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Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra announces 2025-26 concert season, celebrating the power of live music

Next season offers audiences opportunities for connection,
inspiration, discovery, and joy



Photo by Joe Cascio

The Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra is proud to announce the concerts of their 2025-26 season, presenting a diverse collection of genres and eras to share the joy of music with audiences at Kleinhans Music Hall. Their new season embraces the power of live music to create shared experiences, awaken nostalgia, spark creativity, and provide moments of rejuvenation and uplift for listeners.

Across the orchestra's annual Classics, Pops, Rock, Kids, and Special event series, their 2025-26 concerts range from beloved symphonies and world premieres to iconic film scores and rock and pop hits. The season opens on September 20 with the return of virtuoso pianist **Alexander Malofeev** performing Tchaikovsky's Piano Concerto No. 1, preceded by the BPO's traditional gala dinner. Renowned guests join the orchestra throughout the season, from Broadway star **Leslie Odom, Jr.** and Buffalo native vocalists **Michele Ragusa** and **Jay Dref**, to acclaimed classical guitarist **Pablo Sáinz Villegas** and the return of fan-favorite pianist **Fabio Bidini**. **Ron Spigelman** debuts as Principal Pops Conductor in a thrilling Pops series featuring the **music of Luther Vandross, Joni Mitchell, Carole King, Disney**, and more, and Rock series tributes to

the **music of Green Day, Journey, Pink Floyd, and The Tragically Hip** light up the Kleinhans stage.

Traditions, new and old, continue: the free **Festival Encanto Hispano** celebrates Hispanic heritage preceding **La Vida Loca**, a program of '80s-'00s Latin pop hits conducted by **Enrico Lopez-Yañez**; **A Gospel Symphony Celebration** with legendary Gospel singer **Karen Clark Sheard** and her daughter, **Kierra Sheard-Kelly**, spotlights the powerful voices of the **Buffalo United Community Choir**; **BPO UpClose** immerses audiences in live, unconduted orchestral music in Kleinhans' intimate Mary Seaton Room; and a series of holiday performances from **JoAnn's Classical Christmas** to **Holiday Pops** ring in the season, along with the return of Buffalo's favorite Irish music sensation, **Celtic Woman**. Families can enjoy **Symphonic Spooktacular**, **Jingle Bell Jam**, **BPO Little Kids**, and **Peter and the Wolf** in the Kids series, and three films are set to be shown above the stage as the orchestra plays their full scores: **E.T. the Extra Terrestrial**, Tim Burton's **Batman (1989)**, and **The Princess Bride**.

The BPO's own talent shines under the baton of Music Director JoAnn Falletta, with featured performances from Concertmaster **Nikki Chooi** and Principal Cellist **Roman Mekinulov** – joined by New York Philharmonic pianist and University at Buffalo Music Department Chair, **Eric Huebner** – Principal Harpist **Madeline Olson**, and saxophonist **Sal Andolina**. Other highlights of the Classics series, curated and conducted by Falletta, are collaborations with the **Buffalo Philharmonic Chorus** including **Carmina Burana** and **Mozart's "Great" Mass**, two festivals celebrating the masterworks of both Ludwig van Beethoven and Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, virtuoso percussionist **Colin Currie** performing a concerto by film composer **Danny Elfman**, and orchestral world premieres of **Niagara Falls** by **Michael Daugherty** and **Serenade** by **Paul Moravec**.

Subscription packages and event details for the 2025-26 season are available online at bpo.org, at the Box Office in Kleinhans Music Hall, and by calling (716) 885-5000.

View the full list of 2025-26 season concerts below, sorted by series. Find images [here](#).

