



BUFFALO PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA  
APRIL 20 - MAY 4

2024



BEETHOVEN'S  
EMPEROR

STAR  
WARS

RETURN OF THE JEDI  
IN CONCERT

LANDSLIDE  
A TRIBUTE TO THE MUSIC OF  
FLEETWOOD  
MAC



CHOOI BROTHERS  
& BACH

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# TABLE OF CONTENTS | APRIL 20 THROUGH MAY 4

<b>BPO Board of Trustees/ BPO Foundation Board of Directors</b>	6
<b>BPO Musician Roster</b>	11
<b>Beethoven's Emperor</b> BPO Classics Series April 20 and 21	15
<b>Landslide: A Tribute to the Music of Fleetwood Mac</b> BPO Rock Series April 26	23
<b><i>Star Wars: Return of the Jedi</i> in Concert</b> BPO Pops Series April 27	29
<b>Choi Brothers &amp; Bach</b> BPO Classics Series May 3 and 4	33
<b>Sponsor a Musician</b>	41
<b>Annual Fund</b>	42
<b>Musical Heritage Society</b>	47
<b>Spotlight on Sponsor</b>	48
<b>Patron Information</b>	50

## CONTACT

**Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra**  
786 Delaware Ave. Buffalo, NY 14209  
bpo.org

**Kleinhans Music Hall**  
3 Symphony Circle, Buffalo, NY 14201  
kleinhansbuffalo.org

BPO Administrative Offices	(716) 885-0331
Box Office	(716) 885-5000
Box Office Fax Line	(716) 885-5064
Kleinhans Music Hall	(716) 883-3560

# A **legacy** that still rings true today.



**EDWARD L. and MARY SEATON KLEINHANS**

When Edward Kleinhans and Mary Seaton Kleinhans passed away suddenly in 1934, they left a gift to the Community Foundation for Greater Buffalo with instructions to build a music hall for our community. The Community Foundation ensured that Kleinhans Music Hall was built according to their wishes and today, their gift continues to provide a home for world-class performances.

To learn more about the Kleinhans and how they continue to support WNY nearly 90 years after their lifetimes, scan the QR code below or visit **[cfgb.org](http://cfgb.org)**.



**Community Foundation**  
for Greater Buffalo



## MESSAGE FROM THE BOARD CHAIR



With spring upon us, our orchestra is proud to present a selection of performances that celebrate the vibrancy of music across eras. These concerts offer songs familiar and reimagined, completing this season's Rock Series with a symphonic tribute to Fleetwood Mac, and concluding our orchestra's multi-season performance of the original *Star Wars* trilogy live in concert. They also shine a spotlight on remarkable guest artists close to our orchestral family, welcoming renowned Canadian pianist Stewart Goodyear, and the brother of concertmaster Nikki Chooi, violin virtuoso Timothy Chooi, to the Kleinhans stage.

As we enjoy the music of this season's final months and look ahead to our 90<sup>th</sup> anniversary season, I'd like to take this opportunity to share with you the various ways to support our beloved orchestra.

We have been deeply grateful for the ongoing support of our generous donors this season, honoring the incredible impact that JoAnn Falletta has made in Buffalo over the past 25 years. If you would like to extend JoAnn and the orchestra's legacy in western New York, please consider making a gift today at [bpo.org/donate](http://bpo.org/donate).

Additionally, our 90<sup>th</sup> season subscriptions are available now. If you have recently renewed your subscription, thank you. We're thrilled to celebrate this milestone year with you! If you are thinking about joining the BPO family, I warmly invite you to do so. Becoming a subscriber means playing a part in the BPO's 90-year tradition of bringing vital culture and artistic excellence to western New York – and joining a family of subscribers to enjoy it with.

With each performance, the BPO remains committed to bringing extraordinary musical experiences to our community. We extend our heartfelt gratitude for your continued support, which enables us to create and share many unforgettable moments.

Sincerely,



Scott R. Stenclik  
 Chair, Board of Trustees  
 Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra Society, Inc.

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## JOANN FALLETTA MUSIC DIRECTOR

Multiple Grammy Award-winning conductor JoAnn Falletta serves as Music Director of the Buffalo Philharmonic, Music Director Laureate of the Virginia Symphony, Principal Guest Conductor of the Brevard Music Center, and Conductor Laureate of the Hawaii Symphony. Recently named as one of the 50 great conductors of all time by Gramophone Magazine and among the top 10 conductors today by David Hurwitz of ClassicsToday.com, she is hailed for her work as a conductor, recording artist, audience builder, and champion of American composers.



As Music Director of the Buffalo Philharmonic, Falletta became the first woman to lead a major American orchestra and has been credited with bringing the Philharmonic to an unprecedented level of national and international prominence. The Buffalo Philharmonic has become one of the leading recording orchestras for Naxos, with two Grammy Award-winning recordings. In honor of Falletta's 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary with the BPO, which is being celebrated this season, Naxos released 20 full albums of music, previously available only on CD, across all major streaming platforms.

Internationally, Falletta has conducted many of the most prominent orchestras in Europe, Asia, and South America, including recent and upcoming concerts in Spain, Sweden, Germany, Brazil, and Croatia. Her recent and upcoming North American guest conducting includes the National Symphony, the orchestras of Boston, Baltimore, Detroit, Nashville, Indianapolis, Houston, Toronto, Milwaukee, Vancouver, Quebec, and a concert at Alice Tully Hall with her alma mater, The Juilliard School Orchestra. In 2022, she led the National Symphony in two PBS televised specials for New Year's Eve and the 50th Anniversary of the Kennedy Center, and made her Boston Symphony Orchestra debut at the Tanglewood Music Festival.

With a discography of over 125 titles, JoAnn is a leading recording artist for Naxos. She has won two individual Grammy Awards, including the 2021 Grammy Award for Best Choral Performance as conductor of the Buffalo Philharmonic in the world premiere Naxos recording of Richard Danielpour's *The Passion of Yeshua*, and the 2019 Grammy Award as conductor of the London Symphony for *Spiritualist* by Kenneth Fuchs. Her Naxos recording of John Corigliano's *Mr. Tambourine Man: Seven Poems of Bob Dylan* with the BPO received two Grammys in 2008, and her 2020 Naxos recording with the BPO of orchestral music of Florent Schmitt received the prestigious Diapason d'Or Award.

Falletta is a member of the esteemed American Academy of Arts and Sciences, has served by Presidential appointment as a Member of the National Council on the Arts during the Bush and Obama administrations, and is the recipient of many of the most prestigious conducting awards. She has conducted over 1,600 orchestral works by more than 600 composers, 135 works by more than 70 women composers, and well over 150 U.S. and world premieres. ASCAP has honored her as "a leading force for music of our time." In 2019, JoAnn was named *Performance Today's* first Classical Woman of The Year.

After earning her bachelor's degree at Mannes, Falletta received master's and doctoral degrees from The Juilliard School.

For more information, visit [www.joannfalletta.com](http://www.joannfalletta.com).

## JOHN MORRIS RUSSELL, PRINCIPAL POPS CONDUCTOR



A master of American musical style, John Morris Russell has devoted himself to redefining the American orchestral experience. He is in his eighth season as Principal Pops Conductor of the Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra. Mr. Russell made his debut with the Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra in the fall of 2014, and later that season was named the third conductor to hold the position following in the footsteps of Doc Severinsen and Marvin Hamlisch. Mr. Russell's concerts at the BPO reflect the diversity of American musical styles: from Classics to Jazz, Hollywood to Broadway, Country & Western to Rhythm & Blues. This season, Mr. Russell conducts the BPO's Holiday Pops concerts.

Maestro Russell is also Conductor of the renowned Cincinnati Pops, one of the world's most iconic and beloved pops orchestras. In his twelfth season, Mr. Russell leads sold-out performances at Cincinnati Music Hall, the Taft Theater, and Riverbend Music Center. Additionally, he conducts the orchestra in concerts throughout the Greater Cincinnati region as well as domestic and international tours. Creator of the orchestra's Classical Roots series, he also conducts the Pops family concert series and the annual USO Tribute Cincinnati Gala. The Cincinnati Pops recorded legacy continues under Mr. Russell's leadership. He led the Cincinnati Pops on their first-ever Florida tour, and in 2017 he led the orchestra's sixth tour to Asia including performances in Shanghai and Taipei.

For the last eleven seasons, Mr. Russell has served as Music Director of the Hilton Head Symphony Orchestra in South Carolina, and conductor of the prestigious Hilton Head International Piano Competition. Under his leadership, the HHSO has enjoyed unprecedented artistic growth. Mr. Russell leads the orchestra in masterwork subscription concerts annually.

As a guest conductor, John Morris Russell has worked with many of North America's most distinguished ensembles.

