

# Season 2014-2015

**Thursday, January 8, at 8:00**

**Friday, January 9, at 2:00**

**Saturday, January 10, at 8:00**

## The Philadelphia Orchestra

**Christoph Eschenbach** Conductor

**Jennifer Montone** Horn

**Strauss** *Till Eulenspiegel's Merry Pranks*, Op. 28

**Strauss** Horn Concerto No. 1 in E-flat major, Op. 11

I. Allegro—

II. Andante—

III. Allegro

### Intermission

**Schumann** Symphony No. 2 in C major, Op. 61

I. Sostenuto assai—Allegro ma non troppo

II. Scherzo: Allegro vivace

III. Adagio espressivo

IV. Allegro molto vivace

This program runs approximately 1 hour, 45 minutes.

Philadelphia Orchestra concerts are broadcast on WRTI 90.1 FM on Sunday afternoons at 1 PM. Visit [www.wrti.org](http://www.wrti.org) to listen live or for more details.

# The Philadelphia Orchestra



The Philadelphia Orchestra is one of the preeminent orchestras in the world, renowned for its distinctive sound, desired for its keen ability to capture the hearts and imaginations of audiences, and admired for a legacy of imagination and innovation on and off the concert stage. The Orchestra is transforming its rich tradition of achievement, sustaining the highest level of artistic quality, but also challenging—and exceeding—that level by creating powerful musical experiences for audiences at home and around the world.

Music Director Yannick Nézet-Séguin's highly collaborative style, deeply-rooted musical curiosity, and boundless enthusiasm, paired with a fresh approach to orchestral programming, have been heralded by critics and audiences alike since his inaugural season in 2012. Under his leadership the Orchestra returned to recording with a celebrated CD of Stravinsky's *The Rite of Spring* and Leopold Stokowski transcriptions on the Deutsche Grammophon label, continuing its history of recording success. The Orchestra also reaches thousands of listeners on the radio with weekly Sunday afternoon broadcasts on WRTI-FM.

Philadelphia is home, and the Orchestra nurtures an important relationship with patrons who support the main season at the Kimmel Center, and also with those who enjoy the Orchestra's other area performances at the Mann Center, Penn's Landing, and other cultural, civic, and learning venues. The Orchestra maintains a strong commitment to collaborations with cultural and community organizations on a regional and national level.

Through concerts, tours, residencies, presentations, and recordings, the Orchestra is a global ambassador for Philadelphia and for the United States. Having been the first American orchestra to perform in China, in 1973 at the request of President Nixon, today The Philadelphia Orchestra boasts a new partnership with the National Centre for the Performing Arts in Beijing. The ensemble annually performs at Carnegie Hall and the Kennedy Center while also enjoying summer residencies in Saratoga Springs, New York, and Vail, Colorado.

The Philadelphia Orchestra has a decades-long tradition of presenting learning and community engagement opportunities for listeners of all ages. The Orchestra's recent initiative, the Fabulous Philadelphians Offstage, Philly Style!, has taken musicians off the traditional concert stage and into the community, including highly-successful Pop-Up concerts, PlayINs, SingINs, and ConductINs. The Orchestra's musicians, in their own dedicated roles as teachers, coaches, and mentors, serve a key role in growing young musician talent and a love of classical music, nurturing and celebrating the wealth of musicianship in the Philadelphia region. For more information on The Philadelphia Orchestra, please visit [www.philorch.org](http://www.philorch.org).

# Music Director

Chris Lee



Music Director **Yannick Nézet-Séguin** continues his inspired leadership of The Philadelphia Orchestra, which began in the fall of 2012. His highly collaborative style, deeply rooted musical curiosity, and boundless enthusiasm, paired with a fresh approach to orchestral programming, have been heralded by critics and audiences alike. The *New York Times* has called Nézet-Séguin “phenomenal,” adding that under his baton, “the ensemble, famous for its glowing strings and homogenous richness, has never sounded better.” He has taken the Orchestra to new musical heights. Highlights of his third season as music director include an Art of the Pipe Organ festival; the 40/40 Project, in which 40 great compositions that haven’t been heard on subscription concerts in at least 40 years will be performed; and Bernstein’s *MASS*, the pinnacle of the Orchestra’s five-season requiem cycle.

Yannick has established himself as a musical leader of the highest caliber and one of the most exciting talents of his generation. He has been music director of the Rotterdam Philharmonic since 2008 and artistic director and principal conductor of Montreal’s Orchestre Métropolitain since 2000. He also continues to enjoy a close relationship with the London Philharmonic, of which he was principal guest conductor. He has made wildly successful appearances with the world’s most revered ensembles, and he has conducted critically acclaimed performances at many of the leading opera houses.

