsidized learning opportunities like Link Up and the Victoria's Dream Project;
- Offer financial aid to students who cannot afford tuition at the Music School;
- Employ hiring and audition practices that value and further quality and diversity;
- Hold ourselves accountable for results.

Through these and other actions, we seek to provide pathways for more performers, educators, composers and arts leaders from diverse backgrounds who will enrich, enliven and expand access to our concert halls and classrooms for generations to come. By listening to, celebrating, empowering and reflecting the many voices that make up our communities and our profession, we can honor the past, and forge a bright and exciting future for symphonic music and music education, and contribute to the cultural, educational and economic vibrancy of our region.

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Troy Quinn, Principal Pops Conductor | **Eric Nathan**, Composer in Residence

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Heidi & Chester Kirk Chair
Katherine Winterstein
Associate Concertmaster
Omar Chen Guey
Assistant Concertmaster
Sasha Callahan
Francesca Anderegg
Xiao Fu
Barbara Lefkowitz
Mina Lavcheva
Irving Tsai
Allyson Michal
Alexey Shabalin
Zoya Tsvetkova
Zoia Bologovsky

VIOLIN II

Amy Rawstron Watson
Principal
Lois Finkel
Assistant Principal
Antoaneta Anguelova
Rose Drucker
Sabine Gross
Lisa Goddard
Laura Gulley
Ella Leone
Theo Ramsey
Sophia Anna Szokolay

VIOLA

Abigail Cross
Principal
Susan Culpo
Assistant Principal
Noriko Futagami
Christine Orio
Katrina Smith
Willine Thoe
Harold Lieberman

CELLO

Brent Selby
Principal
Melanie Dyball
Assistant Principal
Jackie Ludwig Selby
Aron Zelkowicz
Steven Laven
Rebecca Thornblade
Megan Koch
Claire Dresselhuis

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Barry Boettger
Principal
Robert Caplin
Assistant Principal
Eliot Porter
Anthony D'Amico
Joseph Higgins
Nancy Kidd

FLUTE

Ann Bobo
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Marie J. Langlois Chair
Kathleen Boyd

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Rachel Braude

OBOE

Cheryl Bishkoff
Principal
Denise Plaza-Martin

ENGLISH HORN

Jane Murray

CLARINET

Ian Greitzer
Principal
Lisa Bisaccia & Robert Naparstek Chair
Steven Zhang

BASS CLARINET

Tom Parchman

BASSOON

Ron Haroutunian
Principal
Brooke Allen

HORN

Kevin Owen
Principal
Joshua Michal
Whit Hill

TRUMPET

Joseph Foley
Principal
Andrew Harms
Mary-Lynne Bohn

TROMBONE

Greg Spiridopoulos
Principal
Alexei Doohovskoy

BASS TROMBONE

Gabriel Rice

TUBA

Stephen Lamb
Principal

TIMPANI

Craig McNutt
Principal
Mr. & Mrs. George M. Sage Chair

PERCUSSION

Rob McEwan
Principal
Nathan Lassell

HARP

Hyunjung Choi
Principal

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6. Xiao Fu
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8. Mina Lavcheva
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11. Alexey Shabalin
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13. Zoia Bologovsky

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14. Amy Rawstron Watson
15. Lois Finkel
16. Rose Drucker
17. Sabine Gross
18. Lisa Goddard
19. Laura Gulley
20. Ella Leone
21. Theo Ramsey
22. Sophia Anna Szokolay

VIOLA
23. Abigail Cross
24. Susan Culpo
25. Noriko Futagami
26. Christine Orio
27. Katrina Smith
28. Willine Thoe
29. Harold Lieberman

CELLO
30. Brent Selby
31. Melanie Dyball
32. Jackie Ludwig Selby
33. Aron Zelkowicz

*leave of absence



34. Steven Laven
35. Rebecca Thornblade
36. Megan Koch
37. Claire Dresselhuis

BASS
38. Barry Boettger
39. Robert Caplin
40. Eliot Porter
41. Anthony D'Amico
42 Joseph Higgins
43. Nancy Kidd

FLUTE
44. Ann Bobo
45. Kathleen Boyd

PICCOLO
46. Rachel Braude

OBOE
47. Cheryl Bishkoff
48. Denise Plaza-Martin

ENGLISH HORN
49. Jane Murray

CLARINET
50. Ian Greitzer
51. Steven Zhang

BASS CLARINET
52. Tom Parchman

BASSOON
53. Ron Haroutunian
54. Brooke Allen

HORN
55. Kevin Owen
56. Joshua Michal
57. Whit Hill

TRUMPET
58. Joseph Foley
59. Andrew Harms
60. Mary-Lynne Bohn

TROMBONE
61. Greg Spiridopoulos
62. Alexei Doohovskoy

BASS TROMBONE
63. Gabriel Rice

TUBA
64. Stephen Lamb

TIMPANI
65. Craig McNutt

PERCUSSION
66. Rob McEwan
67. Nathan Lassell

HARP
68. Hyunjung Choi

Musicians not pictured:
Antoaneta Anguelova



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Named in honor of Francis K.C. Madeira, Conductor Emeritus and founder of the Rhode Island Philharmonic Orchestra, this society welcomes people who have remembered the Rhode Island Philharmonic Orchestra & Music School in their estate plans. Their legacy will not only enable the Philharmonic to continue great music into the future, it ensures the permanence of each gift.

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And live on through the music



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RI Phil ORCHESTRA

RUTH REINHARDT
MUSIC DIRECTOR

AMICA RUSH HOUR CONCERT

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Ride of the Valkyries!

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 20, 2026, 6:30PM

This Concert Weekend is endowed by ***The Collis Family in memory of their Beloved Son and Brother, Andrew Francis Anderson****.*

Christian Reif, conductor • Estefan Iatcekiw, piano

RICHARD WAGNER — *Ride of the Valkyries,* WWV 86b

CLARA SCHUMANN — Piano Concerto in A minor, op.7
Allegro maestoso
Romanze: Andante non troppo, con grazia
Finale: Allegro non troppo
Estefan Iatcekiw

ANTONÍN DVOŘÁK — *The Wood Dove,* op.110, B.198

MAURICE RAVEL — *La valse*

You are invited to join Christian Reif and Estefan Iatcekiw when they return to the stage for a brief conversation immediately following the concert.

RISCA RHODE ISLAND STATE COUNCIL ON THE ARTS

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The Rhode Island Philharmonic is funded in part by a grant from the Rhode Island State Council on the Arts, through an appropriation by the Rhode Island General Assembly, a grant from the National Endowment for the Arts and private funders.

Estefan Iatcekiw's appearance is sponsored by The Collis Family.

Estefan Iatcekiw appears by arrangement with ArteMatriz.
Christian Reif appears by arrangement with Primo Artists.

RI Phil ORCHESTRA

RUTH REINHARDT
MUSIC DIRECTOR

TACO CLASSICAL CONCERT

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Ride of the Valkyries!

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 21, 2026, 7:30PM

This Concert Weekend is endowed by ***The Collis Family in memory of their Beloved Son and Brother, Andrew Francis Anderson****.*

Christian Reif, conductor • Estefan Iatcekiw, piano

RICHARD WAGNER *Ride of the Valkyries,* WWV 86b

CLARA SCHUMANN Piano Concerto in A minor, op.7
Allegro maestoso
Romanze: Andante non troppo, con grazia
Finale: Allegro non troppo
Estefan Iatcekiw

INTERMISSION

ANTONÍN DVOŘÁK *The Wood Dove,* op.110, B.198

MAURICE RAVEL *La valse*

You are invited to join Christian Reif and Estefan Iatcekiw when they return to the stage for a brief conversation immediately following the concert.

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1836

Clara Schumann
Piano Concerto



MUSIC
Giacomo Meyerbeer
Les Huguenots



ART
Thomas Cole
The Oxbow



LITERATURE
Charles Dickens
The Pickwick Papers



HISTORY
The battle of the Alamo

1856

Wagner
Ride of the Valkyries



MUSIC
The group of Russian composers known as "The Mighty Five" is formed.



ART
Hiroshige
One Hundred Famous Views of Edo



LITERATURE
Gustave Flaubert
Madame Bovary



HISTORY
The American Know Nothing Party nominates their first presidential candidate, former president Millard Fillmore.

1896

Dvořák
The Wood Dove



MUSIC
Ernest Chausson
Poème



ART
Camille Pisarro
Pont Boieldiue in Rouen, Rainy Weather



LITERATURE
H. G. Wells
The Island of Doctor Moreau



HISTORY
X-rays are discovered

1920

Ravel
La valse



MUSIC
Ralph Vaughan Williams
The Lark Ascending



ART
Daniel Chester French
Abraham Lincoln Memorial Statue in Washington, D.C.



LITERATURE
F. Scott Fitzgerald
This Side of Paradise



HISTORY
The League of Nations holds its first meeting.

RIDE OF THE VALKYRIES!

The mid-19th century was a heady time. New nations were being formed, individual freedoms were being tested, societal norms were being challenged, and art was being redefined.

It was this crucible of change that gave rise to all four of the pieces on tonight's program.

In a largely misogynistic society, Clara Schumann was making it abundantly clear the summits of artistic achievement to which women could ascend (all while raising no less than seven healthy, well-adjusted children); a mid-career Wagner was laying out an entirely new conceptual basis for opera ("a consummate artwork of the future"), fusing all the dramatic arts—poetry, lighting, scenery, music, and acting-together as equal elements to create what he famously coined as *Gesamtkunstwerk*; Dvořák, meanwhile, helped articulate a distinct Czech cultural identity within the repressive Austro-Hungarian Empire by composing such culturally specific masterworks as *The Wood Dove*; and the revolutionary dance craze known as the waltz, with its close hold embraces and continuous, swirling motions, effectively shattered the rigid social order and formal etiquette of European ballroom culture.

The driving force behind all this change was a growing understanding of both the importance and the power of human passion. Such passion provided the raw material from which gloriously expressive music could be spun and through which artistic personalities could shine.

In 1937, paying homage to a recently deceased Maurice Ravel, French musicologist and critic Paul Landormy spoke of the "heretofore unexpected depths of Romanticism, power, vigor, and rapture" one encounters in *La valse*. Such words are a perfect encapsulation of the entirety of what you will hear on tonight's entire program.



***Ride of the Valkyries*, WWV 86b**

RICHARD WAGNER (1813-1883)

Last performed February 20, 2016 with Larry Rachleff conducting. This piece is scored for piccolo, two flutes, two oboes, English horn, two clarinets, bass clarinet, two bassoons, four horns, three trumpets, three trombones, tuba, timpani, percussion and strings.