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## FERNANDA LASTRA, ASSISTANT CONDUCTOR, DIVERSITY FELLOW



Born in Mar del Plata, Argentina, Fernanda Lastra is a passionate and creative conductor interested in a wide variety of repertoire, including symphonic, contemporary, and operatic works. She is a dedicated advocate for Latin American composers, particularly those from her home country.

In 2022, Fernanda was appointed as the Conductor Diversity Fellow at the BPO, under the mentorship of JoAnn Falletta, and was promoted to Assistant Conductor, Diversity Fellow in 2023. In this role she fulfills various conducting responsibilities, including cover conductor and main conductor for the BPO Kids and Music for Youth concert series. Fernanda actively contributes to the BPO's artistic team, music education committee, and Diversity Council.

Fernanda has led professional and youth orchestras across the United States, Argentina, and Brazil. One of her previous engagements include conducting the National Orchestra of Argentine Music "Juan de Dios Filiberto" at the CCK National Auditorium in Buenos Aires, and the production of Missy Mazzoli's opera, *Song from the Uproar*, in Pittsburgh. Fernanda has also made significant contributions as an educator, serving as the Director of Orchestras at Augustana College (IL) and as conductor for the Central Pennsylvania Youth Orchestra, among other engagements. As an entrepreneur, Fernanda founded a training ensemble in Argentina in 2013, serving as its artistic director for four years.

Trained as a pianist, Fernanda holds two bachelor's degrees from La Plata University in Argentina, a master's degree from Penn State University, and a doctoral degree from the University of Iowa. Fernanda believes in the power of music to create meaningful connections with one another.

The Assistant Conductor, Diversity Fellow position is sponsored by Uniland.

## WELCOME TO THE BPO'S NEWEST MEMBER!

### NATALYA ROSE VRBSKY, THIRD BASSOON/CONTRABASSOON



Natalya Rose Vrbsky joined the BPO in 2024 after being a regular substitute for many years. She held the principal bassoon chair in the Sarasota Opera Orchestra and was a member of the Chamber Orchestra of Philadelphia, also performing regularly with the Philadelphia Orchestra, Opera Company of Philadelphia, and the Pennsylvania Ballet. She has served as acting principal bassoon of the Jacksonville Symphony Orchestra and has appeared as guest principal with the symphony orchestras of Oregon, Vermont, Delaware, Knoxville, and the ProMusica Chamber Orchestra. On contrabassoon, she has performed with the Boston Symphony Orchestra and served as acting contrabassoon in the Rochester

Philharmonic Orchestra. As a chamber musician, she has toured with Musicians from Marlboro and appeared as a guest artist with the Philadelphia Chamber Music Society, Kingston Chamber Music Festival, Saratoga Chamber Players, Bay Chamber Concerts, Astral Artists Concerts, the Knights, and A Far Cry, among many others. She has attended the Tanglewood Music Center, Pacific Music Festival, and Aspen Music Festival, and continues to participate at the Marlboro Music Festival where she first appeared in 2005.

Rose received a bachelor's degree from the New England Conservatory studying with Richard Ranti, followed by a master's degree from Temple University and a diploma from the Curtis Institute, where she studied with Daniel Matsukawa. In addition to her work as a bassoonist, she has more recently pursued training in various movement modalities, receiving a yoga teaching certification and completing a certification in The Feldenkrais Method®. A native of Vermont, she lives in Snyder, NY with her husband, clarinetist Will Amsel, and their two children.

#### Notes from Rose

**Favorite composers:** Mozart, Brahms, Ravel, Dvořák, Verdi, and more!

**Favorite music genre to listen to:** Classical, but classic rock as well as I'm a huge Beatles fan.

**Hobbies:** For the time being, my hobbies are mainly what keeps my kids happy too, like going for walks (and scooter rides) in the neighborhood, or crafting, or enjoying an afternoon outside exploring a park with a playground. I also love reading fiction, so we all enjoy visiting many of the Erie County libraries!

**Why the BPO?** I moved to Buffalo in 2017 when my husband, principal clarinetist Will Amsel, started playing with the BPO, and the superb bassoon section was extremely welcoming. In fact, Martha Malkiewicz would even loan me her contrabassoon when I would sub in for her because I didn't own one. I actually bought her instrument when she retired, so her – and now my – contrabassoon has basically exclusively been played in the BPO! Having heard and played with the BPO as a substitute musician for the past seven years, I can honestly say how truly amazed and grateful I am to work with JoAnn Falletta and this incredible orchestra.



## HISTORY OF THE BUFFALO PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA

As Buffalo's cultural ambassador, the Grammy Award-winning Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra under Music Director JoAnn Falletta presents more than 120 Classics, Pops, Rock, Family and Youth concerts each year.

After the rise and fall of several forerunners, the BPO was founded in 1935, performing most often at the Elmwood Music Hall. The hall was located at Elmwood Ave. and Virginia St., and was demolished in 1938 as the BPO's permanent home, Kleinhans Music Hall, was constructed. During the Great Depression, the orchestra was initially supported by funds from the Works Progress Administration and the Emergency Relief Bureau. Over the decades, the orchestra has matured in stature under outstanding conductors including William Steinberg, Josef Krips, Lukas Foss, Michael Tilson Thomas, Maximiano Valdés, Semyon Bychkov, and Julius Rudel. The orchestra has welcomed many distinguished guest performers such as Isaac Stern, Aaron Copland, Van Cliburn, Igor Stravinsky, Renée Fleming, and Yo-Yo Ma. During the tenure of JoAnn Falletta, who has served as music director since 1998, the BPO has rekindled its history of radio broadcasts and recordings, including the release of 62 albums.

The BPO's Naxos recording of composer John Corigliano's "Mr. Tambourine Man: Seven Poems of Bob Dylan" won two Grammys, and their Naxos recording of Richard Danielpour's "The Passion of Yeshua" with the Buffalo Philharmonic Chorus won one Grammy. Their recordings are heard on classical radio worldwide.

## HISTORY OF KLEINHANS MUSIC HALL

Since 1940, the orchestra's home has been Kleinhans Music Hall, which enjoys an international reputation as one of the finest concert halls in the world due to its superb acoustics.

Kleinhans Music Hall was built thanks to the generosity and vision of Edward and Mary Seaton Kleinhans and the stewardship of their charitable dreams by the Community Foundation for Greater Buffalo, and the support of the federal government. The Community Foundation was bequeathed the estates of Mr. and Mrs. Kleinhans, who made their fortune from the clothing store that bore their name, and who died within three months of each other in 1934. The Public Works Administration, an agency of the New Deal, provided crucial funding that made it possible to complete the hall.

The Kleinhanses, who were music lovers, specified their money was to be used "to erect a suitable music hall...for the use, enjoyment and benefit of the people of the City of Buffalo."

The BPO performed at Kleinhans Music Hall's official opening on Oct. 12, 1940, under the baton of Franco Autori.

Kleinhans Music Hall was designed by the Finnish father-and-son team of Eliel and Eero Saarinen, along with architects F.J. and W.A. Kidd. Kleinhans is known for its combination of graceful structural beauty and extraordinary acoustics. Eliel Saarinen's aim was to create "an architectural atmosphere...so as to tune the performers and the public alike into a proper mood of performance and receptiveness, respectively." In 1989, the hall was designated a National Historic Landmark, the highest designation of significance a site or structure can receive.

Kleinhans is owned by the City of Buffalo and operated by a separate 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. The Board of Directors is comprised of Jeremy Oczek, Chair; Karen Arrison, Vice Chair; Peter Eliopoulos, Treasurer; Tania Werbizky, Secretary; Cindy Abbott Letro; Akruiti Babaria; and city officials including Byron Brown, Mayor of the City of Buffalo, and David Rivera, Niagara District Council member.

