Philadelphia Orchestra’s holiday concerts offer seasonal classics for all generations

Handel's beloved Messiah, a time-honored tradition, returns for the 48th year

The Orchestra’s best-selling popular holiday album comes to life in three Glorious Sound of Christmas concerts

Soprano Heidi Stober and baritone Hugh Russell join the Orchestra for a New Year's Eve Concert of music from Vienna

Tickets for selected holiday concerts start at $10

(Philadelphia, November 5, 2008)—Generations of music lovers have made The Philadelphia Orchestra part of their holiday celebrations. This December the Orchestra’s holiday concerts are once again a destination for listeners who want to experience the sublime sounds of the season performed by the Fabulous Philadelphians. The festivities kick-off with a performance of Handel's Messiah, an audience favorite since the composer’s time, which returns for its 48th annual outing by the Orchestra (December 14). The Glorious Sound of Christmas, first introduced as a best-selling album in 1962, continues to delight today on compact disc and as a trio of exciting concerts (December 18-20). The holiday season culminates with the Orchestra’s annual New Year's Eve Concert featuring soprano Heidi Stober and baritone Hugh Russell in a program of Viennese music (December 31). Tickets for selected holiday concerts start at $10.

Handel’s Messiah

The Philadelphia Orchestra opens its holiday concerts with a time-honored tradition: a performance of Handel's Messiah (December 14). The work, which was a favorite of the composer, has delighted audiences for over two centuries. American conductor Julian Wachner makes his Philadelphia Orchestra debut leading the Orchestra's 48th consecutive annual performance of the
beloved oratorio. Joining him are four rising star soloists all making their Philadelphia Orchestra debuts: soprano Sarah Coburn, mezzo-soprano Laura Vlasak Nolen; tenor William Hite, and baritone David Kravitz. The soloists are joined by the Philadelphia Singers Chorale.

Born in Hollywood, California, conductor Julian Wachner has served as music director of the Bach-Academie de Montréal (2003-2007), the Providence Singers (1996-2006), the Back Bay Chorale (1996-2002), and the Boston Bach Ensemble (1995-2002). He has also appeared with Glimmerglass Opera, the Toronto Operetta Company, the Montreal Symphony, the Music Academy of the West, the Boston Pops, and the National Arts Centre Orchestra in Ottawa, among others.

The Glorious Sound of Christmas

With the Glorious Sound of Christmas, The Philadelphia Orchestra lends its lush sound to festive orchestral classics and selections from its best-selling Christmas album of the same name (December 18-20). Since the album’s release in 1962, millions of listeners worldwide have celebrated the holidays with the sounds of the Fabulous Philadelphians. This year’s program focuses on works featured on the original legendary recording and its follow-up, Joy to the World. Philadelphia Orchestra Assistant Conductor Danail Rachev leads these performances.

Danail Rachev made his debut as The Philadelphia Orchestra’s assistant conductor in October 2008. He comes to Philadelphia from the Dallas Symphony, where he had been assistant conductor since the 2005-06 season, leading classical concerts, pops programs, and family concerts, as well as school and outreach programs. From 2002 to 2005 he served as conductor of the Juilliard PreCollege Symphony, and in the 2002-03 season he was the first ever conducting fellow of the New World Symphony, where he worked with Michael Tilson Thomas. Mr. Rachev’s other positions have included cover conductor of the Saint Louis Symphony, guest conductor of Baltimore’s Opera Vivente, assistant conductor of the Columbia Orchestra, and assistant conductor of the Baltimore Opera Company. In his native Bulgaria, he has worked with several ensembles including the Russe State Opera, where he led performances of Rossini’s The Barber of Seville.

New Year’s Eve Concert

From waltzes and polkas to iconic opera overtures, The Philadelphia Orchestra’s annual New Year’s Eve Concert rings in 2009 with Viennese flair under the baton of Associate Conductor Rossen Milanov. Soprano Heidi Stober, making her Philadelphia Orchestra debut, and baritone Hugh Russell join the Orchestra for arias from Strauss’s Die Fledermaus and Lehár’s The Merry Widow. The program also includes favorite waltzes including Strauss’s “On the Beautiful Blue Danube” and “Roses from the South.”

Rossen Milanov is associate conductor of The Philadelphia Orchestra and artistic director of The Philadelphia Orchestra at The Mann Center for the Performing Arts. In addition, he serves as
The Philadelphia Orchestra's holiday concerts

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music director of New Jersey's Symphony in C (formerly the Haddonfield Symphony); music director of the New Symphony Orchestra in his native city of Sofia, Bulgaria; and chief conductor of the Bulgarian National Radio Symphony. During the 2008-09 season—in addition to conducting The Philadelphia Orchestra in subscription, family, educational, community, and holiday concerts—Mr. Milanov debuts with the Swedish Royal Opera, the New Jersey Symphony, the Komische Oper Berlin, the Singapore Symphony, the Orchestra of St. Luke's, the San Antonio Symphony, and the Charlotte Symphony. He also makes return engagements with the Seattle Symphony, the Seoul Philharmonic, and the National Orchestra of Mexico.