After early successes in opera, Wagner turned in the mid-1840s to a bold new theory of the art form that would permanently reshape music history. While exiled in Switzerland for his outspoken democratic and socialist views, he wrote two major essays, *Art and Revolution* and *Opera and Drama*. In them, he developed the idea of the *Gesamtkunstwerk*, or "total work of art," which sought to fuse music, drama, poetry, and staging into one continuous narrative rather than a sequence of separate arias and recitatives.

At the heart of this concept was a large orchestra, especially rich in winds, that spun a continuous musical texture. The orchestra became a central presence in the stage drama. It did more than accompany the singers like a Greek chorus; it also drove the action through commentary, interpretation, and foreshadowing.

The fullest expression of this style was Wagner's four-part cycle of "music dramas," collectively known as *The Ring of the Nibelung: Das Rheingold, Die Walküre, Siegfried*, and *Götterdämmerung*. Its vast, continuously unfolding story is extraordinarily intricate, yet it speaks directly to a wide range of recognizable human passions and traits. Because the orchestra's role is so vivid and unforgettable throughout, major orchestral excerpts from Wagner operas have long been popular in the concert hall.

The best known of these excerpts is probably the "Ride of the Valkyries," which opens Act III of *Die Walküre*, the second drama in the cycle. Its main theme, a leitmotif Wagner called "Walkürenritt," was first sketched in 1851, five years before the premiere. Recognizing its dramatic power, Wagner introduced it early in the work's development and kept it as a central element to the finished score.

In the drama, this music sounds as the curtain rises on a mountain peak, where four of Brünnhilde's eight Valkyrie sisters have gathered to carry fallen heroes to Valhalla. When the other four arrive, the orchestra presents the famous theme as the Valkyries greet one another and let loose their battle cries.

At first, Wagner considered independent performances of the "Ride" "an utter indiscretion" and forbade "any such thing." But its popularity spread quickly, and publishers, ignoring his wishes, issued it to a clamoring public as a stand-alone piece. After the complete *Ring* was performed in Bayreuth in 1876, Wagner relented; in 1877, he even conducted it in London as an encore.

Today, excerpts from Wagner's operas are a standard part of the orchestral repertoire, enabling many a listener who has never entered an opera house to become acquainted with the magical power of Wagner's orchestral writing.

Piano Concerto in A minor, op.7

CLARA SCHUMANN (1819-1896)

This is a RI Philharmonic Orchestra premiere. In addition to a solo piano, this piece is scored for two flutes, two oboes, two clarinets, two bassoons, two horns, two trumpets, trombone, timpani and strings.

> "I once believed that I possessed creative talent, but I have given up this idea; a woman must not desire to compose—there has never yet been one able to do it. Should I expect to be the one?"

Clara Wieck Schumann must have written these words in a moment of discouragement, for she was unquestionably a gifted composer whose works were respected in her lifetime and remain highly regarded today. The challenge was not a lack of talent, but that she was celebrated above all as one of the great pianists of the nineteenth century, a musician equal to any of her peers and a trailblazer who helped define the standards of performance, repertoire, and artistic integrity expected of virtuoso pianists. The story is not a unique one. Performers at the highest level of performance have often struggled to gain equal recognition as composers. Schumann also lived in the shadow of her husband, Robert, whose music she championed with devotion. Not only was she his artistic partner and collaborator, she also bore him

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eight children, raised the seven who survived, helped care for her grandchildren, managed the household, earned the family income, paid the bills, and toured across Europe to great acclaim.

Schumann completed, published, and premiered her Piano Concerto in 1836, when she was just sixteen (!). But that remarkable fact doesn't quite tell the whole story. She began the work three years earlier - composing the finale first, with considerable help from Robert, who also orchestrated it. She had initially conceived that movement as a stand-alone piece, but then expanded it into a concerto by adding the first and second movements, which she orchestrated herself. The concerto reveals the qualities one might expect from so young and accomplished a performer: brilliant and demanding piano writing, adventurous and colorful harmonies, a vivid imagination, and, above all, a daring and unconventional command of form.

The first movement opens with a bold statement of the main theme, followed by a flourish from the solo piano. Soon the pianist presents the full theme alone, without orchestral support. Florid passagework worthy of Liszt leads to a second theme, but there are questions. Is this sonata form? Some sort of theme & variations? The answer remains unsettled, for the structure is strikingly original and hard to define. The second theme then begins in the expected key, but quickly veers away, never to return. A development-like passage follows, with echoes of earlier themes and harmonic detours through A$^{\flat}$, F minor, and E major. Yet there is no true recapitulation. Instead, the mood softens, the tempo relaxes, and the movement fades into a slow ascending arpeggio that leads directly to the graceful Romanze in A$^{\flat}$—a distant key from the concerto's home key of A minor.

After a brief harmonic detour, the music returns to the home key with a sublime cello solo over piano figuration (those familiar with Brahms's Second Piano Concerto may detect a bit of foreshadowing here). The cello carries the movement to its close, and soft timpani lead into the energetic finale, heralded by the trumpets.

Compared with the more modest scale and mood of the first two movements, the finale is clearly the concerto's largest and most forceful movement, reversing the usual balance of a concerto. In most concertos, the first movement carries the greatest weight, while the last releases the tension with lighter, more sparkling energy. Not here. It is easy to understand why Clara first imagined this movement as an independent virtuoso *tour de force* for piano and orchestra. Many hear a Chopin-esque *Grand Polonaise* in its rhythm and drive. Yet, true to her flexible treatment of form in the first movement, she crafts the finale as a rondo unencumbered by rules. In the end, what matters most is the music's impact: this dynamic finale is exhilarating, entertaining, and compelling evidence of the extraordinary technical command of a remarkably young artist. By this point in her life, Clara Schumann was already an experienced and admired performer in the fiercely competitive world of piano virtuosi, and this imaginative closing movement is dazzling proof of it.

***The Wood Dove*, op.110, B.198**

ANTONÍN DVOŘÁK (1841-1904)

This is a RI Philharmonic Orchestra premiere. This piece is scored for piccolo, two flutes, two oboes, English horn, two clarinets, bass clarinet, two bassoons, four horns, three trumpets, three trombones, tuba, timpani, percussion, harp and strings.

A musically gifted child of a Prague butcher, Antonín Dvořák soaked in the city's rich musical life, including performances by Clara Schumann. Such an environment proved to be fertile soil for the composer who would soon become internationally recognized as the architect of a distinctly Bohemian musical voice, one that successfully brought authentic folk elements into the concert hall. American cultural leaders in the late nineteenth century recognized this and invited him to the New World in hopes that he would inspire students and colleagues to cultivate a similarly distinctive American music.

Yet despite the undeniable admiration he won in the United States, Dvořák could not remain away from home for long.

Upon his return to a loving wife, children, native language, and familiar surroundings, he wrote four distinctive symphonic poems in a single year, all based on Czech fairy tales: *The Water Goblin, The Noon Witch, The Golden Spinning Wheel,* and *The Wood Dove*. These stories differ sharply from the fairy tales familiar to many modern American audiences; they are darker, stranger, and more unsettling, much like the work of Czech illustrator Adolf Born (if you don't know him, look him up).

In these tales, innocent children often fall prey to sinister figures such as witches and water goblins. *The Wood Dove* is no exception. It begins with a funeral march to the graveyard, where the grieving young widow is revealed to be her husband's poisoner. She killed him in order to marry the handsome young suitor who appears in the next section, which becomes a rollicking Bohemian wedding. But the cheer is short-lived. A wild dove—the spirit of her murdered husband— returns to accuse her, with haunting and persistent cooing.

Not everyone admired these artistic choices. The influential Austrian critic Eduard Hanslick, until then a champion of Dvořák's music, warned of the "dangers of this latest tendency":

> It is with a strange passion that Dvořák now indulges in ugly, unnatural, and ghastly stories which correspond so little to his amiable character and to the true musician that he is.

Leoš Janáček, however, greatly admired the work. He conducted the premiere of *Wood Dove* and offered this analytical description:

> "The widow, a 'lovely rose,' is accompanying her [deceased] husband on his last journey—Violoncellos and double basses mark the solemn strides of the funeral procession by a characteristic [dotted] rhythm.... Arching above this rhythm, cast in two voices, is the plaintive melody in violins and flutes, whose beginning, variously altered, appears many times throughout the composition."

The central "wedding" section, reminiscent of Dvořák's *Slavonic Dances*, bursts into an exuberant dance driven by winds, brass, and even bagpipe-like drones in the cellos and basses. But sudden, dissonant tremolos signal that something is amiss. A wood dove's ominous cooing appears in the flutes, followed by threatening sounds in the bass clarinet, which, in Janáček's words, seems to sing: "Stop cooing, stop calling, stop howling into my ear: Your cruel song is piercing my soul!" By this point, the wife is overwhelmed by remorse, and her self-destruction is imminent.

Janáček considered this "the truly dramatic part of the composition." We can almost see the widow hurl herself in despair into the cold, rushing water, with flashes of her white dress visible between the waves. In Janáček's words, "The unlucky woman tried to find herself a grave." The mournful funeral music returns, now joined by the dove's merciless call.

Janáček continues: "The hollow sounds of the flutes…are filled by the dark clarinet and…the trembling tone of the harp. Under the heavy [chorale] chords pressing against one another we can almost feel the heavy stone weighing down on the unfortunate woman's body. 'Yet no stone can ever be as heavy as the curse attached to her name!'"

As Janáček's comments suggest, the work's power is due, in large part, to Dvořák's masterful orchestration. Using a traditional orchestra with only subtle touches of harp, bells, and triangle, he creates sounds that are often truly breathtaking.

La valse

MAURICE RAVEL (1875-1937)

Last performed November 20, 2010 with Larry Rachleff conducting. This piece is scored for piccolo, three flutes, three oboes, English horn, two clarinets, bass clarinet, two bassoons, contrabassoon, four horns, three trumpets, three trombones, tuba, timpani, percussion, two harps and strings.

The idea for *La valse* dates to 1906, when Ravel first conceived of a work titled *Vienne*, later *Wien*—the French and German names for Vienna. He initially imagined it as a tribute to the waltzes of Johann Strauss II, and described the project as "a kind of apotheosis of the Viennese waltz, with which is mingled in my mind the idea of the fantastic whirl of destiny." Some of that vision surfaced in his 1911 *Valses nobles et sentimentales*, written amid the cautious optimism of the waning days of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. Neither Ravel nor his contemporaries could foresee the looming clouds of the First World War, though his image of a "fantastic whirl of destiny" now seems strikingly prophetic.