## JOANN FALLETTA, MUSIC DIRECTOR

Angelo and Carol Fatta Endowed Chair

## JOHN MORRIS RUSSELL, PRINCIPAL POPS CONDUCTOR

## FERNANDA LASTRA, ASSISTANT CONDUCTOR, DIVERSITY FELLOW

### FIRST VIOLIN

Nikki Chooi  
concertmaster  
Amy Glidden  
assoc. concertmaster  
*Louis P. Ciminelli Family  
Foundation Endowed Chair*  
Anton Shelepov  
asst. concertmaster  
Yeji Kim  
2nd asst. concertmaster  
Douglas Cone  
Deborah Greitzer  
Diana Sachs  
Alan Ross  
Andrea Blanchard-Cone  
Loren Silvertrust  
Hee Sagong (L)  
Zhen Liu  
Aleksandar Ivanov  
Mari Jones\*\*

### SECOND VIOLIN

Antoine Lefebvre  
principal  
Andrew Lin  
asst. principal\*\*  
Jacqueline Galluzzo  
assoc. principal (L)  
Richard Kay (L)  
Frances Morgante  
Robert Prokes  
Shieh-Jian Tsai  
Xiaofan Liu  
Aika Ito  
Jonathan Hwang\*  
Iain Crampton\*\*

### VIOLA

Caroline Gilbert  
principal  
Anna Shemetyeva  
assoc. principal  
Matthew Phillips  
Kate Holzemer  
Natalie Piskorsky  
Janz Castelo de Armas  
Joshua Lohner

### CELLO

Roman Mekinulov  
principal  
*Jane D. Baird Endowed Chair*  
Feng Hew  
assoc. principal  
Nancy Anderson  
Robert Hausmann <sup>2</sup>

David Schmude  
Amelie Fradette  
Eva Herer\*

### BASS

Daniel Pendley  
principal  
*Garman Family Foundation  
Endowed Chair*  
Brett Shurtliffe  
assoc. principal  
Michael Nigrin  
Edmond Gnekow  
Jonathan Borden  
Nicholas Jones  
Gary Matz

### FLUTE

Christine Bailey Davis  
principal  
Linda Greene  
Natalie Debikey Scanio

### PICCOLO

Natalie Debikey Scanio

### OBOE

Henry Ward  
principal  
Joshua Lauretig  
Anna Mattix

### ENGLISH HORN

Anna Mattix

### CLARINET

William Amsel  
principal  
Patti DiLutis  
Salvatore Andolina

### E-FLAT CLARINET

Patti DiLutis

### BASS CLARINET AND SAXOPHONE

Salvatore Andolina

### BASSOON

Glenn Einschlag  
principal  
Doron Laznow  
Natalya Rose Vrbksy

### CONTRABASSOON

Natalya Rose Vrbksy

### FRENCH HORN

Jacek Muzyk  
principal  
*Kay Koessler Endowed Chair*

Daniel Kerdelewicz  
assoc. principal  
Joseph Alberico\*  
Jay Matthews  
Daniel Sweeley

### TRUMPET

Alex Jokipii  
principal  
Geoffrey Hardcastle  
Philip Christner

### TROMBONE

Jonathan Lombardo<sup>1</sup>  
principal  
Timothy Smith

### BASS TROMBONE

Filipe Pereira

### TUBA

Seth Rawleigh  
principal

### TIMPANI

Matthew Bassett  
principal  
Dinesh Joseph  
assistant principal

### PERCUSSION

Mark Hodges  
principal  
Dinesh Joseph

### HARP

Madeline Olson  
principal

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Travis Hendra  
principal librarian  
Erin Vander Wyt  
assistant librarian

### STAGE MANAGER

Andrew Berdine  
Interim Master property  
person, IATSE Local 10

<sup>1</sup> Chair dedicated to the  
memory of Scott Parkinson

<sup>2</sup> Chair dedicated to the  
memory of Maer Bunis

\* One Year Appointment

\*\* Temporary Appointment

(L) Leave of Absence



KleinHans Music Hall would like to thank the supporters of Keeping it Modern:  
 The Community Campaign for their help in restoring one of Buffalo's most treasured venues.

**Please join us today in keeping KleinHans Music Hall modern for generations to come!**

For more information or to make a gift, contact Luke Borkowski at [LBorkowski@bpo.org](mailto:LBorkowski@bpo.org) or (716) 242-7855.

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 Scott and Rachel Stenclik and the  
 Stenclik Family Charitable Fund

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 Dr. Elisabeth Zausmer and  
 Dr. Angel A. Gutierrez

**\$2,500+**

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 Dr. Gabriela Popescu  
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 Mr. Robert B. Skerker  
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 Bud and Sandy Whistler

\* deceased

List as of March 28, 2024





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As lead sponsor of the Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra's Classics Series for over 30 years, M&T Bank has had the privilege of supporting the performance of magnificent repertoire and the appearance of outstanding artists in our Western New York community.

This season we are pleased to announce an expanded focus; that of sponsoring the BPO's I-D-E-A initiative, designed to foster an Inclusive, Diverse, Equitable, and Accessible environment, where music is the right of every individual across generations, cultures, genders, and socio-economic classes.

We are invested in the BPO's commitment to present diverse programming, support artists of color, and engage every aspect of the Western New York community in a meaningful way. We invite you to join us, as proud supporters of the BPO, in an effort to ensure that music, and its power to open doors and change lives, is available to all.



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Tianwa Yang



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Julius Williams



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 **The GreenFields**

Saturday, April 20, 2024 at 7:30 PM  
Sunday, April 21, 2024 at 2:30 PM

BPO CLASSICS SERIES  
**BEETHOVEN'S EMPEROR**

David Lockington, conductor  
Stewart Goodyear, piano

VIVIAN FUNG *Prayer*

BEETHOVEN Concerto No. 5 in E-flat major for Piano  
and Orchestra, Op. 73, "Emperor"  
I. Allegro  
II. Adagio un poco mosso  
III. Rondo: Allegro  
**Stewart Goodyear, piano**

INTERMISSION

SIBELIUS Symphony No. 2 in D major, Op. 43  
I. Allegretto  
II. Andante, ma rubato  
III. Vivacissimo  
IV. Finale: Allegro moderato



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Patrons are asked to turn off all electronic devices.  
The use of cameras and recording devices is strictly prohibited.



## PROGRAM OVERVIEW

We're happy to have English conductor David Lockington back on the Kleinhans stage for this remarkable program. The main piece is the beautiful second symphony of Jean Sibelius, one that deeply inspired several works of Charles Burchfield (after he heard it played at a BPO concert!). Soloist Stewart Goodyear is returning to perform one of Beethoven's greatest masterpieces, his "Emperor" concerto. The concert opens with a special discovery, *Prayer* by Vivian Fung. Welcome back, David and Stewart!

*JoAnn Falletta*

## PROGRAM NOTES

**Vivian Fung** (Canadian; b. 1975)

### *Prayer*

Composed 2020; Duration: 6 minutes

First performance of this work by the BPO.

Vivian Fung's eclectic sound worlds combine her rigorous Juilliard education with her ethnomusical explorations of the music of Bali, Vietnam, and China. Among her notable awards and recognitions is her 2012 Juno Award for Classical Composition of the Year for her Violin Concerto No. 1. Regarding her 2020 work *Prayer*, she has written the following:

"*Prayer* is, in essence, an aberration, for under no other circumstance in the past (or probably in the future) have I worn my heart on my sleeve as transparently as I have with this piece. In times of crisis and peril, we have but the reliance of faith – from the profound faith in humanity, faith in love, and faith that we will persevere and get through this with dignity, to the mundane faith that I would complete the piece within the extraordinary conditions that faced me, with a young child at home 24/7, a bronchial infection, and a very tight timeline (ultimately, a matter of days) to complete the piece in a manner feasible for COVID remote performance requirements. In the end, I chose a chant

from my composer heroine Hildegard von Bingen as inspiration for my prayer. It goes: *O Shepherd of our souls, O primal voice, whose call created all of us; Now hear our plea to thee, to thee, and deign to free us from our miseries and feebleness.* I wish to thank my family – my husband, parents, and son – as well as my neighbors, the Lees, who have all made composing this piece possible." – *Vivian Fung*

### **Ludwig van Beethoven**

(German; 1770-1827)

### **Concerto No. 5 in E-flat major for Piano and Orchestra, Op. 73, "Emperor"**

- I. Allegro
- II. Adagio un poco mosso
- III. Rondo: Allegro

Composed 1809; Duration: 38 minutes

First BPO performance: March 11, 1937 (Harold Bauer, piano; Lajos Shuk, conductor)

Last BPO performance: March 27-28, 2015 (Norman Krieger, piano; JoAnn Falletta, conductor)

On doctor's orders, Beethoven spent the summer of 1802 in Heiligenstadt, confronting the emotional and physical fallout of his encroaching deafness. His return to Vienna saw a change of style, beginning his middle, or "heroic" period. His music

was not only heroic for its confrontation of ailment, but it was grander and more experimental while touching on closely held political beliefs.

His third symphony, the “Eroica” (Heroic) of 1804, was originally dedicated to Napoleon Bonaparte, whom Beethoven celebrated as a democratic embodiment of the Enlightenment. Upon the news of Napoleon taking the title of Emperor, he furiously retracted the dedication and re-assigned it to his friend and patron, Prince Lobkowitz. By 1809, Beethoven was at work on his fifth piano concerto as Vienna was under siege by Napoleon’s armies, providing a backdrop of drums and cannons. Prince Lobkowitz and a consortium of other benefactors, including the concerto’s dedicatee, Archduke Rudolf, were funding Beethoven to keep him from leaving Vienna for work. Though his hearing loss never prevented him from composing, his appearances as a pianist waned, with this work premiered by Friedrich Schneider in Leipzig in 1811.

The origins of the work’s nickname, “Emperor,” are unclear and would certainly have been objectionable to its composer. The work has no tie to any emperor, except possibly as an implicit rebuff of Napoleon. The title appeared in an early publishing of the work and has stuck.