Yannick Nézet-Séguin and Deutsche Grammophon (DG) enjoy a long-term collaboration. Under his leadership The Philadelphia Orchestra returned to recording with a CD on that label of Stravinsky’s *The Rite of Spring* and Leopold Stokowski transcriptions. He continues a fruitful recording relationship with the Rotterdam Philharmonic on DG, EMI Classics, and BIS Records; the London Philharmonic and Choir for the LPO label; and the Orchestre Métropolitain for ATMA Classique.

A native of Montreal, Yannick Nézet-Séguin studied at that city’s Conservatory of Music and continued lessons with renowned conductor Carlo Maria Giulini and with Joseph Flummerfelt at Westminster Choir College. Among Yannick’s honors are an appointment as Companion of the Order of Canada, one of the country’s highest civilian honors; a Royal Philharmonic Society Award; Canada’s National Arts Centre Award; the Prix Denise-Pelletier, the highest distinction for the arts in Quebec; and honorary doctorates from the University of Quebec in Montreal and the Curtis Institute of Music in Philadelphia.

To read Yannick’s full bio, please visit [www.philorch.org/conductor](http://www.philorch.org/conductor).

# Conductor



Eric Brissaud

**Christoph Eschenbach** served as music director of The Philadelphia Orchestra from 2003 to 2008. He made his Orchestra debut as a pianist in 1973 and first conducted the ensemble in 1989. In 2010 he began his tenure as music director of the National Symphony as well as music director of the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts in Washington, D.C. Since his appointment in 2008 he has played a key role in planning future seasons, international festivals, and special projects for these two prestigious institutions, including leading the orchestra on tours in South America, Europe, and Oman. Mr. Eschenbach and the National Symphony have also performed together at Carnegie Hall.

A prolific recording artist, Mr. Eschenbach has an impressive discography as both a conductor and a pianist on a number of prominent labels. His first recording with the National Symphony, *Remembering JFK*, was released in 2011 on the Ondine label. He has recorded with The Philadelphia Orchestra (Ondine), the Orchestre de Paris (Ondine and Deutsche Grammophon), the London Philharmonic (EMI/LPO Live), the London Symphony (DG/BMG), the Vienna Philharmonic (Decca), and the NDR Symphony (BMG/Sony and Warner), among others. Recording awards include *BBC Magazine's* Disc of the Month, *Gramophone's* Editors' Choice, and the German Record Critics' Award. His Ondine recording of the music of Kaija Saariaho with the Orchestre de Paris and soprano Karita Mattila won the 2009 MIDEM Classical Award in Contemporary Music. Of particular note is his recording and filming of the full cycle of Mahler symphonies with the Orchestre de Paris, available on his web site for free streaming.

Mentored by George Szell and Herbert von Karajan, Mr. Eschenbach has enjoyed a career that has also included music directorships of the Orchestre de Paris (2000–10), the Ravinia Festival (1994–2003), the NDR Symphony (1998–2004), and the Houston Symphony (1988–99). He has served as artistic director of the Schleswig-Holstein Music Festival (1999–2002) and as chief conductor and artistic director of the Tonhalle Orchestra (1982–86). His many honors include the Légion d'Honneur, the German Order of Merit, and the Leonard Bernstein Award from the Pacific Music Festival, where he was co-artistic director from 1992 to 1998.

# Soloist



**Jennifer Montone** joined The Philadelphia Orchestra as principal horn in 2006. She is on the faculty at the Curtis Institute of Music, the Juilliard School, and Temple University. Previously the principal horn of the St. Louis Symphony and associate principal horn of the Dallas Symphony, Ms. Montone was an adjunct professor at Southern Methodist University and performer/faculty at the Aspen Music Festival and School. Prior to her tenure in Dallas she was third horn of the New Jersey Symphony and performed regularly with the Metropolitan Opera Orchestra, the Orpheus Chamber Orchestra, and the New York Philharmonic. Ms. Montone has performed as a soloist with The Philadelphia and Curtis orchestras; the St. Louis, Dallas, National, and Polish National Radio symphonies; and the Warsaw National Philharmonic, among others. Her recording of the Penderecki Horn Concerto ("Winterreise") with the Warsaw National Philharmonic won a 2013 Grammy Award in the category of "Best Classical Compendium." Other recordings include *Still Falls the Rain*—works of Benjamin Britten—and a soon to be released solo CD.

As a chamber musician Ms. Montone has performed with the Bay Chamber Concerts, the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center, the La Jolla Chamber Music Festival, the Santa Fe Chamber Music festival, the Bellingham Music Festival, the Spoleto (Italy) Chamber Music Festival, and the Marlboro Music Festival.