When war broke out, Ravel felt he could no longer write a piece named after an enemy capital, so he set *Wien* aside. Despite his age and a heart condition, he enlisted as a truck driver in the 13th Artillery Regiment, hauling munitions to the front. Heavy bombardment and the loss of friends and comrades took its toll. A bout of peritonitis led to intestinal surgery and then, during a painful period of recovery he learned of his mother's death—a blow that proved devastating.

Discharged from the army and deeply depressed, Ravel spent the next several years in and out of hospitals and resisted composing—joking, perhaps bitterly, that the piano in his apartment was out of tune.

So it was that, in 1919, Serge Diaghilev—the great impresario of the Ballets Russes and champion of choreographers and composers who would revolutionize both dance and music—asked Ravel for a new ballet. The commission gave him a needed push to start composing again, and he returned to his earlier idea. It was soon clear, however, that the piece had become something far more complex than the straightforward homage he had first envisioned.

When Ravel finally played the new score for Diaghilev, the impresario declined it—but not because he didn't like it. In fact, he called it a "masterpiece." But he also insisted that "it is not a ballet," rather a work *about* dance. Ravel accepted the distinction, went home, and subtitled *La valse* a "choreographic poem."

The work begins in near silence, as double basses rumble and cellos and harps gradually join them. Fragmentary figures emerge and gather into a muted theme in bassoons and violas. Then the harps help propel the music toward its first full flowering: led by the violins, the orchestra bursts into the principal waltz theme.

A series of six contrasting waltzes follows, each with its own character and dynamic profile, from mild and slightly shy variations for oboe, violins, and flutes, to the triumphant song of strings as they soar above crashing cymbals and blazing brass. Sometimes tender, sometimes restless, sometimes playful, sometimes yearning, each successive waltz draws you in like a book you can't put down. And that's only the first half.

The second half reintroduces the earlier waltzes in altered form. We hear them all again, but now they are reshaped with unexpected modulations and changed instrumentation (listen, for instance, for material once owned by the flutes now taken over by the trumpets). And then, again, the momentum breaks. An ominous sequence steadily builds with unsettling repetitions until the orchestra drives helter-skelter toward a *danse macabre* coda. The work ends with a forceful gesture that seems to shatter the waltz rhythm itself into countless shards on the floor.

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CHRISTIAN REIF

Conductor

GRAMMY® award-winning conductor Christian Reif is Music Director Designate of Wuppertal Opera & Symphony Orchestra, where he leads his inaugural season as Music Director in 2027/28. Reif holds the title of Chief Conductor of the Gävle Symphony Orchestra in Sweden, where his term has been extended for 2 years through the 2027/28 season, and has established a reputation for his natural musicality, innovative programming and technical command.

Since 2022, Reif has served as Music Director of the Lakes Area Music Festival, a month-long summer festival in Minnesota featuring the nation's top classical performers in programming that ranges from opera and chamber music to symphonic performances along with commissioned new works. LAMF believes that high-quality arts experiences should be accessible to all and operates on a name-your-price ticket model.

Highlights of Reif's 2026/27 season include performances with the Wuppertal Symphony Orchestra in his role as Music Director Designate, and his collaboration with star soloists such as Anastasia Kobekina and Nicolas Altstaedt in his role as Chief Conductor with the Gävle Symphony Orchestra. For their last concert of the season, he brings Gävle Symphony Orchestra to Stockholm. Reif makes his debut with the Lithuanian State Symphony Orchestra, Borusan Istanbul Philharmonic, Sarasota Orchestra, and leads an opera production at Rice University in Houston. He also returns to the Latvian National Symphony Orchestra.

In 2023, Reif won a GRAMMY® for the Nonesuch Records album *Walking in the Dark*, the debut solo album of classical singer Julia Bullock, on which he accompanied her on piano and led London's Philharmonia Orchestra. *Gramophone Magazine* praised the album as "illuminating" and described Reif as providing "excellent support" for Bullock. In 2020 during the pandemic, Reif and Bullock recorded a series of at-home virtual "Songs of Comfort," ranging from Carole King's classic "Up on the Roof" to Schubert's *Wanderers Nachtlied*. NPR Music featured the duo in a "Tiny Desk Concert" for their special quarantine edition of the series, and *The New York Times* highlighted them on their "Best Classical Music of 2020" list.

From 2016 to 2019, Reif was Resident Conductor of the San Francisco Symphony and Music Director of the San Francisco Symphony Youth Orchestra, after Conducting Fellowships at the New World Symphony (2014-2016) and Tanglewood Music Center (2015-2016). He studied at the Mozarteum in Salzburg and The Juilliard School in New York and resides in Munich with his wife Julia Bullock and their son.

More information on Christian Reif can be found at **www.christianreif.eu**
Management for Christian Reif: Primo Artists, New York, NY **www.primoartists.com**



ESTEFAN IATCEKIW

Piano

Winner of the First Prize at the IX International Piano Competition Ciudad de Vigo (2025), in Spain, where he also received the Audience Choice Award, Estefan Iatcekiw is one of the most promising pianists of his generation on the international classical music scene. At just 22 years old, he has accumulated major distinctions: First Prize at the IV International Rachmaninov Piano Competition for Young Pianists, held in Germany, with an additional award for Best Interpretation of a Work by S. Rachmaninov; laureate of the International S. Rachmaninov Competition in Moscow (2022), judged by a panel including Denis Matsuev, Boris Berezovsky, and Vladimir Ovchinnikov; and First Prize at the RPM (Russian Piano Music) International Competition in Sanremo, Italy (2025), where he also received the Special Audience Award.

Estefan regularly performs as a soloist in major concert halls across Europe and the Americas, appearing with leading orchestras and under the baton of distinguished conductors. He studied at the prestigious Tchaikovsky Conservatory in Moscow, where he was admitted at the age of 15. He is currently pursuing his undergraduate degree at the renowned Juilliard School in New York City, under the tutelage of the legendary pianist Sergei Babayan. In 2018, he earned Second Prize at the Santa Cecília International Competition, in Porto, Portugal.

In Brazil, he was awarded at the 10th and 11th Prof. Edna Bassetti Habbith Piano Competitions, where he was also named Best Interpreter of Brazilian Music (Villa-Lobos); received the hors concours award at the Souza Lima National Competition; and was laureated at the Mackenzie National Competition, the Young Soloists Competition of the Goiânia Symphony Orchestra, and the Yamaha National Piano Competition. In 2017, he won TV Cultura's Prelúdio Competition, which granted him a full three-year scholarship to the Liszt Ferenc Academy of Music in Budapest, Hungary.

His repertoire is marked by depth and breadth, with a special emphasis on Russian music, particularly the works of Sergei Rachmaninov. Estefan is recognized as one of the youngest pianists in the world to perform the complete solo piano works of Rachmaninov, including solo pieces, chamber music, and piano concertos. In 2023, he released his debut album featuring Rachmaninov's Two Sonatas, followed by *Memories*, dedicated to the 24 Preludes, and *Dreams,* a recording of works by Chopin, Scriabin, and Rachmaninov.

Estefan began his piano studies at the age of five and gave his first solo recital at nine. He trained at the Tchaikovsky Conservatory in Moscow and continues his path at the Juilliard School in New York, building a career defined by artistic excellence, expressive sensitivity, and international distinction.

PROVIDENCESINGERS

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Graham Schultz, Collaborative Pianist

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Christina Eskarous
Julianne Fournier
Lauren Furst
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RI Phil ORCHESTRA

RUTH REINHARDT
MUSIC DIRECTOR

Handel's Messiah

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 13, 2026, 3:00PM

Christine Noel, conductor

Maya Kherani, soprano • Emily Marvosh, mezzo-soprano • Jonas Budris, tenor
Andrew Garland, baritone • Providence Singers, Christine Noel, Artistic Director

Scene 1: Isaiah's prophecy of salvation
1. Sinfonia
2. Comfort ye (tenor)
3. Every valley (tenor)
4. And the glory of the Lord (chorus)

Scene 2: The coming judgment
5. Thus saith the Lord (bass)
6. But who may abide (alto)
7. And He shall purify (chorus)

Scene 3: The prophecy of Christ's birth
8. Behold, a virgin shall conceive (alto)
9. O thou that tellest (alto and chorus)
10. For behold, darkness (bass)
11. The people that walked in darkness (bass)
12. For unto us a child is born (chorus)

Scene 4: The annunciation to the shepherds
13. *Pifa*
14a. There were shepherds abiding (soprano)
14b. And lo, the angel of the Lord (soprano)
15. And the angel said unto them (soprano)
16. And suddenly . . . w/ the angel (soprano)
17. Glory to God (chorus)

Scene 5: Christ's healing and redemption
18. Rejoice greatly (soprano)
19. Then shall the eyes of the blind (alto)
20. He shall feed his flock (alto and soprano)
21. His yoke is easy (chorus)

INTERMISSION

Scene 1: Christ's Passion
22. Behold the Lamb of God (chorus)
23. He was despised (alto)
24. Surely He hath borne our griefs (chorus)
25. And with His stripes (chorus)
26. All we like sheep (chorus)
27. All they that see Him laugh (tenor)
28. He trusted in God (chorus)
29. Thy rebuke (tenor)
30. Behold and see (tenor)

Scene 2: Christ's Death and Resurrection
31. He was cut off (soprano)
32. But thou didst not leave (soprano)

Scene 6: The world's rejection of the Gospel
40. Why do the nations so furiously rage together (bass)
41. Let us break their bonds asunder (chorus)
42. He that dwelleth in heaven (tenor)
43. Thou shalt break them (tenor)

Scene 7: Christ's reception in Heaven
44. Hallelujah (chorus)

Scene 1: The promise of eternal life
45. I know that my Redeemer (soprano)
46. Since by man came death (chorus)

Scene 2: The Day of Judgment
47. Behold, I tell you a mystery (bass)
48. The trumpet shall sound (bass)

Scene 4: The acclamation of the Messiah
53. Worthy is the Lamb (chorus)

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The Rhode Island Philharmonic is funded in part by a grant from the Rhode Island State Council on the Arts, through an appropriation by the Rhode Island General Assembly, a grant from the National Endowment for the Arts and private funders.

Maya Kherani appears by arrangement with Athole Still Artists.
Emily Marvosh appears by arrangement with Dispeker Artists.
Andrew Garland appears by arrangement with Encompass Arts.

Isaiah's prophecy of salvation

Sinfonia (Overture)

Recitative

Tenor: Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God.

Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her, that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned.