Beethoven’s middle period was significant for its wealth of innovation and played an important role in the proto-Romantic era, with the fifth piano concerto serving as a landmark contribution to the genre. Whereas Mozart’s extensive portfolio of piano concertos emphasized the soloist’s virtuosity and balanced the relationship between orchestra and soloist, Beethoven’s fifth concerto treats the pianist as an extension of the composer, while leading the orchestra as a protagonist in the work.

The opening was revolutionary. Before any orchestral introduction, the pianist initiates the work with a written cadenza (importantly, Beethoven asserted this was not to be composed by the performer). The movement is the longest of any Beethoven concerto, symphonic in scope with a three-theme exposition and thorough development of musical materials.

The exuberant Allegro is juxtaposed by the muted, nocturnal Adagio, set in a distant B major. The tender opening melody is answered by a twinkling piano, and the sonic palette becomes reminiscent of a music box. The coda returns to the principal E-flat major, and droning horns connect seamlessly to the exuberant finale. The playful movement features a heroic theme, carefree amidst the militant sounds of roaring trumpets and beating drums.

**Jean Sibelius** (Finnish; 1865-1957)

### **Symphony No. 2 in D major, Op. 43**

- I. Allegretto
- II. Andante, ma rubato
- III. Vivacissimo
- IV. Finale: Allegro moderato

Composed 1902; Duration: 44 minutes

First BPO performance: March 17, 1937  
(Franco Autori, conductor)

Last BPO performance: May 12-13, 2017  
(Christopher Wilkins, conductor)

For centuries, Finland was integrated into the Kingdom of Sweden, but in 1809 Russia was successful in wrangling Finland away from the Swedes during the Napoleonic Wars, making it an autonomous state ruled by the Russian Empire. Finland enjoyed various degrees of political and cultural autonomy along with economic and industrial development brought by Russia, but in 1899 Emperor Nikolai II took steps to ramp up Finnish Russification.

Jean Sibelius was an early attendee of

the Helsinki Music Institute, graduating in 1889, and spent a few more years studying in Berlin and Vienna, ultimately returning to focus on composition instead of violin performance. His music was played often, but the 1899 premiere of his first symphony alongside his *Song of the Athenians* was a display of patriotism so successful that his name was forever linked to Finnish national identity. Now something of a cultural ambassador, he only extended his reputation and cause when he toured Europe with these works the following year. Hot off the premiere of his immensely popular *Finlandia*, he was enjoying Italy with his family when he penned his second symphony.

Sibelius conducted the premiere in Helsinki in 1902 over a run of three nights of sold-out performances. The work has thematic threads of fate, with Sibelius later stating the work was a "confession of the soul," and some claim no connection between the work and his previous efforts in Finnish patriotism. However, audiences were bowled over by the work's grandiosity, leading it to bear the nickname, "Symphony of Independence."

The work opens with pulsing swells in the strings, out of which themes materialize organically, blanketed in pastoral sunniness. The atmosphere is often juxtaposed by stark wintry scenes gripped with anxiety, but such is the nature of Sibelius' symphonic writing. Turning classical thematic development on its head, Sibelius doesn't provide complete melodic statements until the fragments have revealed themselves through curious exploration, and a grand collision in the movement's most climactic moment reveals the melody in full.

Some of the earliest music in the symphony is heard in the second movement. As Sibelius enjoyed his Italian villa, he daydreamed about the storied Don Juan's encounter with death, whose singing voice can be heard in the grim bassoon melody. The opening pizzicato triplets set the icy tone, escorting death to the anxious Don's door. Through all the movement's moody digressions, it maintains an earnest sense of foreboding.

The anxiety of the second movement, first introduced by triplets, is amplified in the third as the figures advance with lightning speed and rapid-fire intensity. The fright is broken for a central, pastoral woodwind serenade. The music builds until it overflows into the finale, in which brass ring out with triumph. The extensive, joyous finale is made possible by the impending fear generated by the central movements, instilling a sense of overcoming.

The Russian Revolution of 1917 ultimately saw an independent Finland. By 1926, Sibelius almost completely ceased composition through his final three decades, often called the "silence of Järvenpää." Connecting this retirement to Finnish Independence may be more cinematic than accurate: with his finances in order and royalties coming in, he enjoyed retired life at his rural estate, entertaining guests and family. He enjoyed fame in his lifetime and is considered one of the great symphonists of the century, boasting seven symphonies. He is still a major figure in Finnish culture, with the Helsinki Music Institute inheriting his name as the Sibelius Academy.

**Chaz Stuart, 2024**

## DAVID LOCKINGTON, GUEST CONDUCTOR



David Lockington returns to the Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra with 40 years of experience conducting in the US and Europe. In addition to Music Director positions with orchestras in California, Michigan, New Mexico, Ohio, Colorado, Wyoming, and New York, he has guest conducted dozens of other orchestras. His longest tenure was with the Grand Rapids Symphony from 2000-2016. Lockington was also Principal Guest Conductor for OSPA in Oviedo, Spain for almost 10 years. He will return to the ASMI Festival this summer in Italy.

Lockington has made 10 recordings, including one playing his own works for cello. The recording with harpist Deborah Henson Conant and the Grand Rapids Symphony was nominated for a GRAMMY Award. Other recordings include single composer albums by Adolphus Hailstork, Philip Sawyers, and Avner Dorman. His recording with Dylana Jenson and the London Symphony Orchestra of the Barber and Shostakovich violin concertos is fast becoming a classic.

Lockington grew up in London, England, and after attending Cambridge University, emigrated to the US in 1978 to study with Aldo Parisot and Otto-Werner Mueller at Yale. He started his conducting career while still playing as Assistant Principal Cello with the Denver Symphony Orchestra.



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## STEWART GOODYEAR, PIANO
















Proclaimed “a phenomenon” by the *Los Angeles Times* and “one of the best pianists of his generation” by *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, Stewart Goodyear is an accomplished concert pianist, improviser, and composer. Mr. Goodyear has performed with, and been commissioned by, many of the major orchestras and chamber music organizations around the world.


Last year, Orchid Classics released Mr. Goodyear’s recording of his suite for piano and orchestra, “Callaloo,” and his piano sonata. His recent commissions include a piano quintet for the Penderecki String Quartet, and a piano work for the Honens Piano Competition.

Mr. Goodyear’s discography includes the complete sonatas and piano concertos of Beethoven, as well as concertos by Tchaikovsky, Grieg and Rachmaninoff, an album of Ravel piano works, and an album entitled “For Glenn Gould,” which combines repertoire from Mr. Gould’s U.S. and Montreal debuts. His Rachmaninoff recording received a JUNO nomination for Best Classical Album for Soloist and Large Ensemble Accompaniment. Mr. Goodyear’s recording of his own transcription of Tchaikovsky’s “The Nutcracker (Complete Ballet)” was chosen by the *New York Times* as one of the best classical music recordings of 2015. His discography is released on the Marquis Classics, Orchid Classics, Bright Shiny Things, and Steinway & Sons labels. His newest recording, Adolphus Hailstork’s Piano Concerto with the Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra under JoAnn Falletta, was released in March 2023 on the Naxos label. His composition for solo cello and piano, “The Kapok,” was recorded by Inbal Negev and Mr. Goodyear on Avie Records, and his suite for solo violin, “Solo,” was commissioned and recorded by Miranda Cuckson for the Urlicht AudioVisual label.

Highlights for the 2023-24 season are his performances at Summer for the City (Lincoln Center, NY), Southbank Centre (U.K.), Schleswig-Holstein Festival, his recital debut at Wigmore Hall, his debut with the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra, and his return with the Milwaukee Symphony, Buffalo Philharmonic, the Philadelphia Chamber Music Society, and his Carnegie Hall debut with the Royal Conservatory Orchestra.

  
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## VIVIAN FUNG, COMPOSER



JUNO Award-winning composer Vivian Fung has a unique talent for combining idiosyncratic textures and styles into large-scale works, reflecting her multicultural background. *NPR* calls her “one of today’s most eclectic composers,” and *The Philadelphia Inquirer* praises her “stunningly original compositional voice.”

Highlights of recent and upcoming performances include the world premiere of Fung’s fifth string quartet by Canada’s Lafayette String Quartet, and a new piece for Houston’s ROCO; international performances of her critically acclaimed elegy for the pandemic, *Prayer*, including concerts throughout the U.S. and Canada; and the European premieres of *A Child’s Dream of Toys* at Germany’s Theater Erfurt, *Baroque Melting* with Switzerland’s Berner Symphonie-Orchester led by Gemma New, and *Prayer* by the Argovia Philharmonic. Mary Elizabeth Bowden tours Fung’s trumpet concerto to the Philharmonia Northwest, Waynesboro Symphony, and the San José Chamber Orchestra. Fung was the 2023 Composer in Residence at the Alba Music Festival Composition Program in Italy.

Born in Edmonton, Canada, Fung received her doctorate from The Juilliard School and currently lives in California.