In May 2006 Ms. Montone was awarded the prestigious Avery Fisher Career Grant. She is also the winner of the 1996 Paxman Young Horn Player of the Year Award in London and the 1998 Philadelphia Concerto Soloists Competition. She was a fellow in the Tanglewood Music Festival Orchestra in 1996 and 1997. She is a graduate of the Juilliard School, where she studied with Julie Landsman, principal horn of the Metropolitan Opera. A native of northern Virginia, Ms. Montone studied with Edwin Thayer, principal horn of the National Symphony, as a fellow in the Symphony's Youth Fellowship Program. She regularly appears as a featured artist at International Horn Society workshops and International Women's Brass conferences.

# Framing the Program

## Parallel Events

**1846**

**Schumann**

Symphony

No. 2

**Music**

Berlioz

*The Damnation*

*of Faust*

**Literature**

Dostoyevsky

*Poor Folk*

**Art**

Cole

*Catskill*

*Landscape*

**History**

Potato famine in

Ireland

With this concert the Philadelphians conclude a two-year celebration marking the 150th anniversary of Richard Strauss's birth. The great German composer conducted the Orchestra many times during his two trips to America (1904 and 1921) and on both presented the delightful *Till Eulenspiegel's Merry Pranks*, which opens the concert today.

Strauss's father was a virtuoso horn player, principal in the Munich Court Orchestra, and the composer clearly loved the instrument. This affinity is evident from many passages in his orchestral works (such as the tricky solo at the start of *Till Eulenspiegel*) and in two horn concertos that frame his career. Today we hear the first of them, composed at the age of 18.

**1882**

**Strauss**

Horn Concerto

No. 1

**Music**

Brahms

String Quintet

No. 1

**Literature**

Twain

*The Prince and*

*the Pauper*

**Art**

Manet

*A Bar at the*

*Folies-Bergère*

**History**

Jesse James

killed

Robert Schumann's Second Symphony in C major is actually the third of his four mature symphonies and was in large part inspired by Schubert's "Great" Symphony in the same key. Schumann was the one who first discovered that magnificent work while visiting Vienna nearly a decade after Schubert's death and he arranged for its premiere, which his friend Felix Mendelssohn conducted in Leipzig in 1839. Six years later Schumann heard further performances, which prompted him to write a new symphony himself. Although he said the piece reminded him of a "dark time" in his life, something that may be sensed in the deeply felt slow movement, most of work is celebratory, including a dazzling second movement scherzo.

**1894**

**Strauss**

*Till*

*Eulenspiegel's*

*Merry Pranks*

**Music**

Debussy

*Prelude to the*

*Afternoon of a*

*Faun*

**Literature**

Kipling

*The Jungle Book*

**Art**

Munch

*Puberty*

**History**

Nicholas II

becomes czar

# The Music

## *Till Eulenspiegel's Merry Pranks*



**Richard Strauss**  
**Born in Munich, June 11,**  
**1864**  
**Died in Garmisch-**  
**Partenkirchen,**  
**September 8, 1949**

Like most young composers honing their art, Richard Strauss began his long career writing relatively conventional music. Raised in a musical household—his father played principal French horn in the Munich Court Orchestra—Strauss's early compositions were firmly anchored in traditional forms. As a precocious teenager he wrote two symphonies that were allied, according to his father's arch-conservative tastes, with such "Classical Romantics" as Schumann, Mendelssohn, and Brahms. Within the fraught musical politics of the time the allegiances of the Strauss family were clear, as was the enemy: the program music of the New German School, epitomized by Berlioz, Liszt, and Wagner.

Then came his "conversion," as Strauss would later call it. The composer and musician Alexander Ritter, 31 years Strauss's senior and someone who had known both Liszt and Wagner, became like a second father, as well as an artistic mentor. Largely under Ritter's influence, Strauss turned to the Lisztian domain of the "Symphonic Poem," or what he would call "Tone Poems." In certain respects these program works, usually in one extended orchestral movement, are descendants of the concert overtures of Beethoven and Mendelssohn. The common starting point is an extra-musical source—a poem, novel, play, legend, historical event, natural phenomenon, philosophical idea, or some other inspiration—that is used as the basis for musical illustration or reflection.

**The Path to *Till Eulenspiegel*** Strauss cautiously moved in the direction of program music with a four-movement descriptive symphony called *Aus Italien* (Out of Italy; 1886). For his first tone poem, the 23-year-old composer turned to Shakespeare's *Macbeth* and next wrote *Don Juan* (1887) and *Death and Transfiguration* (1889). With these works he had found his mature voice and they marked an important stage in early musical Modernism.