The voice of him that crieth in the wilderness; prepare ye the way of the Lord; make straight in the desert a highway for our God. *(Isaiah 40: 1-3)*

Air

Tenor: Ev'ry valley shall be exalted, and ev'ry moutain and hill made low; the crooked straight and the rough places plain. *(Isaiah 40: 4)*

Chorus: And the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together: for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it. *(Isaiah 40: 5)*

The coming judgment

Recitative

Bass: Thus saith the Lord, the Lord of hosts: Yet once a little while and I will shake the heavens and the earth, the sea and the dry land.

And I will shake all nations; and the desire of all nations shall come. *(Haggai 2: 6-7)*

The Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to His temple, even the messenger of the Covenant, whom you delight in; behold, He shall come, saith the Lord of hosts. *(Malachi 3: 1)*

Air

Alto: But who may abide the day of His coming, and who shall stand when He appeareth? For He is like a refiner's fire. *(Malachi 3: 2)*

Chorus: And He shall purify the sons of Levi, that they may offer unto the Lord an offering in righteousness. *(Malachi 3: 3)*

The prophecy of Christ's birth

Recitative

Alto: Behold, a virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call His name Emmanuel, God with us. *(Isaiah 7: 14; Matthew 1: 23)*

Air and Chorus

Alto: O thou that tellest good tidings to Zion, get thee up into the high mountain. O thou that tellest good tidings to Jerusalem, lift up thy voice with strength; lift it up, be not afraid; say unto the cities of Judah, behold your god! *(Isaiah 40: 9)*

Arise, shine, for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee. *(Isaiah 60: 1)*

Chorus: O thou that tellest good tidings to Zion, get thee up into the high mountain. O thou that tellest good tidings to Jerusalem, lift up thy voice with strength; lift it up, be not afraid; say unto the cities of Judah, behold your god!

Recitative

Bass: For behold, darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people; but the Lord shall arise upon thee, and His glory shall be seen upon thee.And the Gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising. *(Isaiah 60: 2-3)*

Air

Bass: The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light;

and they that dwell in the land of the shadow of death, upon them hath the light shined. *(Isaiah 9: 2)*

Chorus: For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given, and the government shall be upon His shoulder; and His name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, the mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace. *(Isaiah 9: 6)*

The annunciation to the shepherds

***Pifa* ("Pastoral Symphony")**

Recitative

Soprano: There were shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flocks by night. *(Luke 2: 8)*

Soprano: And lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them, and they were sore afraid. *(Luke 2: 9)*

Recitative

Soprano: And the angel said unto them: "Fear not, for behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord." *(Luke 2: 10-11)*

Recitative

Soprano: And suddenly there was with the angel, a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God, and saying: *(Luke 2: 13)*

Chorus: "Glory to God in the highest, and peace on earth, good will towards men." *(Luke 2: 14)*

Christ's healing and redemption

Air

Soprano: Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout, O daughter of Jerusalem!

Behold, thy King cometh unto thee; He is the righteous Saviour, and He shall speak peace unto the heathen.

Rejoice greatly. . . da capo *(Zecharaiah 9: 9-10)*

Recitative

Alto: Then shall the eyes of the blind be opened, and the ears of the deaf unstopped. Then shall the lame man leap as an hart, and the tongue of the dumb shall sing. *(Isaiah 35: 5-6)*

Air

Soprano/Alto: He shall feed His flock like a shepherd; and He shall gather the lambs with His arms, and carry them in His bosom, and gently lead those that are with young. *(Isaiah 40: 11)*

Soprano/Alto: Come unto Him, all ye that labour, come unto Him that are heavy laden, and He will give you rest. Take his yoke upon you, and learn of Him, for He is meek and lowly of heart, and ye shall find rest unto your souls. *(Matthew 11: 28-29)*

Chorus: His yoke is easy, and His burden is light. *(Matthew 11: 30)*

INTERMISSION

Christ's passion

Chorus: Behold the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sin of the world. *(John 1: 29)*

Air

Alto: He was despised and rejected of men, a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. *(Isaiah 53: 3)*

Chorus: Surely He hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows!

He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon Him. *(Isaiah 53: 4-5)*

Chorus: And with His stripes we are healed. (*Isaiah 53: 5)*

Chorus: All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way. And the Lord hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all. *(Isaiah 53: 6)*

Recitative

Tenor: All they that see Him laugh Him to scorn; they shoot out their lips, and shake their heads, saying: *(Psalm 22: 7)*

Chorus: "He trusted in God that He would deliver Him; let Him deliver Him, if He delight in Him." *(Psalm 22: 8)*

Recitative

Tenor: Thy rebuke hath broken His heart: He is full of heaviness. He looked for some to have pity on Him, but there was no man, neither found He any to comfort him. *(Psalm 69: 20)*

Air

Tenor: Behold, and see if there be any sorrow like unto His sorrow. *(Lamentations 1: 12)*

Christ's Death and Resurrection

Recitative

Soprano: He was cut off out of the land of the living: for the transgressions of Thy people was He stricken. *(Isaiah 53: 8)*

Air

Soprano: But Thou didst not leave His soul in hell; nor didst Thou suffer Thy Holy One to see corruption. *(16: 10)*

Air

Bass: Why do the nations so furiously rage together, and why do the people imagine a vain thing?

The kings of the earth rise up, and the rulers take counsel together against the Lord, and against His anointed. *(Psalm 2: 1-2)*

Chorus: Let us break their bonds asunder, and cast away their yokes from us. *(Psalm 2: 3)*

Recitative

Tenor: He that dwelleth in Heav'n shall laugh them to scorn; The Lord shall have them in derision. *(Psalm 2: 4)*

Air

Tenor: Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron; thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel. *(Psalm 2: 9)*

Christ's reception in heaven

Chorus: Hallelujah: for the Lord God Omnipotent reigneth. *(Revelation 19: 6)*

The kingdom of this world is become the kingdom of our Lord, and of His Christ; and He shall reign for ever and ever. *(Revelation 11: 15)*

King of Kings, and Lord of Lords. *(Revelation 19: 16)* Hallelujah!

Promise of eternal life

Air

Soprano: I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that He shall stand at the latter day upon the earth.

And though worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God. *(Job 19: 25-26)*

Soprano: For now is Christ risen from the dead, the first fruits of them that sleep. *(I Corinthians 15: 20)*

Chorus: Since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. *(I Corinthians 15: 21-22)*

Day of judgement

Recitative

Bass: Behold, I tell you a mystery; we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. *(I Corinthians 15: 51-52)*

Air

Bass: The trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. (I Corinthians 15: 52-53)

The acclamation of the Messiah

Chorus: Worthy is the Lamb that was slain, and hath redeemed us to God by His blood, to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing.

Blessing and honour, glory and power, be unto Him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb, for ever and ever.

Amen. *(Revelation 5: 12-14)*

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Messiah, HWV 56

GEORGE FRIDERIC HANDEL (1685-1759)

Last performed December 14, 2025 with Christine Noel conducting, Providence Singers and soloists Teresa Wakim, Meg Bragle, Lawrence Jones and Weston Hurt. In addition to a chorus and solo soprano, alto, tenor and bass, this piece is scored for two oboes, bassoon, two trumpets, timpani, continuo and strings.

When Handel made a visit from his native Germany to England in 1710, he had no intention of settling there. But he did have reason to believe that the visit would be profitable. Recent attempts by local composers to establish an appetite for Italian opera in London seemed to be bearing fruit. But no one on the planet could hold a candle to Handel when it came to writing Italian-style opera in the early 1700s. Within four months of setting foot on British soil, he successfully mounted a production of his new work *Rinaldo*, which proved to be such a success that Queen Anne herself let him know that, were he to return on a more permanent basis, he would enjoy guaranteed patronage from both the crown and the aristocracy.

Handel gladly accepted the offer and, for many years, rode wave after wave of success in his newly adopted country. But public taste is a fickle thing, and society was changing. Patronage of the arts was gradually shifting from the aristocracy to the middle classes. And the middle classes, accustomed to the plays of Shakespeare and his contemporaries, clamored for on-stage action and English language texts that they could understand. Opera at the time, where most of the real action happened off stage and soloists merely sang about it (in Italian, no less), was a hard sell to the 18th century ticket-buying public. The playwright Samuel Johnson succinctly summed up the general British opinion of opera as an "exotic and irrational entertainment."

So, reading the writing on the wall, Handel took it upon himself to invent an entirely new form - the English oratorio - a completely different animal from the Italian oratorios he had written earlier in his career. Where the choruses in his early work were subordinate and simple, this new invention took advantage of a burgeoning tradition of choral music in England and featured the grandest of choruses that would not only command center stage but ring through the ages as well.

His first foray into this new form was called *Esther*, a dramatic spin on an Old Testament story about a Persian Queen who devises a clever plan to save all the Jews in her country from imminent slaughter. Despite its lack of sets and acting, the music was so new and compelling that audiences clamored for more. *Esther* enjoyed many successful revisions in subsequent London seasons, and its memorable grand chorus at the end foretold even greater things on the horizon.

In August of 1741, Handel received an invitation to present a concert for the benefit of Dublin's charities. In a head-spinningly short period of 24 days (although one might make the argument that this piece had been percolating within him for a decade or so), Handel produced what we now know as *Messiah*. Powerful puritanical elements in England, who couldn't abide the thought of something called "Messiah" being defiled by a presentation in such a sinful venue as a theater, forced its first

appearances to be billed as simply "a new sacred oratorio." But its timeless and universal message of redemption, faith, and hope, brimming with majestic choral passages and poignant arias, soon began resonating with audiences not just as a religious text but also as a celebration of the human condition.

Throughout, Handel blends dramatic choral movements with delicate solo arias, creating an emotional journey for the listener, and his expert use of the orchestra creates a vibrant sound that evokes the joy and reverence of the text. But pay attention, if you will, to the way in which he achieves crystal clarity in even the most complex of musical moments. This bit of sublime magic on the part of the composer means that there is always something for everyone, from the most ardent music enthusiast to the casual listener. And even in the grandest moment, there is always something ineffable that strikes us on a deeply personal level.

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PROVIDENCE SINGERS

Founded in 1971, the Providence Singers, under the direction of Christine Noel, presents concerts of choral masterworks, contemporary music, and newly commissioned works. In addition to an annual concert series, the Singers make frequent guest appearances throughout the region, including annual concerts with the Rhode Island Philharmonic Orchestra. Creative partnerships have included performances with Dave Brubeck Quartet at Lincoln Center and Newport Jazz Festival, Boston Modern Orchestra Project, New Haven Philharmonic, Aurea Ensemble, New Bedford Symphony, and the State Ballet of Rhode Island. The Providence Singers have produced four studio recordings of American choral music, the most recent of which was the 2017 recording of Dan Forrest's *Requiem for the Living*. Opportunities for community education and participation include workshops, concert discussions, and community sings. The Providence Singers support emerging talent through its Fassett Fellowships for young adult singers and In Harmony, a new after-school choral program for high school singers.