The Philadelphia Orchestra

Founded in 1900, The Philadelphia Orchestra has distinguished itself as one of the leading orchestras in the world through a century of acclaimed performances, historic international tours, best-selling recordings, and its unprecedented record of innovation in recording technologies and outreach. The Orchestra has maintained an unparalleled unity in artistic leadership with only seven music directors throughout its history: Fritz Scheel (1900-07), Carl Pohlig (1907-12), Leopold Stokowski (1912-41), Eugene Ormandy (1936-80), Riccardo Muti (1980-92), Wolfgang Sawallisch (1993-2003), and Christoph Eschenbach (2003-08).

This rich tradition is carried on by Charles Dutoit, who was appointed chief conductor and artistic adviser of The Philadelphia Orchestra from the 2008-09 season through the 2011-12 season. Mr. Dutoit has a long-standing relationship with the Orchestra, having made his debut with the ensemble in 1980. Highlights of his first season include the Opening Night Concert, featuring pianist Martha Argerich; performances of Berlioz's *Romeo and Juliet* and Requiem, part of Mr. Dutoit's four-year focus on the works of that composer; the U.S. premiere of Krzysztof Penderecki's Concerto grosso No. 1 for three cellos, part of the Orchestra's celebration of Mr. Penderecki's 75th birthday; and Honegger’s Symphony No. 3 (“Liturgical”). During his tenure, Mr. Dutoit will also focus on the music of the Ballets Russes, beginning in the 2008-09 season with performances of Stravinsky’s complete music to *The Firebird*.

Recent Philadelphia Orchestra highlights include the opening of the Orchestra’s Online Music Store, www.thephiladelphiaorchestra.com; regular broadcasts on NPR; a series of critically acclaimed recordings led by Mr. Eschenbach and released in partnership with Ondine Records; and a $125 million endowment campaign.

The Philadelphia Orchestra annually touches the lives of more than one million music lovers worldwide through its performances, publications, recordings, and broadcasts. The Orchestra presents a subscription season in Philadelphia each year from September to May, in addition to
education and community partnership programs, and appears annually at Carnegie Hall. Its summer schedule includes an outdoor series at Philadelphia’s Mann Center for the Performing Arts, free Neighborhood Concerts, and residencies at the Bravo! Vail Valley Music Festival and the Saratoga Performing Arts Center in upstate New York.

For more information about The Philadelphia Orchestra please visit [www.philorch.org](http://www.philorch.org).

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**HANDEL’S MESSIAH**

**December 14** at 2:00 PM—Sunday afternoon—Verizon Hall at The Kimmel Center for the Performing Arts

The Philadelphia Orchestra  
Julian Wachner Conductor  
Sarah Coburn Soprano  
Laura Vlasak Nolen Mezzo-soprano  
William Hite Tenor  
David Kravitz Baritone  
The Philadelphia Singers Chorale (David Hayes, music director)

Handel *Messiah*

THE GLORIOUS SOUND OF CHRISTMAS
December 18 at 7:00 PM—Thursday evening—Verizon Hall at The Kimmel Center for the Performing Arts
December 19 at 7:00 PM—Friday evening—Verizon Hall at The Kimmel Center for the Performing Arts
December 20 at 7:00 PM—Saturday evening—Verizon Hall at The Kimmel Center for the Performing Arts

The Philadelphia Orchestra
Danail Rachev Conductor
The Philadelphia Singers Chorale (David Hayes, music director)

Mason  
Redner  
Murray  
Mendelssohn  
Traditional  
Vaughan Williams  
Traditional  
Tchaikovsky  
Traditional  
Wade  
Gruber  
Traditional  
Schubert  
Bach  
Handel  
Handel

"Joy to the World"
"O Little Town of Bethlehem"
"Away in a Manger"
"Hark! the Herald Angels Sing"
"God Rest Ye, Merry Gentlemen"
Fantasia on “Greensleeves”
Good King Wenceslas
Excerpts from The Nutcracker
"Angels We Have Heard on High"
"O Come, All Ye Faithful"
"Silent Night"
"The First Noël"
"Ave Maria"
"Jesu, Joy of Man’s Desiring"
Pastoral Symphony, from Messiah
"Hallelujah” Chorus, from Messiah

NEW YEAR'S EVE
December 31 at 7:30 PM—Wednesday evening—Verizon Hall at The Kimmel Center for the Performing Arts

The Philadelphia Orchestra
Rossen Milanov Conductor
Heidi Stober Soprano
Hugh Russell Baritone

Strauss                “Roses from the South” Waltz
Strauss               Overture to Die Fledermaus
Strauss “Csárdás,” from Die Fledermaus
Strauss "Dieser Anstand, so manierlich" (The Watch Duet), from Die Fledermaus
Strauss               Perpetual Motion
Strauss               “Tritsch-Tratsch” Polka
Lehár                  Overture to The Merry Widow
Lehár "Da geh‘ ich zu Maxim," from The Merry Widow
Lehár Introduction, Dance, and “Vilja,” from The Merry Widow
Lehár “Lippen schweigen,” from The Merry Widow
Strauss               “On the Beautiful Blue Danube” Waltz


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