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**Ali Handal, guitar & vocals**  
**Jennifer Jo Oberle, vocals**

**Ben White, bass**  
**Jimmy Keegan, drums**  
**Sven Martin, keyboard**

*Program to be announced from the stage.*

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## **BRADLEY THACHUK, CONDUCTOR**



Canadian conductor Bradley Thachuk is the Music Director of the Niagara Symphony Orchestra in Canada. He is also the conductor for the BPO Rock series, conductor and arranger for Steve Hackett's "Genesis Revisited" project, and a lecturer in Orchestral Literature at the world-renowned Glenn Gould School at the Royal Conservatory of Music in Toronto.

As an in-demand guest conductor in North America and Europe, Mr. Thachuk's recent and upcoming guest engagements include the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra, the English Symphony Orchestra (U.K.), the Heart of England Philharmonic, the Wuppertal Symphony Orchestra (Germany), the Chautauqua Institute's Music School Symphony Orchestra, the Kamloops Symphony Orchestra, the Indianapolis Chamber Orchestra, the Reading Symphony Orchestra, the Windsor Symphony Orchestra (Canada), the Fort Wayne Philharmonic, the Tucson Symphony Orchestra, the Cincinnati Pops, the Richmond Symphony, the Hartford Symphony Orchestra, and the Hradec Kralove Philharmonic (Czech Republic).

An advocate of contemporary music, he has led world, Canadian, and U.S. premieres of works by John Estacio, Joseph Schwantner, Kevin Lau, Stewart Goodyear, Ellen Taaffe Zwilich, Roydon Tse, Robert A. Baker, and Ronald Royer, amongst others.

Mr. Thachuk, a versatile musician and highly sought-after symphonic arranger, has also established himself globally as one of the handful of conductors who moves easily between the classical and rock worlds. His work on Steve Hackett's worldwide Blu-Ray/DVD/CD release, "Genesis Revisited Band & Orchestra: Live at Royal Festival Hall," and appearances in Europe with this project have been met with critical acclaim. Recent and upcoming projects include work with Chris Botti, Blue Rodeo, Dave Mason of Fleetwood Mac and Traffic, Bahamas, ABC's "Dancing with the Stars" franchise, Tony-Award winning Heather Headley, Sarah Slean, Chantal Kreviazuk, The Beach Boys, and Air Supply.



## WALTER INO, LEAD GUITAR & VOCALS



Walter Ino is a Los Angeles-based stage and studio multi-instrumentalist with decades of touring and recording experience, hailing from Pittsburgh where he was originally classically trained in piano. He is currently the keyboardist/guitarist/music director for Tommy DeCarlo, the singer of Boston, the keyboardist for Asia featuring John Payne, and also the keyboardist/saxophonist/guitarist for the "Voices of Classic Rock" show, which features legendary singers Lou Gramm (Foreigner), Steve Augeri (Journey), John Elefante (Kansas), Bill Champlin (Chicago), Fran Cosmo (Boston), and many more.

Walter spent 2018 to early 2019 as the lead guitar player for Eagles of Death Metal, and from 2011-2018 was a member of the multi-platinum, GRAMMY Award-winning band Survivor, playing keyboard, guitar, and singing background vocals. He currently tours as the keyboardist with legendary band The Babys, touring occasionally as the guitarist with Wilson Phillips, and is also the musical director and orchestrator for "The Music of Led Zeppelin with Orchestra," "A Night of Symphonic Rock," "A Night of Symphonic Metal," and "Rewind," a national orchestral rock show featuring members of Starship, Foreigner, Berlin, Survivor, MSG, and more. You can also see him as a rotating member of the award-winning Las Vegas and Branson show "Raiding The Rock Vault," featuring band members of Heart, Bad Company, Whitesnake, Bon Jovi, Ozzy Osbourne, Billy Idol, and more. Walter is also the guitarist for an all-star tribute to the music of the band Rush called "A Farewell to Kings," featuring Brian Tichy of Whitesnake, Francesco Di Cosmo of Thin Lizzy, and Jonathan Sindleman of the Alan White band.

Walter also runs his own studio, "Secret Asian Man Studios," where he produces for many artists of different styles, mixes for various artists, and writes and records music for TV and movies, including music for the Hallmark Channel, USA Network, Discovery Channel, and more. He plays with his original rock trio occasionally in and around L.A.

## ALI HANDAL, GUITAR & VOCALS



"Ali Handal's reputation has centered around her big riffs, burning yet melodic solos, and huge voice" (*Guitar Player*). Guitarist and singer-songwriter Ali Handal sets the stage ablaze with fiery guitar passages and soulful lyrics delivered by her powerhouse voice. *Vintage Guitar* describes her as a "devilishly witty songwriter whose guitar is as blue and gutsy as her lyrics."

Ali's songs have been featured in numerous films and hit shows like "Dawson's Creek," "Sex and the City," and Fox's Thursday Night Football. She has toured Australia, Japan, and beyond, provided backing vocals for Neil Young, and shared the stage with songwriting legend Paul Williams as his featured vocalist. Also a published author, Ali penned *Guitar for Girls* (Hal Leonard), an exceptional guitar method book and CD brimming with advice for aspiring female musicians, as well as encouraging quotes and remarkable songs from female songwriters in all genres.

Ali has released four albums, as well as a series of bluesy rockin' singles. Her song, "Shut Your Mouth and Do Something," was chosen for Spotify's "Nu-Blues" and "Women of the Blues" playlists, as well as Joe Bonamassa's "Cutting Edge Blues" Spotify playlist. Her fifth album will be released this year, produced by four-time GRAMMY Award-winner Seth Atkins Horan.

## JENNIFER JO OBERLE, VOCALS & ARRANGER



Jennifer Jo Oberle is a professional bassist, vocalist, bandleader, orchestrator, arranger, and songwriter based out of Los Angeles, CA. Her touring and recording credits include Sarah McLachlan, Five for Fighting, Vertical Horizon, Meredith Brooks, and Air Supply, in addition to leading her own musical collective, JJo & the Jennerators. She is the orchestrator and arranger of *Landslide: A Tribute to the Music of Fleetwood Mac*.

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## BEN WHITE, BASS



Playing and recording with locals and legends alike, Ben White has established himself as a versatile, reliable, tasteful, and in-demand sideman, bringing both electric and upright chops to the table and adding his vocal abilities to the mix. Not just a sideman though, he has also developed a truly unique voice on his instrument which sets him apart in his improvisation, soloing, and composition. He has shared stages with such luminaries as Gerry Brown, Rick Latham, Steve Lukather, David Paich, Rafael Moreira, Warren Hill, and Mindi Abair, and has recorded with Shooter Jennings, Josh Kelley, Jessi Colter, Suge Knight, and Sophie B. Hawkins, among many others.

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## JIMMY KEEGAN, DRUMS



Jimmy started playing drums at 10 years old. A few months after receiving his first drum set, he landed a TV show alongside the late River Phoenix. A few months later, he was doing theater in LA as a cast member and musician. By 14 he started his first band, Polo, that would end up performing in regular rotation at Disneyland, winning *Starsearch*, and playing for numerous telethons. By 18 he had started getting calls for sessions and tours, and it expanded from there. He says, "I was lucky to have a huge family with all kinds of music playing at all times.

As I grew as a musician, I just continued that trend of listening to everything. Consequently, I got calls from R&B artists as often as rock, pop, and country artists from Santana, John Waite, and Kenny Loggins, to Tevin Campbell and Tony Orlando."

In 2003, Jimmy began touring with Spock's Beard alongside fellow Aquarian artist Nick D'Virgilio. 2012 saw Nick leaving and Jimmy taking over as the full-time drummer with the release of "Brief Nocturnes and Dreamless Sleep," and in 2015 with "The Oblivion Particle." Now onto new territory, Jimmy has a solo album coming, and the fourth album from Pattern Seeking Animals, "Spooky Action at a Distance," is out now.

## SVEN MARTIN, KEYBOARD



Hailing from Düsseldorf, Germany, Sven Martin is an accomplished keyboardist, producer, songwriter, and musical director who now resides in Los Angeles, CA. Sven Martin has worked with artists such as Shakira, Black Eyed Peas, and Jonathan Davis of Korn. The accomplished musician has also produced songs for production studios such as 20<sup>th</sup> Century Fox, Warner Bros., Touchstone Pictures, and MTV.