CHRISTINE NOEL

Conductor

Christine Noel is in her 13th season as Artistic Director of the Providence Singers, marking 20 years of artistic leadership with the organization since her appointment as Assistant Conductor in 2006. During that time, she has enjoyed a rich partnership with the Rhode Island Philharmonic, conducting several annual performances of *Messiah* at The VETS and treasuring especially her collaborations with the late conductors Bramwell Tovey and Larry Rachleff.

Under her leadership, the Providence Singers has presented world premieres, commissioned works, and released its fourth commercial recording, Dan Forrest's *Requiem for the Living*. Praised for her "thoughtful leadership," "elegant conducting," and "attention to musical detail," Dr. Noel has influenced generations of emerging musicians, many of whom have pursued professional careers in music.

Dr. Noel is also the Founding Artistic Director of the Rhode Island Children's Chorus, now in its 24th season. The award-winning organization has performed at Carnegie Hall and been featured at conventions of the American Choral Directors Association and the National Association for Music Education. Previously, she served as Director of Choral Activities at Clark University and Musical Director at Trinity Repertory Company.

An accomplished guest conductor, clinician, and master teacher, Dr. Noel has conducted choral-orchestral works throughout the United States and abroad. She holds graduate degrees in conducting from Boston University and an undergraduate degree in Music Education from Rhode Island College. A Ridgway Shinn Fellowship enabled her to study at the Kodály Institute in Hungary. She also spent two years in Florence, Italy, pursuing advanced Italian language studies and serving as Assistant Conductor of two Italian choral ensembles.

Outside of music, Dr. Noel is a dedicated martial artist, having recently earned her Apprentice Black Belt. She is currently training toward her Certified Black Belt alongside her daughter.

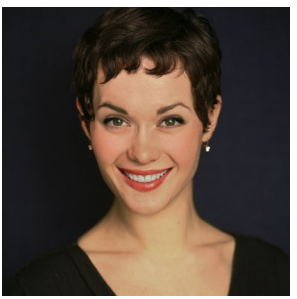


MAYA KHERANI

Soprano

Indian-American soprano Maya Kherani has earned acclaim for her "rich, soaring soprano" and "crystalline tone" (*Opera News*). Recent highlights include her debut with Apollo's Fire (Jeanette Sorrell), the New York Philharmonic in *Messiah* (Ton Koopman), and performances with American Bach Soloists (Jeffrey Thomas), Portland Baroque Orchestra (Julian Perkins), Boston Baroque (Martin Pearlman), Baltimore Symphony (Patrick Quigley), Opera Lafayette (Nic McGegan), Handel and Haydn Society (Raphaël Pichon), Philharmonia Baroque Orchestra (Richard Egarr), and Vancouver Symphony (Otto Tausk), as well as returns to Philharmonia Baroque Orchestra (Václav Luks) and American Bach Soloists. Career highlights include debuts at the Festival d'Aix-en-Provence and Château de Versailles Spectacles in *L'incoronazione di Poppea* (Leonardo García Alarcón), which was released on DVD; Glyndebourne as the title role in *Pay the Piper* (world premiere); Sartorio's *L'Orfeo* at Opéra national de Montpellier (Philippe Jaroussky); Houston Grand Opera (HGOco) in the world premièere of Jack Perla's *River of Light* and the Aspen Music Festival for the world premiere of *Siddhartha, She*.

Maya graduated *summa cum laude* from Princeton University with a degree in Mechanical and Aerospace Engineering before pursuing music at San Francisco Conservatory of Music and Boston University Opera Institute. She is currently based in the Bay Area with her husband and two young children.



EMILY MARVOSH

Mezzo-soprano

American contralto Emily Marvosh has established a reputation as a singing actress with excellent musicianship, a "plum-wine voice," and "graceful allure," on national and international stages. Recent solo appearances include the Handel and Haydn Society, St. Thomas Fifth Avenue, Boston Symphony Orchestra, Rhode Island Philharmonic, Charlotte Symphony, Huntsville Symphony Orchestra, Tucson Symphony Orchestra, Mobile Symphony Orchestra; and John Davenant's *Macbeth* with the Henry Purcell Society of Boston, as well as solo recitals in Arizona, Michigan, Maine and Massachusetts. Awards include the prestigious Adams Fellowship at the Carmel Bach Festival, the American Prize in the Oratorio and Art Song divisions, and second place in the New England Regional NATSAA competition. Her contributions

to 21st century repertoire and performance include world premiere performances with The Thirteen, Juventas New Music, Shoreline Music Society, the Manchester Summer Chamber Music Festival, and the Hugo Kauder Society.

A frequent recitalist and proud native of Michigan, Emily Marvosh created a chamber recital celebrating the history and culture of her home state, which won a St. Botolph Club Foundation Emerging Artist Award. A chamber music tour is planned for 2027 in Michigan.

She belongs to Beyond Artists, a coalition of artists that donates a percentage of their concert fees to organizations they care about. She supports Rosie's Place and the Gabriela Lena Frank Creative Academy of Music through her performances. She holds degrees from Central Michigan University and Boston University. www.emilymarvosh.com.



JONAS BUDRIS

Tenor

Tenor Jonas Budris is a versatile soloist and ensemble musician, engaging in new works and early music with equal passion.

He performs and tours frequently with Cut Circle, and can be heard in their new recording, *Johannes Ockeghem: The Songs*. He also appears with Cut Circle in the short documentary, *Sounds of Renaissance Florence*. He has also enjoyed performing, touring, and recording with such groups as the Handel and Haydn Society, Blue Heron, Boston Baroque, The Thirteen, and the Skylark Vocal Ensemble.

Mr. Budris is a featured soloist in multiple Grammy-nominated recordings, including *It's a Long Way* with Skylark Vocal Ensemble and *Il ritorno d'Ulisse in patria* with Boston Baroque. He can also be heard in Blue Heron's recording *Music from the Peterhouse Partbooks*, which received the 2018 Gramophone Award for Early Music.

On the opera stage, he has performed principal and supporting roles with Opera Boston, OperaHub, Guerilla Opera, and Odyssey Opera, originating such roles as John in *Giver of Light* and the title role of Chrononhotonthologos.

Mr. Budris recently made his debut at the Carmel Bach Festival, where he was the 2018 Tenor Vocal Fellow for the Virginia Best Adams Vocal Masterclass. He is a Lorraine Hunt Lieberson Fellow with Emmanuel Music, where he has performed regularly in their Bach Cantata and evening concert series.

Originally from Martha's Vineyard, Mr. Budris holds a degree in Environmental Sciences & Engineering from Harvard College.



ANDREW GARLAND

Baritone

Andrew Garland has performed recitals at Carnegie Hall, New York Festival of Song (NYFOS), Ravinia Festival, Cleveland Art Song Festival, Camerata Pacifica, Andre-Turp Society Montreal, Voce at Pace, Cincinnati Song Initiative, Tuesday Morning Music Club, The Phillips Collection, Vocal Arts DC, college campuses around North America, and venues in Italy, Croatia, Greece, and Turkey.

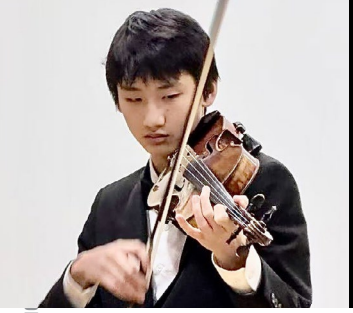
This year he recorded his eleventh album.

He has premiered works by Jake Heggie, William Bolcom, Stephen Paulus, Steven Mark Kohn, Lee Hoiby, Tom Cipullo, Thomas Pasatieri, and Gabriela Lena Frank.

He has performed in concert with the Boston Pops, Atlanta Symphony, Orchestre de la Suisse Romande, Brevard Festival, Boston Baroque, Handel and Haydn, Albany Symphony, Grant Park, Washington Master Chorale at the Kennedy Center, National Chorale at Lincoln Center, The Chorus of Westerly and leading opera roles at Seattle Opera, New York City Opera, Opera Philadelphia, Cincinnati Opera, Minnesota Opera, Florida Grand Opera, Hawai'i Opera Theatre, and many others.

A native of Kingston, MA (not RI), Andrew taught voice at Brown University for six years. He is a mentor with Bel Canto Boot Camp, a coach with tonebase, is on the faculty at CU Boulder, and has guest taught at Juilliard, CCM, Boston Conservatory, Harvard, Yale, Princeton, and many other schools.

Andy bicycles year-round and for the past 33 years has ridden the Pan Mass Challenge.



BRIAN WEI

Rhode Island Philharmonic Music School

2025-2026 Concerto & Aria Competition Winner

Brian Wei has been studying violin at the Rhode Island Philharmonic Music School for the past twelve years. He was a student of Laura Gulley in the Suzuki violin program from 2014-2024, and he was a member of the Rhode Island Philharmonic Youth Orchestras from 2018-2025, studying under conductors Erin Erban (Intermediate Strings, 2018-2019), Irina Naryshkova (String Orchestra, 2019-2021), Vincent Mattera (Repertory Orchestra, 2021-2023), and Alexey Shabalin (Symphony Orchestra, 2023-2025). He has also been a member of the Music School's Chamber Music ensembles, studying under Lois Finkel and Gideon Rubin. The Music School has been crucial to the development of his technique and musicality, and he has been blessed by the wonderful community of dedicated teachers, friendly staff, and fellow musicians. He has been a four time participant in the Concerto Competition, and he has always enjoyed the learning experience of recording and performing with Music School piano teacher and accompanist Juan Rios. Brian is currently learning under Charles Dimmick to further develop his violin skills and music understanding, and he is a member of the Boston Philharmonic Youth Orchestra in their 2025-2026 season. Outside of music, he enjoys speedcubing and playing soccer.

How did you choose the violin and who has had an influence on your growth as a musician?

I started playing the violin when I was three, and it has always been my favorite instrument. I like its sharpness and intensity, which gives it the ability to be heard through other sounds. As my playing progresses, its wide range of notes and large repertoire comes as an advantage as well. I would not be here if it had not been for my first teacher, Laura Gulley, who taught me for ten years and helped me develop strong technique and an understanding of music. My current teacher, Charles Dimmick, continues to help me improve as a musician. My wonderful conductors Irina Naryshkova, Vincent Mattera, and Alexey Shabalin have all helped me by teaching me about being apart of an orchestra and giving me leading roles. Finally, the most important person to my growth as a musician has been my mom, who is always supportive, and drives me to lessons and rehearsal every week.