Classics Series

- **Malofeev Plays Tchaikovsky**, September 20
 - Alexander Malofeev, piano; JoAnn Falletta, conductor
 - Bernstein: Overture to *Candide*
 - R. Strauss: Suite from *Der Rosenkavalier*
 - Tchaikovsky: Piano Concerto No. 1 in B-flat minor
- **Fabio, Folklore & Fantasy**, October 3-4
 - Fabio Bidini, piano; JoAnn Falletta, conductor
 - Rossini: Overture to *Semiramide*
 - Bartók: *Dance Suite*
 - Chopin: Piano Concerto No. 1 in E minor

- **Nikki Plays Beethoven**, October 17-18
 - Nikki Chooi, violin; JoAnn Falletta, conductor
 - Verdi: Overture to *La Forza del Destino*
 - Tchaikovsky: *Francesca da Rimini*
 - Beethoven: Violin Concerto in D major
- **Beethoven's Pastoral**, October 24-25
 - Nikki Chooi, violin; Roman Mekinulov, cello; Eric Huebner, piano; JoAnn Falletta, conductor
 - Debussy: *Prelude to the Afternoon of a Faun*
 - Paterson: *Trio Concerto*
 - Beethoven: Symphony No. 6, "Pastoral"
- **Mahler & Mahler**, November 7-8
 - Andrea Bickford, soprano; JoAnn Falletta, conductor
 - A. Mahler: *Lieder*
 - G. Mahler: Symphony No. 1, "Titan"
- **Grieg & Schumann: Romantic Impressions**, November 22-23
 - Adam Golka, piano; Eric Jacobsen, conductor
 - Brahms: *Hungarian Dances* Nos. 4, 6, 10, 21
 - Schumann: Symphony No. 4 in D minor
 - Grieg: Piano Concerto in A minor
- **JoAnn's Classical Christmas**, December 12-13
 - JoAnn Falletta, conductor; Sirgourney Cook, soprano; Buffalo Philharmonic Chorus
 - Adam: *Cantique de Noël*
 - Niles: *I Wonder As I Wander*
 - Handel: Let the Bright Seraphim from *Samson*
- **Mozart's Mass**, January 16-17, 2026
 - Maximiano Valdés, conductor; Natalia Santaliz & Camila Isabel, sopranos; John Tiranno, tenor; Lester Lynch, baritone; Buffalo Philharmonic Chorus
 - Mozart: Symphony No. 38, "Prague"
 - Mozart: "Great" Mass in C minor
- **Mozart's Violin**, January 24-25, 2026
 - Aubree Oliverson, violin; Anthony Parnter, conductor
 - Bologne: Symphony No. 2

- Mozart: Violin Concerto No. 5 in A major
- Paradis: Overture to *The School Candidate*
- Mozart: Symphony No. 35, "Haffner"
- **Shostakovich No. 5**, February 6-7, 2026
 - Madeline Olson, harp; JoAnn Falletta, conductor
 - Brahms: *Academic Festival* Overture
 - Reinecke: Harp Concerto in E minor
 - Shostakovich: Symphony No. 5 in D minor
- **Beethoven's Fifth**, February 21-22, 2026
 - George Li, piano; JoAnn Falletta, conductor
 - Copland: *Dance Symphony*
 - Beethoven: Piano Concerto No. 1 in C major
 - Beethoven: Symphony No. 5 in C minor
- **Tchaikovsky Meets Elfmán**, March 7-8, 2026
 - Colin Currie, percussion; JoAnn Falletta, conductor
 - Elfmán: Percussion Concerto
 - Tchaikovsky: Symphony No. 5 in E minor
- **Brahms & Bruch**, March 20-21, 2026
 - Simone Porter, violin; JoAnn Falletta, conductor
 - Butterworth: *The Banks of Green Willow*
 - Bruch: *Scottish Fantasy*
 - Brahms: Symphony No. 1 in C minor
- **Pablo's Guitar**, April 11-12, 2026
 - Pablo Sáinz Villegas, guitar; Anna Sułkowska-Migoń, conductor
 - Bacewicz: *Overture* for Orchestra
 - Rodrigo: *Concierto de Aranjuez*
 - Fauré: *Pelléas et Mélisande* Suite
 - Borodin: Symphony No. 2 in B minor
- **Mendelssohn & Dvořák**, April 24-25, 2026
 - Amaryn Olmeda, violin; Roberto Minczuk, conductor
 - Elodie Bouny: *Ignis*
 - Mendelssohn: Violin Concerto in E minor
 - Dvořák: Symphony No. 8 in G major