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**Ron Spigelman, conductor**

John Williams

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## JOHN WILLIAMS, COMPOSER



In a career spanning more than six decades, John Williams has become one of America's most accomplished and successful composers for film and for the concert stage, and he remains one of our nation's most distinguished and contributive musical voices. He has composed the music and served as music director for more than one hundred films, including all nine *Star Wars* films, the first three *Harry Potter* films, *Superman*, *JFK*, *Born on the Fourth of July*, *Memoirs of a Geisha*, *Far and Away*, *The Accidental Tourist*, *Home Alone*, and *The Book Thief*. His 50-year artistic partnership with director Steven Spielberg has resulted in many of Hollywood's most acclaimed and successful films,

including *Schindler's List*, *E.T. The Extra-Terrestrial*, *Jaws*, *Jurassic Park*, *Close Encounters of the Third Kind*, the *Indiana Jones* films, *Munich*, *Saving Private Ryan*, *The Adventures of Tintin*, *War Horse*, *Lincoln*, *The BFG*, *The Post*, and *The Fabelmans*. His contributions to television music include scores for more than 200 television films for the groundbreaking, early anthology series *Alcoa Theatre*, *Kraft Television Theatre*, *Chrysler Theatre* and *Playhouse 90*, as well as themes for *NBC Nightly News* ("The Mission"), *NBC's Meet the Press*, and the PBS arts showcase, *Great Performances*. He also composed themes for the 1984, 1988, and 1996 Summer Olympic Games, and the 2002 Winter Olympic Games.

He has received five Academy Awards and 54 Oscar nominations, making him the Academy's most-nominated living person and the second-most nominated person in the history of the Oscars. He has received seven British Academy Awards (BAFTA), 25 Grammys, four Golden Globes, five Emmys, and numerous gold and platinum records. In 2003, he received the Olympic Order (the IOC's highest honor) for his contributions to the Olympic movement. He received the prestigious Kennedy Center Honors in December of 2004. In 2009, Mr. Williams was inducted into the American Academy of Arts & Sciences, and he received the National Medal of Arts, the highest award given to artists by the U.S. Government. In 2016, he received the 44th Life Achievement Award from the American Film Institute – the first time in their history that this honor was bestowed upon a composer. In 2020, he received Spain's Princess of Asturias Award for the Arts as well as the Gold Medal from the prestigious Royal Philharmonic Society in the U.K., and in 2022 he was awarded an honorary knighthood of the British Empire as one of the final awards approved by Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II.

In January 1980, Mr. Williams was named the nineteenth music director of the Boston Pops Orchestra, succeeding the legendary Arthur Fiedler. He currently holds the title of Boston Pops Laureate Conductor, which he assumed following his retirement in December 1993 after 14 highly successful seasons. He also holds the title of Artist-in-Residence at Tanglewood. Mr. Williams has composed numerous works for the concert stage, among them two symphonies, and concertos commissioned by several of the world's leading orchestras, including a cello concerto for the Boston Symphony Orchestra, a bassoon concerto for the New York Philharmonic, a trumpet concerto for The Cleveland Orchestra, and a horn concerto for the Chicago Symphony Orchestra. In 2009, the Boston Symphony premiered his concerto for harp and orchestra entitled "On Willows and Birches," and in the same year, Mr. Williams composed and arranged "Air and Simple Gifts" especially for the first inaugural ceremony of President Barack Obama. In 2021, Williams premiered his second violin concerto with the Boston Symphony Orchestra at Tanglewood along with soloist Anne-Sophie Mutter, for whom he composed the work.

## RON SPIGELMAN, CONDUCTOR



A native of Australia, conductor Ron Spigelman is an honors graduate of the Royal Academy of Music, London. He has been the Associate Conductor of the Buffalo Philharmonic and the Fort Worth Symphony, Music Director of the Fort Worth Dallas Ballet, San Angelo Symphony, Texas Chamber Orchestra, Springfield Symphony (MO), and the Lake Placid Sinfonietta. He has also served as Principal Pops Conductor of the Fort Worth and Syracuse symphonies. This season with the BPO, Ron conducts a selection of Pops and Film concerts.

Recent guest conducting appearances include the Atlanta, St. Louis, Baltimore, Oregon, Kansas City, and Columbus symphonies. In past seasons he has conducted the Dallas, North Carolina, Phoenix, and Virginia symphony orchestras, among many others. This season, he will appear in Canada with both the Winnipeg and Vancouver symphonies.

Ron has conducted symphonic concerts, ballet, opera, and musical theatre, plus over 30 live-to-film productions including seven of the *Harry Potter* films. Guest artists he has accompanied include Horacio Gutiérrez, Rachel Barton Pine, Richard Stoltzman, and Pops artists Marvin Hamlisch, Peter Paul and Mary, James Taylor, Leslie Odom Jr., and Gladys Knight. Other career highlights include his Carnegie Hall debut with the BPO in 2004, and the world premiere recording of *Sylvan* by Michael Torke, commissioned for the Lake Placid Sinfonietta's centennial in 2017.

Ron lives in Tulsa, OK with his wife Laura, and combined they have six children. He is also pursuing a Bachelor of Science degree in Family and Human Development with minors in Counseling and Applied Psychology and Communications at Arizona State University.

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**BEHZAD RANJBARAN** *Saratoga Overture*

**PROKOFIEV** Concerto No. 1 in D major for Violin  
and Orchestra, Op. 19

I. Andantino

II. Scherzo: Vivacissimo

III. Moderato

**Timothy Chooi, violin**

INTERMISSION

**J. S. BACH** Concerto in D minor for Two Violins  
and String Orchestra, BWV 1043

I. Vivace

II. Largo, ma non tanto

III. Allegro

**Timothy Chooi, violin**

**Nikki Chooi, violin**

**BRAHMS** Serenade No. 2 in A major, Op. 16

I. Allegro moderato

II. Scherzo: Vivace

III. Adagio non troppo

IV. Quasi menuetto

V. Rondo: Allegro



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Patrons are asked to turn off all electronic devices.

The use of cameras and recording devices is strictly prohibited.

## PROGRAM OVERVIEW

A concert we have all been anticipating with great joy! Nikki's younger brother, Timmy, is here in Buffalo to play the haunting Prokofiev Violin Concerto No. 1. And of course, we had to ask the two brothers to play a duet – the beloved Bach Concerto for Two Violins. Spectacular!

The concert opens with a beautiful overture by composer Behzad Ranjbaran and will close with the rarity of Brahms' Serenade No. 2. There is something quite unusual with this Brahms. He chose to let the violins take a bit of a rest, so that he could feature the instrument he especially loved – the viola. It is a happy chance for us to show off our superb viola section!

*To Ann Fallette*

## PROGRAM NOTES

**Behzad Ranjbaran** (Persian; b. 1955)

### *Saratoga Overture*

Composed 2005; Duration: 7 minutes

First performance of this work by the BPO.

Behzad Ranjbaran is an Iranian-born composer who studied violin as a child while developing an interest in folk music. In 1974, he immigrated to America to study composition at Indiana University and The Juilliard School, where he now serves on the faculty. His 2005 work, *Saratoga Overture*, was commissioned to celebrate the Philadelphia Orchestra's 40th anniversary at its summer home at the Saratoga Performing Arts Center. The overture alludes to the American victory in the Battle of Saratoga in 1777 as the turning point in the War for Independence. About the work, Ranjbaran has written the following:

"A simple 7-note scale is presented first by a solo flute in a descending melodic line at the beginning of the piece. They are then rearranged to form a hymn-like theme played by a solo French horn, alluding to the style prevalent during the Revolutionary War. The newly composed hymn is often heard in larger note values (augmentation) in the low brass, while its variations involving shorter note values (diminution) are used continuously throughout the

piece. In the finale, this hymn is played in its entirety by the whole orchestra with a celebratory and festive character that is enhanced by the sounds of cymbals and bells." – *Behzad Ranjbaran*

**Sergei Prokofiev** (Russian; 1891-1953)

### **Concerto No. 1 in D major for Violin and Orchestra, Op. 19**

- I. Andantino
- II. Scherzo: Vivacissimo
- III. Moderato

Composed 1915; Duration: 22 minutes

First BPO performance: December 3 & 5, 1950 (Joseph Szigeti, violin; William Steinberg, conductor)

Last BPO performance: May 9-10, 2015 (Rachel Lee Priday, violin; Leon Botstein, conductor)

Before the First World War, Prokofiev's reputation as a skilled pianist with thorny original works led him to work with Sergei Diaghilev's Paris-based Ballet Russes. The company had a reputation for working with Russia's great modernists, making their engagement with Prokofiev a milestone in the composer's young career. He avoided conscription during the war by going back to school, and he was particularly productive in 1917, completing his

first symphony, the “Classical,” often credited for pioneering neo-classicism, and his first violin concerto, which would have to wait for its first performance.

Prokofiev, like many other Russian artists, saw the writing on the wall and left for opportunities abroad. A brief stint in America was mired with financial challenges, and he soon relocated to Paris where he had contacts and professional opportunities.

Serge Koussevitzky is perhaps most well-known as the longtime conductor of the Boston Symphony Orchestra, but when he left Soviet Russia in 1920, he spent most of the decade organizing *Concerts Koussevitzky* while continuing his publishing business, Éditions Russes de Musique, with a special interest in championing contemporary Russian music. He published and programmed many of Prokofiev’s works, including the long-awaited premiere of the first violin concerto, with his concertmaster Marcel Darrieux performing as soloist.