What does it mean to you to be selected as the winner of the concerto competition?

I have been a participant in the concerto competition for four years. Looking back, it's amazing to see how far I have come. The previous winners of the competition have inspired me so much with their hard work and confidence, and I hope that my performance will be able to live up to their standards. I made the final of the competition last year with Mendelssohn Violin Concerto, and even though I was unable to win, the experience of playing in front of the judges helped me prepare for this year's competition. This year there were many other skilled musicians that I had to compete against who deserved to win as much as I did, if not more. I am thrilled to be selected, and it feels amazing to see my hard work finally pay off.

The Rhode Island Philharmonic Music School Concerto & Aria Competition is open to currently enrolled student musicians who play either piano, orchestral or band instruments, or sing. Finalists are selected from an initial round of current students who perform at a very high level. On Saturday, December 13, 2025, three finalists performed for adjudicators at the Carter Center for Music Performance & Education, and Brian Wei was chosen as the winner of the 2025/2026 Concerto Competition. Brian performed at East Providence High School in May of 2026.

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RUTH REINHARDT
MUSIC DIRECTOR

TACO CLASSICAL CONCERT

Sponsored by Taco / The White Family Foundation

Romantic Chopin

SATURDAY, JANUARY 23, 2027, 7:30PM

*Sponsored by **Lisa Bisaccia & Robert Naparstek, MD***

Ruth Reinhardt, conductor • Alessio Bax, piano

RICHARD STRAUSS *Don Juan,* TrV 156, op.20

DMITRI SHOSTAKOVICH Symphony No.1 in F minor, op.10
Allegretto; Allegro non troppo
Allegro
Lento
Allegro molto; Lento

INTERMISSION

FRÉDÉRIC CHOPIN Piano Concerto No.2 in F minor, op.21
Maestoso
Larghetto
Allegro vivace
Alessio Bax

Side-by-Side performance with students from the RI Philharmonic Youth Orchestra

You are invited to join Ruth Reinhardt and Alessio Bax when they return return to the stage for a brief conversation immediately following the concert.

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Alessio Bax's appearance is sponsored by Lisa Bisaccia & Robert Naparstek, MD and Dr. & Mrs. Adetokunbo Oyelese.

Alessio Bax appears by arrangement with Arts Management Group.
Ruth Reinhardt appears by arrangement with Opus 3 Artists.

1830

Chopin
Piano Concerto No.2



MUSIC
Hector Berlioz
Symphonie fantastique



ART
Eugène Delacroix
Liberty Leading the People



LITERATURE
Aleksandr Pushkin
The Stone Guest



HISTORY
French and Flemish speakers secede from the Netherlands to create Belgium.

1889

R. Strauss
Don Juan



MUSIC
First performance of Wagner's Ring Cycle in the U.S.



ART
Vincent van Gogh
The Starry Night



LITERATURE
August Strindberg
Miss Julie



HISTORY
The Eiffel Tower is inaugurated, becoming the tallest structure in the world.

1925

Shostakovich
Symphony No.1 in F minor



MUSIC
Edgard Varèse
Intégrales



ART
Art Deco style is born



LITERATURE
F. Scott Fitzgerald
The Great Gatsby



HISTORY
The Scopes Trial sparks a nationwide debate on evolution and religion in public education.

ROMANTIC CHOPIN

Tonight's program is truly a celebration of youth. As the Rhode Island Philharmonic welcomes its younger counterparts from the Rhode Island Philharmonic Youth Orchestra onto the stage, the program itself features three of the greatest examples of masterpieces by composers at the very beginning of what would become illustrious careers.

The program begins with *Don Juan*, which Richard Strauss composed at just 24. This blazing concert opener is both brilliantly written and fantastically difficult to perform. Strauss's father, Franz Joseph, a musician himself, but with extremely conservative tastes, desperately tried to shield his precocious son from improper musical influences. Fortunately (for us), he failed. When the young Strauss first encountered Wagner's "music of the future," he was at once both perplexed and enthralled. So, "against my father's orders," he wrote, "I studied the score of *Tristan*. I can well remember how, at the age of seventeen, I positively wolfed [it down]." Soon after, the idea of the "tone poem" (of which *Don Juan* is one of the finest examples) was born.

For his part, Shostakovich was only 19 when he completed his first symphony - as a graduation requirement for the St. Petersburg Conservatory. One of the supreme prodigies in the history of music, Shostakovich was known, like Mozart, to have pieces fully formed in his head before he wrote them down. But compared to the first symphonies of Mozart, Shostakovich's Symphony No. 1 is a much more polished and mature masterpiece. The wry sense of humor and intensity of expression that would become his hallmarks are already apparent.

And a 20-year-old Chopin, still in school but having just made a successful solo piano debut in Vienna, needed a new concerto for future tours. So, he decided to write one. The result was his Piano Concerto No.2, in which all of the poetic expressiveness he would become known for is on full display. Robert Schumann's accolade for the young Chopin could easily be applied to all three composers on tonight's program: "Hats off, gentlemen—a genius!"

Don Juan, TrV 156, op.20

RICHARD STRAUSS (1864-1949)

Last performed May 10, 2014 with Larry Rachleff conducting. This piece is scored for piccolo, three flutes, two oboes, English horn, two clarinets, two bassoons, contrabassoon, four horns, three trumpets, three trombones, tuba, timpani, percussion, harp and strings.

As a young man, Richard Strauss was captivated by the bold innovations Richard Wagner was bringing not only to opera but to the very language of music. Inspired by that freedom, Strauss set out to create something new himself: the orchestral tone poem. The concept was simple but powerful—use the palette of a full symphony orchestra to render a story or poetic idea in a single movement. Strauss carried it off with such brilliance that the genre did more than succeed; it established him as the most important progressive German composer since Wagner.

Strauss later admitted that he could not, in fact, compose without some kind of dramatic or literary spark. For *Don Juan*, that spark was the play *Don Juans Ende*, itself based on an unfinished 1844 work by the poet Nikolaus Lenau. The central figure—known in Italian as Don Giovanni—was already famous from countless stories and operas. Strauss knew Mozart's opera of the same name especially well, having conducted it in Munich. During rehearsals, he also fell deeply in love with the soprano Pauline de Ahna, whom he later married. That heady experience of youthful passion forms part of the backdrop to what may be Strauss's most romantic work. *Don Juan* brims with grand, heroic, swaggering themes as its legendary seducer pursues one conquest after another.

Strauss included these lines from Lenau's poem in the score: "The charmed circle of many kinds of beautiful, stimulating femininity… I should like to traverse them in a storm of pleasure." Embracing that "storm of pleasure," the composer wrote music rich in orchestral color, with recurring themes that suggest people, places, emotions, and actions. Each woman Don Juan pursues is distinctly characterized. The result is a vivid, wordless drama, felt at a visceral level.

The work opens with one of the repertoire's most electrifying flourishes as the hero bursts onto the scene, proclaiming "Out and away—to new conquests!" in an upward sweep of four unison horns, marked *sehr energisch* ("very energetic"). From there, the music drives forward with exuberant force, though it repeatedly gives way to a more dreamlike, sensual world of love themes, the longest of which is introduced by solo oboe, then passed to clarinet, bassoon, and horn. Yet Don Juan's restlessness always returns, and with another heroic horn gesture he rushes toward his next pursuit. After each of four romantic episodes leaves him unsatisfied, his main theme returns and the chase begins again. In the final moments, the adventure collapses as a disillusioned Don Juan submits to the sword of a father avenging his daughter's honor, bringing the hero's life to a tragic end.

Symphony No.1 in F minor, op.10

DMITRI SHOSTAKOVICH (1906-1975)

Last performed February 20, 2016 with Larry Rachleff conducting. This piece is scored for two piccolos, three flutes, two oboes, two clarinets, two bassoons, four horns, two trumpets, contralto trumpet, three trombones, tuba, timpani, percussion, piano and strings.

Shostakovich's artistic life illustrates the painful challenge of remaining true to one's creative vision while simply trying to survive—both as an artist and as a person—under a brutal totalitarian regime. Born in St. Petersburg, he was only ten when the February Revolution ended more than four centuries of Romanov rule. He then witnessed his country's transformation from Tsarist autocracy to Communist dictatorship. So, it is no surprise that even as a teenage student at the conservatory in what was now called Petrograd, during years of famine and civil war, his personal, philosophical, and political struggles were already finding expression in his music.

Although his teachers at the Petrograd Conservatory were deeply conservative—his main teacher (Rimsky-Korsakov's son-in-law) seemed intent on halting music history around 1905—Shostakovich had already studied scores by Stravinsky, Prokofiev, and others, absorbing many of the new century's musical currents. His First Symphony shows signs of these influences, but he is already shaping them into the distinctive voice we now immediately recognize as his own.

The first movement opens almost like chamber music, with muted trumpet and bassoon, before moving into an *allegro non troppo* march reminiscent of the vaudeville music Shostakovich knew well from his work as a licensed silent-film pianist (listen for its unexpected return in the third movement). A seemingly lyrical waltz follows, followed by an off-kilter development section that again evokes vaudeville. The movement ends in classical fashion with a return of the opening theme, first in the flute and then in the clarinet—an unconventional development rounded off with a respectful nod to sonata form.

The second movement is a biting scherzo, famous for its abrupt false start in the cellos and basses. Here the piano appears for the first time, racing through rapid scalar passages. Its blend of wit and mockery recalls moments in the silent movie houses when Shostakovich laughed so hard at his favorite scenes that he had to stop playing. The slow central section—once referred to by musicologist Edward Downes as music that "would be marked *religioso* if it hadn't been composed in Soviet Russia"—is full of unease and caution. The bassoon then restores the opening allegro theme, and the scherzo closes with widely spaced chords in the piano and violins. After finishing the first two movements, Shostakovich wrote to a friend that the piece might better be called a "symphony-grotesque." "I am in a terrible mood," he confessed. "Sometimes I just want to shout. To cry out in terror. Doubts and problems. All this darkness suffocates me. From sheer misery, I've started to compose the finale of the symphony. It's turning out pretty gloomy." As with the composer's own state of mind, the grotesque energy of the first two movements gives way to the darkness of the last two.

The third movement begins with a dark, half-step theme—related to the opening idea of the first movement—introduced by the oboe and then taken up by the cello. It swells to an expressive climax before fading into a distant echo of the opening motif. Suddenly, a snare-drum roll tears the music apart and drives it into the frenzied finale.

The finale weaves together themes heard earlier with new material, creating a relentless

sequence of sharp contrasts in texture, timbre, mood, dynamics, and tempo that culminates in a famous timpani solo. After transforming ideas from earlier movements, the symphony ends with trills in the woodwinds and strings and a brilliant, if frantic, brass fanfare.