- **Haydn Cello Concerto**, May 8-9, 2026
 - Sterling Elliott, cello; Rune Bergmann, conductor
 - Sibelius: *Finlandia*
 - Haydn: Cello Concerto No. 1 in C major
 - Grieg: *Symphonic Dances*
- **Carmina Burana**, May 30-31, 2026
 - Sara LeMesh, soprano; Kameron Loppreore, tenor; Joshua Conyers, baritone; Buffalo Philharmonic Chorus; JoAnn Falletta, conductor
 - Hindemith: *Symphonic Dances*
 - Orff: *Carmina Burana*
- **American Soundscapes**, June 5-6, 2026
 - Jon Kimura Parker, piano; JoAnn Falletta, conductor
 - Bernstein: Three Dance Episodes from *On the Town*
 - Daugherty: *Niagara Falls* (orchestral world premiere)
 - Copland: *Appalachian Spring*: Suite
 - Moravec: *Serenade* (orchestral world premiere)
 - Gershwin: *Rhapsody in Blue*

Pops Series

- **Showstopping Pops!**, September 27
 - Jay Dref & Michele Ragusa, vocals; Ron Spigelman, conductor
- **La Vida Loca**, October 11
 - Ender Thomas & Jackie Mendez, vocals; José Sibaja, trumpet; Luisito Quintero, percussion; Enrico Lopez-Yañez, conductor
- **E.T. the Extra Terrestrial in Concert: Film with Live Orchestra**, October 31 & November 1
 - Scott Terrell, conductor
- **Clouds in My Coffee**, November 15
 - Morgan James, Shayna Steele, & Bryonha Marie, vocals; Ted Sperling, conductor
- **Holiday Pops**, December 18-21
 - Ron Spigelman, conductor; Buffalo Philharmonic Chorus
- **Uptown Nights with Byron Stripling**, January 31, 2026
 - Byron Stripling, trumpet & conductor; Carmen Bradford, vocals; Leo Manzari, tap dancer

- **Ruben Studdard: My Tribute to Luther Vandross**, February 13-14, 2026
 - Ruben Studdard, vocals; Ron Spigelman, conductor
- **Dancing & Romancing**, February 28, 2026
 - Joan Hess & Kirby Ward, vocals; Ron Spigelman, conductor
- **Disney in Concert: A Dream Is A Wish**, April 17-18, 2026
 - Ron Spigelman, conductor
- **Patriotic Pops**, May 22-23, 2026
 - Sal Andolina, saxophone; Buffalo Philharmonic Chorus; Ron Spigelman, conductor

Rock Series

- **The Music of Green Day (Rock Special)**, November 14
 - Timothy Muffitt, conductor
- **The Music of Journey**, January 30, 2026
 - Bradley Thachuk, conductor
- **The Music of Pink Floyd with The Machine**, February 27, 2026
 - Bradley Thachuk, conductor
- **The Music of The Tragically Hip with The Strictly Hip**, May 1, 2026
 - Bradley Thachuk, conductor

Kids Series

Grant O'Brien, conductor

- **Symphonic Spooktacular**, October 12
- **Jingle Bell Jam**, December 14
- **BPO Little Kids**, February 7 & 14, 2026
- **Peter and the Wolf**, April 19, 2026

Special Events

- **A Gospel Symphony Celebration with Karen Clark Sheard**, October 10
 - Karen Clark Sheard & Kierra Sheard-Kelly, vocals; Buffalo United Community Choir; Jonathan Taylor Rush, conductor
- ***The Princess Bride* in Concert: Film with Live Orchestra**, November 29
 - Ron Spigelman, conductor
- **Celtic Woman Christmas**, December 9
 - Lloyd Butler, conductor

- **BPO UpClose**, January 28 & April 29, 2026
- **Tim Burton's *Batman* (1989) in Concert: Film with Live Orchestra**, March 14, 2026
 - Ron Spigelman, conductor
- **Rick Steves' Europe: A Symphonic Journey**, March 15, 2026
- **Leslie Odom, Jr. with the BPO**, May 2, 2026
 - Leslie Odom, Jr., vocals; Ron Spigelman, conductor

Revised to reflect program updates 8/1/2025. Programs and performers are subject to change.

About Us: To learn more about our storied history, [distinguished conductors and world-class musicians](#), and commitment to [IDEA](#), visit the [Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra](#).



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