The Andantino opens with a whispering melody presented by the soloist over a dreamy bed of tremolo violas. Woodwinds join in counterpoint and the intensity grows into a second theme made angular by dense ornamentation. The development opens with the soloist playing pizzicato, and riffs on the thematic material across various moods and scenes. The opening theme returns in the winds with the soloist adding a layer of serene passages.

The dreaminess that ended the opening movement disappears in the scherzo, as the skittish tempo is propelled by the assertive melody in the violin that teeters nervously on chaos. As a rondo the melody returns, but for digressions that offer varying scenes, each bolder than the last.

A persistent staccato figure keeps time in the final movement for a curious melody first heard in the bassoon, then completed

by the soloist. As the violinist takes up time-keeping duties, a new breezy diatonic melody takes over with echoes from his “Classical” symphony. Recalling both the tranquil tone and melodies of the first movement, the orchestral textures thicken and the soloist offers elaborate figurations, rising to an early climax before descending back into dreaminess.

### **Johann Sebastian Bach**

(German; 1685-1750)

### **Concerto in D minor for Two Violins and String Orchestra, BWV 1043**

I. Vivace

II. Largo, ma non tanto

III. Allegro

Composed 1730; Duration: 17 minutes

First BPO performance: March 1 & 3, 1953  
(Budapest Quartet; Josef Krips, conductor)

Last BPO performance: October 3, 2009  
(Gil Shaham & Adele Anthony, violin; JoAnn Falletta, conductor)

When Bach arrived in Leipzig in 1723, he was responsible for the city’s church music, preparing choirs, playing organ, and composing years of cantata cycles. Meanwhile, the city boasted the Collegium Musicum, a free concert series of secular music performed by university students at the local coffeehouse, Café Zimmermann. The extraordinary series began (or really, was resurrected) in 1702 by Telemann, but Bach took the helm as the director in 1729, ensconcing his musical influence over the city. He held the post until the series was disbanded following its host Gottfried Zimmermann’s death in 1741.

The series presented many genres, including opera, chamber, and keyboard music, much of it Bach’s, including the reprisal of his Brandenburg Concertos and new works such as his Coffee Cantata and the beloved Concerto for Two Violins.



Rhythmically intense and contrapuntally dense, the *Vivace* features fugal, imitative passages throughout in the standard ritornello framework, with the opening music returning after soloistic digressions. The soloists work in tandem with complex, independent lines that drive the motion forward.

The second movement again relies on imitative conversations between the soloists, but the melody is gentle and emotive. Bach's question-and-answer presentation rocks rhythmically through various moods and sumptuous textures. The final movement mirrors the first as a fiery ritornello, but the soloists' virtuosity is pushed to new limits.

**Johannes Brahms** (German; 1833-1897)

**Serenade No. 2 in A major, Op. 16**

- I. Allegro moderato
- II. Scherzo: Vivace
- III. Adagio non troppo
- IV. Quasi menuetto
- V. Rondo: Allegro

Composed 1859; Duration: 29 minutes

First performance of this work by the BPO.

Johannes Brahms began his career as a pianist, but his interest in composition flourished after he was introduced to Robert and Clara Schumann, who housed and encouraged the young composer, helping him translate his piano music into orchestral works. Now considered one of the most significant symphonists of the later 19th century, Brahms' obsessive reverence for the past mired his process in self-doubt. It took him more than two decades to complete his first symphony, but dur-

ing this time he developed his confidence with smaller orchestral works such as his first piano concerto and two quasi-symphonies he called serenades.

In the classical tradition, a serenade was a fairly lengthy work comprising several movements, serving as entertainment music for social events. Mozart's famous contributions include smaller ensembles, often relying exclusively on wind instruments. Brahms composed two serenades, and the first in 1857 was influenced by Beethoven's pastoral music. Almost immediately after, the second was underway, this time aggressively pursuing musical qualities that were distinctly his own. The work spans five movements and relies heavily on the winds, as the orchestration omits violins.

The opening movement is striking for its use of mellow winds alone, and through development, introduces the cross-rhythms that can be heard throughout his piano music, with soaring woodwind melodies that would characterize his later symphonies. The middle movement is surrounded by two dance movements: a lively and folksy Scherzo, then a nervous "Quasi menuetto." The central Adagio is a brilliant passacaglia in which a repeated bass line serves as a medium for a set of variations, leveraging Beethoven's examples as a formal model while laying the groundwork for future innovations in the theme and variation genre. Following the introverted menuetto is the youthful Rondo finale, rounding out a work that serves as a testing ground for Brahms' developing musical persona.

**Chaz Stuart, 2024**

## TIMOTHY CHOOI, VIOLIN



Internationally acclaimed violinist Timothy Chooi has captivated audiences worldwide with his virtuosic and finely nuanced performances. He is highly sought after for his passionate renditions and extensive repertoire, as well as his exceptional ability to connect with a global audience, amassing a media following of millions of viewers who have tuned in to his music.

Chooi gained international recognition by winning First Prize at the Joseph Joachim International Violin Competition in Hanover, Germany, and Second Prize at the Queen Elisabeth International Competition. He also received the prestigious classical music award, the “Yves Paternot Prize,” at the Verbier Festival in Switzerland. He has performed with renowned orchestras such as the Deutsches Symphonie-Orchester

Berlin, Belgian National Orchestra, Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, Royal Liverpool Philharmonic, and Wiener Concert-Verein, among others. His performances have garnered glowing reviews from venues such as Carnegie Hall, Musikverein Wien, Berlin Philharmonie, Amsterdam’s Concertgebouw, and the Royal Albert Hall in London. Additionally, he has collaborated with esteemed artists including Anne-Sophie Mutter, Pinchas Zukerman, Jukka-Pekka Saraste, Lang Lang, and James Ehnes. This year marks an exciting touring year from Chooi, including collaborations with London’s Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, featuring Emmy Award nominee composer Brian Tyler, a return to the Toronto Symphony, and debuts with the European Union Youth Orchestra, Bruckner Orchester Linz, and at the Wimbledon Music Festival.

Chooi’s music has been broadcast on several prestigious stations worldwide. In 2023, he recorded with Anne-Sophie Mutter and Mutter’s Virtuosi on Deutsche Grammophon, and his performance with the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra was featured on Medici TV. His music has also been aired on NPO Radio Klassiek Amsterdam, WQXR New York, RTBF Belgium, Swiss Public Radio, CBC Radio Canada, Deutschlandfunk Kultur, and Danish Public Radio.

Born in Canada and raised in the United States of America to Indonesian parents of Chinese ethnicity, Chooi embarked on his violin journey inspired by his older brother, Nikki Chooi. At the age of sixteen, his debut performance with the Montreal Symphony Orchestra (Orchestre symphonique de Montréal) catapulted his career onto the global stage.

Currently, Chooi serves as the Professor of Violin at the University of Ottawa in Canada. He performs on two exceptional rare violins: the Titan Guarneri Del Gesu violin from 1741, on loan from CANIMEX INC. in Drummondville, Québec, Canada, and the Engleman Stradivarius violin from 1709, on loan from the Nippon Music Foundation in Japan.

## NIKKI CHOOI, BPO CONCERTMASTER



Praised for his powerful and poetic performances, internationally acclaimed violinist Nikki Chooi has established himself as an artist of rare versatility. Described as “expressive, enchanting, and transcendent,” Nikki is a Laureate of the Queen Elisabeth and Tchaikovsky Competitions, and was awarded First Prize at the Montreal Symphony’s ManuLife Competition, the Klein International Strings Competition, and the Michael Hill International Violin Competition.

In 2022-2023, Nikki made critically acclaimed debuts at Carnegie Hall’s Stern Auditorium as soloist with the Buffalo Philharmonic, and at Lincoln Center’s Rose Hall with Orchestra NOW. He was also a featured soloist with the Vancouver Symphony, Puerto Rico Symphony, National Taiwan Symphony Festival Orchestra, Santa Fe Symphony, Hamilton Philharmonic, and Manitoba Chamber Orchestra. In past seasons, he has appeared as soloist with

orchestras across Canada and internationally including the Montreal Symphony Orchestra, National Arts Centre Orchestra, Victoria Symphony Orchestra, Louisiana Philharmonic, Chamber Orchestra of Wallonie, National Orchestra of Belgium, Auckland Philharmonia, Malaysian Philharmonic, and Hong Kong Philharmonic.

Nikki has been featured at many international festivals with performances at the Marlboro Festival, Wimbledon International Festival, Ravinia Festival, Rockport Chamber Music Festival, La Jolla Summerfest, Brevard Music Center, Vancouver Recital Series, Moritzburg Festival, Kammermusik Utrecht, Dresden Music Festival, Chamber Music New Zealand, and Fundación Beethoven in Chile.