Piano Concerto No.2 in F minor, op.21

FRÉDÉRIC CHOPIN (1810-1849)

Last performed January 22, 2011 with Jessie Chang conducting and soloist Jahja Ling. In addition to a solo piano, this piece is scored for two flutes, two oboes, two clarinets, two bassoons, two horns, two trumpets, bass trombone, timpani and strings.

Despite its title, the Piano Concerto No. 2 is actually the first concerto Chopin composed, written while he was still a student at the Warsaw Conservatory. Its premiere performance was so successful that he quickly began writing another concerto, which happened to be published first. This quirk explains the numbering shell game.

Although Chopin wrote almost entirely for piano and had little interest in composing symphonies or operas, writing concertos for piano and orchestra was important for his career. Fortunately, he excelled at it. After the 1832 Paris premiere of this concerto, critic François-Joseph Fétis praised the young composer as someone who "has found, if not a way of reviving piano music completely, at least some of what has so long been vainly sought, that is to say an abundance of original ideas of which the type is nowhere to be discovered."

The concerto has three movements. The first, *Maestoso*, opens with an extended orchestral introduction presenting two main themes: one dramatic and romantic, marked by sharp dynamic contrasts, and the other more lyrical. When the piano enters, Chopin reshapes both themes with the expressive ornamentation for which he is now famous. The movement alternates between orchestra and soloist, balancing calm passages with more animated ones. After the piano restates both themes in increasingly virtuosic form, a short orchestral coda brings the movement to a close.

Chopin's good friend, Franz Liszt, described the second movement as "… a perfection almost ideal, its expression now radiant with light, now full of tender pathos." Chopin himself said it was inspired by the fervent but quiet admiration he had for a female classmate. After a brief orchestral introduction, such youthful longing is easily heard as the piano unfolds a lyrical, songlike melody. A contrasting middle section follows, beginning with tremolo strings and an agitated piano line that resembles operatic recitative, almost as if the instrument were speaking. The opening melody then returns, and the movement ends with the same beauty and poise with which it began.

The third movement, *Allegro vivace*, begins with a melody modeled on the Polish mazurka, a lively dance Chopin loved and often used in his solo piano works. After the opening theme and a burst of virtuosity from the pianist, the violins and violas introduce a contrasting rustic idea *col legno*, or playing with the wood of the bow. The mazurka theme then returns, and a horn solo leads into a brilliant, technically demanding final section. The melody here is irresistibly memorable. As musicologist Calvin Dotsey observed, "Chopin's art developed as the years went on, but nothing he wrote surpassed this last movement in simple, direct, healthy charm."

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ALESSIO BAX

Piano

Combining exceptional lyricism and insight with consummate technique, Alessio Bax is without a doubt "among the most remarkable pianists now before the public" (*Gramophone*). He catapulted to prominence with First Prize wins at both the 2000 Leeds International Piano Competition and the 1997 Hamamatsu International Piano Competition and is now a familiar face on five continents as a recitalist, chamber musician, and concerto soloist. He has appeared with nearly 200 orchestras, including the New York, London, Royal, and St. Petersburg Philharmonic Orchestras, the Boston, Baltimore, Dallas, Cincinnati, Seattle, Sydney, BBC Scottish, and City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestras, the Cleveland and Minnesota orchestra, and the Tokyo and NHK Symphony in Japan collaborating with such eminent conductors as Marin Alsop, Vladimir Ashkenazy, Sir Andrew Davis, Hannu Lintu, Fabio Luisi, Matthias Pintscher, Sir Simon Rattle, Ruth Reinhardt, Daniele Rustioni, Yuri Temirkanov, and Jaap van Zweden.

As a renowned chamber musician, he recently collaborated with Lisa Batiashvili, Joshua Bell, Ian Bostridge, Lucille Chung, James Ehnes, Vilde Frang, Maximilian Hornung, Steven Isserlis, Daishin Kashimoto, François Leleux, Sergei Nakariakov, Emmanuel Pahud, Mark Padmore, Lawrence Power, Jean-Guihen Queyras, Paul Watkins, and Tabea Zimmermann, among many others.

For ten years, he has been the Artistic Director of the Incontri in Terra di Siena Festival, a Summer Music Festival in the Val d'Orcia region of Tuscany and is the founding and current Artistic Director of the London Festival of Chamber Music at Smith Square Hall in London.

Bax's most recent album releases are the complete Beethoven Cello Sonatas with Paul Watkins (a *Gramophone Editor's* Choice and CD of the month), *Forgotten Dances*, a solo recital, and *Debussy & Ravel for Two* with Lucille Chung. His celebrated Signum Classics discography also includes *Italian Inspirations*; Beethoven's *Hammerklavier* and *Moonlight Sonatas* (a *Gramophone* Editor's Choice); Beethoven's *Emperor* Concerto; *Bax & Chung*, a duo disc with Lucille Chung; *Alessio Bax plays Mozart,* recorded with London's Southbank Sinfonia; *Alessio Bax: Scriabin & Mussorgsky* (named "Recording of the Month … and quite possibly … of the year" by MusicWeb International); *Alessio Bax plays Brahms* (a *Gramophone* Critics' Choice); *Bach Transcribed*; and *Rachmaninov: Preludes & Melodies* (an *American Record Guide* Critics' Choice).

At the record age of 14, Bax graduated with top honors from the conservatory of Bari, his hometown in Italy, and after further studies in Europe, he moved to the United States in 1994. He has been on the piano faculty of Boston's New England Conservatory since the fall of 2019 and serves as co-artistic director of the Joaquín Achúcarro Foundation for emerging pianists.

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Ludwig van Beethoven: String Quartet No. 16 in F major, Op. 135



PHAETON PIANO TRIO

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 8, 2026

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart: Piano Trio in B-flat major, K. 254
Fazil Say: Space Jump, Op. 46
Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky: Piano Trio in A minor, Op. 50



NEAVE TRIO

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 12, 2026

Eric Nathan: Dream Scenes
Robert Schumann: Piano Trio No. 3 in G minor, Op. 110
Johannes Brahms: Piano Trio No. 2 in C major, Op. 87



GOLDMUND QUARTET

THURSDAY, MARCH 4, 2027

Niccolò Paganini: String Quartet No. 3 in A Minor
Ludwig van Beethoven: String Quartet No. 3 in D Major, Op. 18
Franz Schubert: String Quartet in D Minor, "Death and the Maiden"



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Joseph Haydn: String Quartet in F major, Op. 77, No. 2
Caroline Shaw :"Entr'acte"
Caroline Shaw :"By and By"
Samuel Barber: Dover Beach, Op. 3
Beethoven: String Quartet No. 1 in F major, Op. 18

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BEETHOVEN: Symphony No.6 (*Pastoral*)

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AMICA RUSH HOUR: Friday, October 16, 6:30pm
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Ruth Reinhardt, conductor | Denis Kozhukhin, piano

PARRY: *Elegy for Brahms*
BRAHMS: Symphony No.3
BEETHOVEN: Piano Concerto No.5 (*Emperor*)


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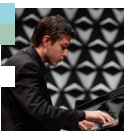
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R. STRAUSS: *Don Juan*
SHOSTAKOVICH: Symphony No.1
CHOPIN: Piano Concerto No.2

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VALENTINE'S WEEKEND:

TCHAIKOVSKY'S FIFTH


VASSILEVA

AMICA RUSH HOUR: Friday, February 12, 6:30pm
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Ruth Reinhardt, conductor | Vivi Vassileva, percussion

JOAN TOWER: *Fanfare for the Uncommon Woman*
JOHN CORIGLIANO: *Conjurer* (Percussion Concerto)
TCHAIKOVSKY: Symphony No.5

NORTHERN LIGHTS – NIELSEN & SIBELIUS

OPEN REHEARSAL: Friday, March 12, 5:30pm
TACO CLASSICAL: Saturday, March 13, 7:30pm

Benjamin Manis, conductor | Brannon Cho, cello

NIELSEN: *Helios Overture*
TCHAIKOVSKY: *Variations on a Rococo Theme*
SIBELIUS: Symphony No.5


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AMICA RUSH HOUR: Friday, April 9, 6:30pm
TACO CLASSICAL: Saturday, April 10, 7:30pm

Robert Spano, conductor | Lauren Carroll, soprano
Veronica Siebert, mezzo-soprano | Reed Gnepper, tenor
Thandolwethu Mamba, baritone

PUCCINI: *Capriccio sinfonico*
PUCCINI: *La bohème*, Act III
LEONCAVALLO: Prologue from *Pagliacci*
ROSSINI: "Una voce poco fa" from *The Barber of Seville*
MASCAGNI: Intermezzo from *Cavalleria rusticana*
CILEA: "È la solita storia del pastore" from *L'Arlesiana*
VERDI: "È strano, è strano… Ah fors'è lui… Sempre libera" from *La traviata*
RESPIGHI: *Pines of Rome*

SEASON FINALE:

RUTH CONDUCTS BEETHOVEN'S MISSA SOLEMNIS

OPEN REHEARSAL: Friday, April 30, 5:30pm
TACO CLASSICAL: Saturday, May 1, 7:30pm

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Providence Singers, Christine Noel, Artistic Director
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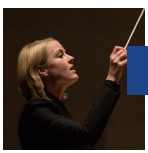
Paul Appleby, tenor | Andrew Munn, bass

BEETHOVEN: *Missa solemnis*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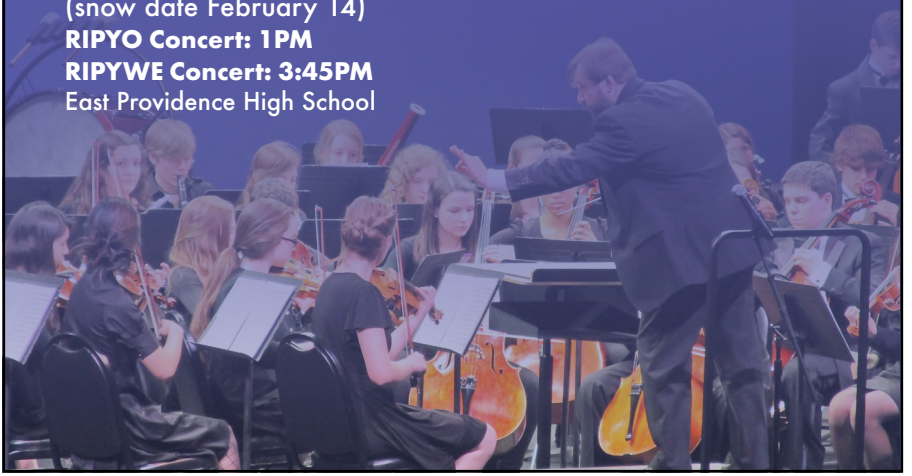
FEBRUARY 7
(snow date February 14)
RIPYO Concert: 1PM
RIPYWE Concert: 3:45PM
East Providence High School

APRIL 17, 3PM
Chamber Music Concert
The Carter Center,
RI Phil Music School

MAY 2, 1PM
RIPYO Concert
East Providence High School

MAY 16, 3PM
RIPYWE Concert
Scituate High School (RI)

MAY 23, TIME TBD
Jazz/Rock Concert
The Carter Center,
RI Phil Music School



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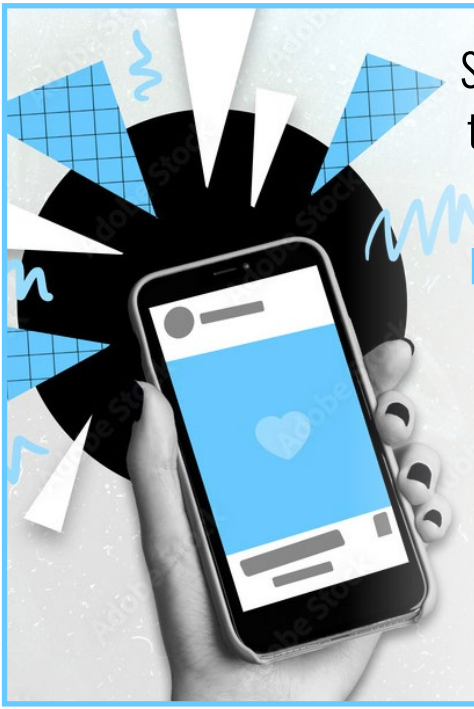

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The State Ballet of Rhode Island

SBRI

Artistic Director *Herci Marsden*

Celebrates 67 Performing Seasons

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

OCTOBER 3, 2026:
Flames of Hope - Illuminations of Life, Providence, RI

NOVEMBER 2026:
Project Ballet From Studio to Stage at Brae Crest Studio, Lincoln, RI

DECEMBER 11 & 12, 2026:
Coppelia - RI's classic comedy ballet for the Holidays

MARCH 2027:
Project Ballet From Studio to Stage at Brae Crest Studio, Lincoln, RI

APRIL 2027:
Spring Performances throughout RI

MAY 2027:
SBRI Outdoor Event Where Art & Nature Come Together











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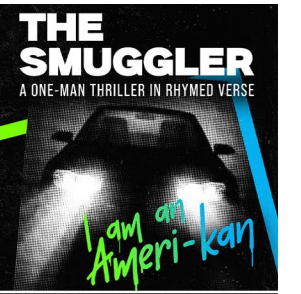
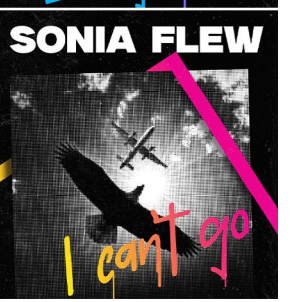
THE GAMM THEATRE
SEASON FORTY-TWO
+ IT'S A WONDERFUL LIFE













INVESTING IN OUR COMMUNITY AND CELEBRATING OUR CREATIVE CAPITAL

Congratulations to the Rhode Island Philharmonic Orchestra & Music School as it works to enrich and transform our community through great music performance and education.

The Providence Tourism Council increases the economic impact of tourism, commerce, and visitor engagement within the City of Providence through programs like this. We work collaboratively with businesses and organizations to build awareness of Providence as a thriving, year-round arts and multicultural destination.

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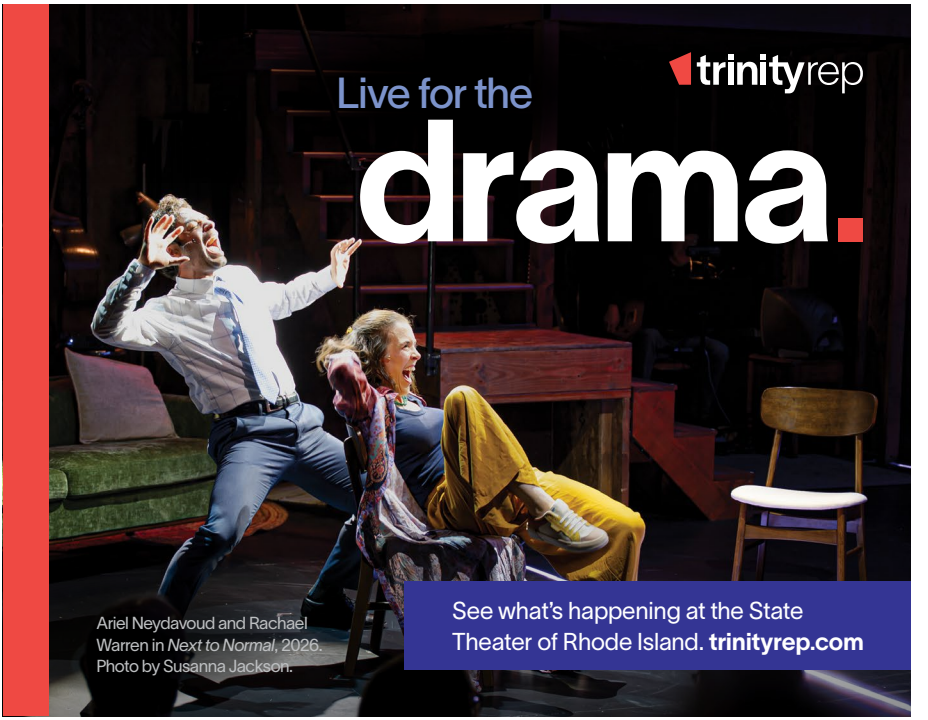
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drama.
Ariel Neydavoud and Rachael Warren in *Next to Normal*, 2026. Photo by Susanna Jackson.
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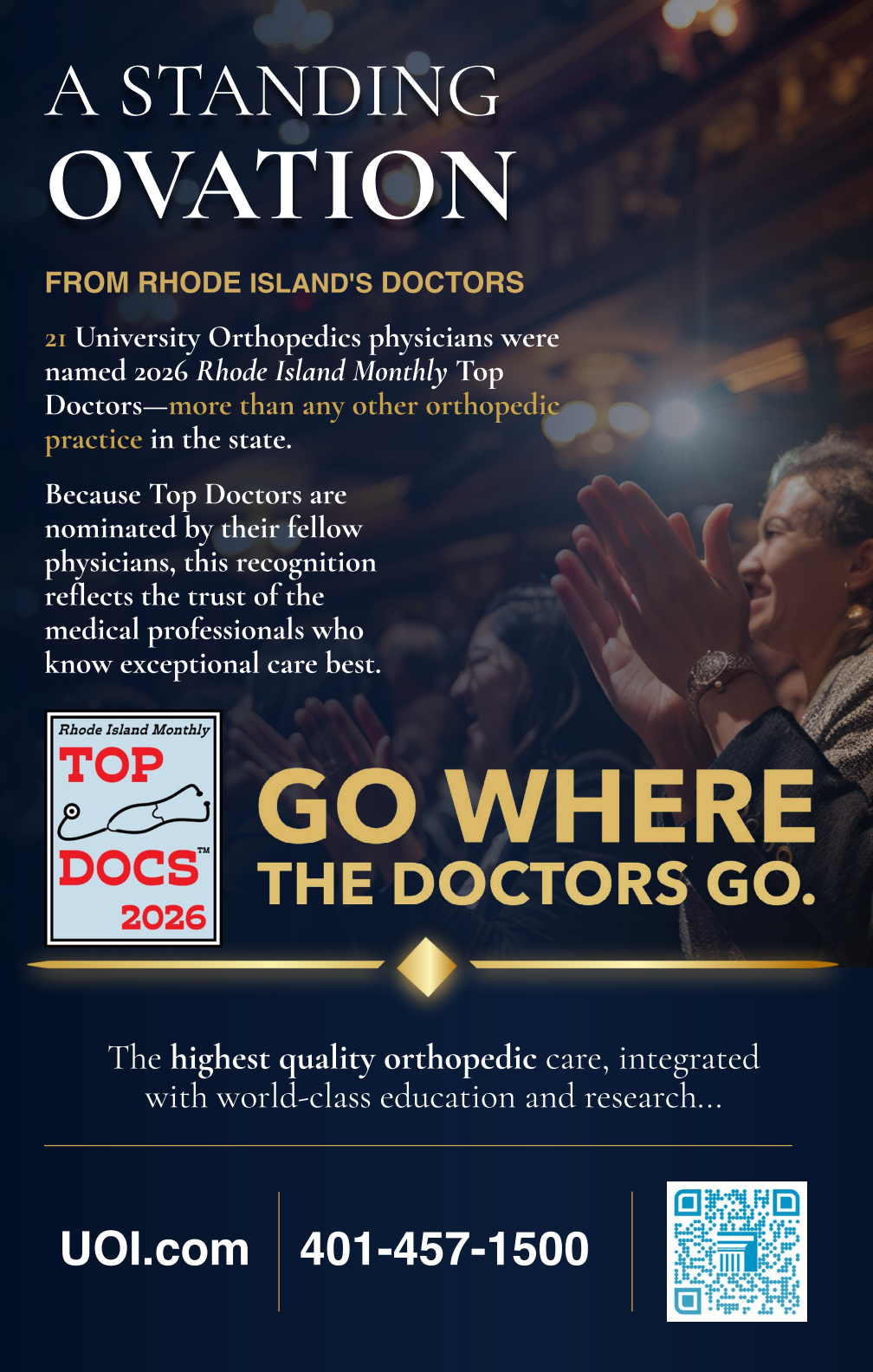

A STANDING OVATION

FROM RHODE ISLAND'S DOCTORS

21 University Orthopedics physicians were named 2026 *Rhode Island Monthly* Top Doctors—more than any other orthopedic practice in the state.

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UNIVERSITY ORTHOPEDICS

KEEPING THE MUSIC PLAYING FOR GENERATIONS TO COME

Celebrating the Rhode Island Philharmonic 2026–2027 Season





The Rhode Island Philharmonic holds a unique place in our state's cultural heart, and we are honored to help it thrive.

Great music is timeless. Every performance, especially live, offers something new — a note, a moment, an emotion — that captures us.

The White Family Foundation is proud to champion this treasured institution and the joy it brings to our communities.

Here's to the music and the moments that inspire us.

Taco

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