Nikki is currently Concertmaster of the GRAMMY Award-winning Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra under Music Director JoAnn Falletta, and was previously Concertmaster of the Metropolitan Opera Orchestra. In demand as a guest concertmaster, he has performed with the Pittsburgh Symphony, Houston Symphony, Milwaukee Symphony, Sydney Symphony, and Macao Orchestra. His collaborations have extended to working with a myriad of distinguished conductors and fellow artists, among them Timothy Chooi, Yo-Yo Ma, Renée Fleming, Esa-Pekka Salonen, Eric Owens, and Time for Three.

A passionate educator, Nikki has presented classes at the Curtis Institute of Music, The Royal Conservatory of Music, San Francisco Conservatory, Morningside Music Program at the New England Conservatory, University of Michigan, University of Ottawa, and University of Auckland.

Nikki has recorded for Naxos, Beau Fleuve, Atoll, and Decca labels and proudly endorses Thomastik-Infeld strings. He gratefully performs on a 1749 G.B. Guadagnini violin and a Jean Marie Persoit bow on extended loan through the Stradivari Society of Chicago.

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## BEHZAD RANJBARAN, COMPOSER



Described as “music’s magical realist” (*Philadelphia Inquirer*) and “a master of the orchestra” (*Dallas Morning News*), Behzad Ranjbaran is known for creating work that possesses “radiant luminescence” (*Washington Post*) and “qualities of inherent beauty and strong musical structure that make...a satisfying musical entity” (*Nashville Scene*). Ranjbaran’s compositional style, which is both evocative and colorful, frequently draws inspiration from his cultural roots and Persian heritage in form or subject matter. His pieces have been performed all over the world by soloists such as Joshua Bell, Renée Fleming, Jean-Yves Thibaudet, and Yo-Yo Ma, and conductors including Yannick Nézet-Séguin, Charles Dutoit, JoAnn Falletta, Kent Nagano, Marin Alsop, Robert Spano, Gerard Schwarz, Miguel Harth-Bedoya, Giancarlo Guerrero, and David Robertson. Some of his more notable

compositions are works for soloist and orchestra, including eight concertos.

Ranjbaran has served as Composer in Residence for the Philadelphia Orchestra’s summer season at Saratoga, the Fort Worth Symphony, and the Cabrillo Festival of Contemporary Music. Recordings include the *Persian Trilogy* on the Delos label by the London Symphony Orchestra, conducted by JoAnn Falletta. This orchestral cycle, comprising the works *Seven Passages*, *Seemorgh*, and *The Blood of Seyavash*, takes its inspiration from ancient Persian legends, as recounted in the 11<sup>th</sup>-century epic poem “Shahnameh” (*The Book of Kings*). Ranjbaran is the recipient of the Rudolf Nissim Award for his violin concerto. He holds degrees from Indiana University and The Juilliard School, where he currently serves on the faculty.

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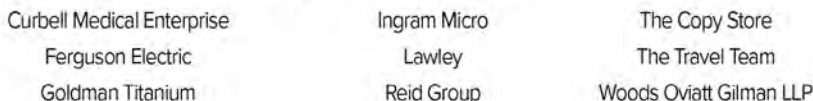
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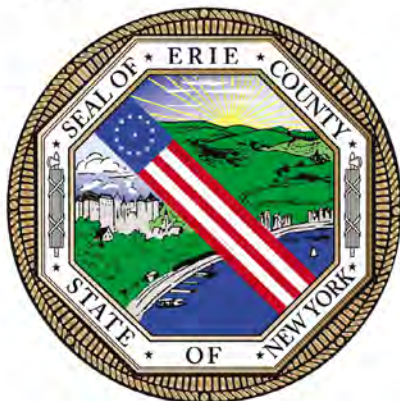
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*Development Assistant*  
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Rachael Pudlewski  
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& Administration*  
Nicole M. Bodemer  
*Director of Finance*  
Jacqueline Henry  
*Finance/Accounts Payable  
Associate*

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*Vice President, Marketing  
& Communications*  
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*Marketing Manager*  
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*Digital Marketing Manager*  
Cary Michael Trout  
*Design Services & Branding  
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*Kleinhaus Music Hall Manager*  
Brian Seibel  
*Event Manager*  
Corinna Scozzaro  
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## WHAT TO KNOW AT THE BPO

- Kleinhans Music Hall will open 90 minutes before a concert's scheduled start, or earlier depending on pre-concert activities
- Special assistance in the areas of parking, seating, and hearing will be accommodated to the best of our ability; Please contact the Box Office ahead of your visit
- Options are available for patrons using mobility aids or requesting a wheelchair accessible location and accompanying companion seating
- Service animals are welcome; Please notify staff upon arrival
- Hearing assistance devices and large print repertoire pages are available at the coat check
- *Please Note: There is no elevator to the balcony level*
- It is strictly forbidden to record, photograph, or film a performance in the Main Auditorium, as it presents a distraction to the musicians and other patrons; Photography is permitted before and after concerts
- Late arrivals will be seated at the first suitable break or at intermission; Late seating may not be in the purchased section
- Security staff is available at all times, and an EMT is on site for all concerts and performances; Please notify an usher or staff member if there is a medical or security need
- Kleinhans Music Hall maintains a smoke-free environment
- All programs and artists are subject to change without notice
- Sorry, no refunds or exchanges on single ticket purchases

## PARKING & SHUTTLE SERVICES

### Kleinhans Music Hall Parking:

- \$10 evening and Sunday performances
- \$5 Friday morning Coffee Concerts
- Free for BPO Kids Sunday afternoon performances

### Free Parking and Shuttle (SELECT Fridays, Saturdays, and Sundays):

- D'Youville University Lot C 260 Connecticut Street 14213  
*between Fargo and West Avenue*

*Shuttle service begins at 6pm and ends 30 minutes following the end of the concert.*

Visit [bpo.org](http://bpo.org) for more information.

Shuttle service is only available for SELECT dates. Please join our email club at [bpo.org](http://bpo.org) or call the Box Office for updated information.

### Symphony Shuttle 6461 Transit Rd., Depew, NY

- Avoid driving downtown! For \$15 per person, enjoy shuttle service to and from Kleinhans on Saturday nights. To reserve shuttle, call (716) 885-5000 and select shuttle option.  
*Shuttle leaves promptly at 6:30pm from the rear of the lot near the water tower.*



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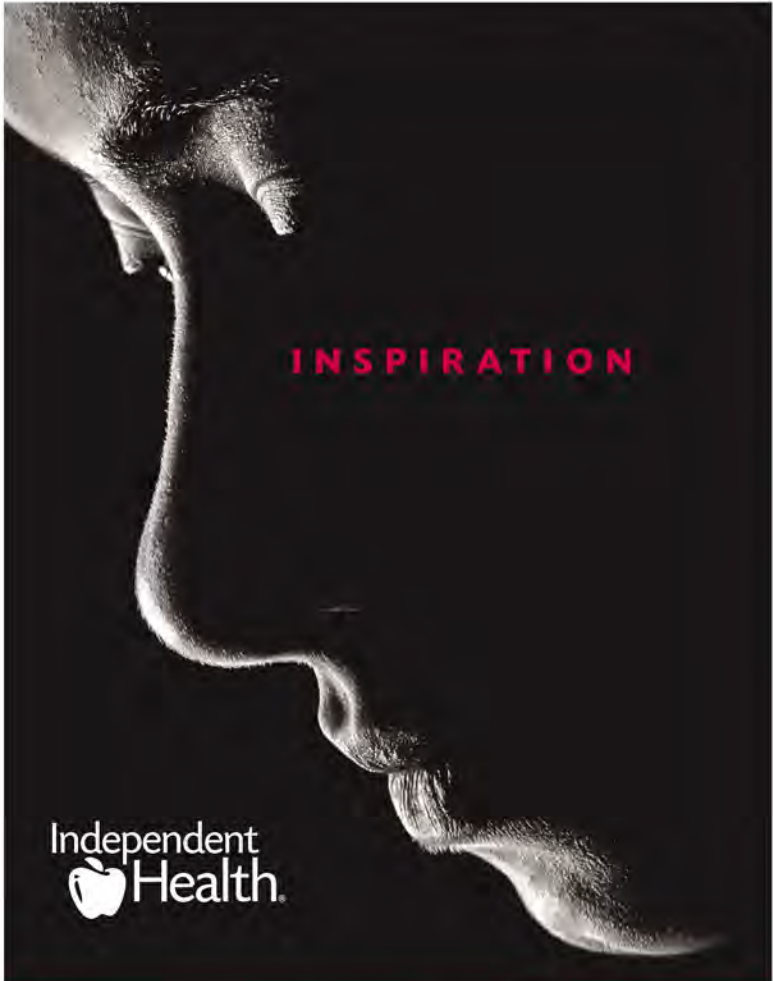
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