Strauss next turned his attention to opera, writing the neo-Wagnerian *Guntram*, which proved an utter failure at its premiere in May 1894. This experience most likely discouraged him from continuing work on another dramatic project for which he had been writing a libretto, namely a "folk opera" about the popular 14th-century

*Richard Strauss composed Till Eulenspiegel's Merry Pranks from 1894 to 1895.*

*Strauss conducted The Philadelphia Orchestra in its first performance of Till Eulenspiegel, in March 1904. He returned to Philadelphia in 1921 for another performance of the piece. Most recently on subscription concerts, the Orchestra played it under Kurt Masur's baton, in April 2009.*

*The Orchestra recorded the work four times: with Eugene Ormandy in 1952 and 1963 for CBS; with Ormandy in 1974 for RCA; and with Wolfgang Sawallisch in 1993 for EMI.*

*The work is scored for piccolo, three flutes, three oboes, English horn, three clarinets, bass clarinet, three bassoons, contrabassoon, four horns, three trumpets, three trombones, tuba, timpani, percussion (bass drum, cymbals, ratchet, snare drum, triangle), and strings.*

*Performance time is approximately 15 minutes.*

character Till Eulenspiegel. "I have already put together a very nice scenario," Strauss wrote in a letter, "although the figure of Master Till Eulenspiegel does not quite appear before my eyes. The book of folk tales outlines only a rogue, with too superficial a dramatic personality. The developing of his character along lines more profound than his trait of contempt for humanity also presents considerable difficulties." Strauss decided to use the character instead for his fourth tone poem, which he began composing in 1894 and finished in May of the next year. Franz Wüllner conducted the premiere in Cologne in November 1895. The work immediately became a popular favorite, displaying a humorous side of the composer not always apparent in his other orchestral works.

**A Closer Look** Strauss was reluctant to spell out the program in detail—he wrote a brief telegram to Wüllner, who had asked for background about the piece: "Analysis impossible for me. All wit spent in notes." But over time he divulged more information, identifying two prominent themes associated with the title character "that run through the whole piece in the most varied disguises and moods and situations until the catastrophe where he is hanged after the death sentence has been spoken over him." The full title of the work is *Till Eulenspiegel's Merry Pranks, After the Old Rogue's Tale, Set in Rondeau Form for Large Orchestra*.

The opening two ideas come in parts—first a lilting string theme that Strauss said was meant to convey "Once upon a time there was a roguish jester," followed by a horn solo, one of the most famous themes in all orchestral music, that identifies the prankster "whose name was Till Eulenspiegel." A third theme associated with Till is mockingly put forth by the clarinet ("He is a wicked goblin"). Till goes through various adventures, some of which Strauss specifically identified: He rides on horseback through a market crowded with women (represented by clarinets sweeping up); disguises himself as a minister and "oozes unction and morality," but because of his mockery "feels a sudden horror of his end." The gallant hero comes across a group of pretty girls and woos them (with a lilting version of the initial horn call); he debates with pompous philistine philosophers (four bassoons and bass clarinet). At the climax of the piece he is put on trial—the death sentence is pronounced, he "nonchalantly whistles" (the clarinet theme again), and is executed. The opening "once upon a time" music returns to conclude this "old rogue's tale."

—Christopher H. Gibbs



# The Music

## Horn Concerto No. 1



**Richard Strauss**

"My mother tells of my earliest childhood that I used to react with a smile to the sound of the horn and with loud crying to the sound of a violin." So starts Richard Strauss's brief essay "Recollections of My Youth and Years of Apprenticeship." There certainly was a lot of horn playing around for him to hear growing up: His father, Franz Strauss, was the principal hornist of the Munich Court Orchestra for 45 years.

Such were the beginnings of Strauss's love affair with the instrument, which resulted not only in two horn concertos framing the ends of his long career, but also in many marvelous passages scattered throughout his tone poems and operas. His late works in particular often end with what might be viewed as tributes to his father—brief horn solos conclude his final opera, *Capriccio*, as well the *Four Last Songs*.

**A Concerto for His Father** Music flourished in the Strauss household during the composer's youth. He studied piano and violin and would play at home with his father and other musicians from the Court Orchestra, instrumentalists for whom Strauss composed some of his first pieces. He started writing orchestral music at age eight and produced a Romance for Clarinet and Orchestra at 15. His Violin Concerto followed three years later.

Soon after he was ready to tackle his father's instrument, producing the Horn Concerto we hear today. It proved an altogether more ambitious and successful concerto than the one for violin and like the earlier piece received its first performance with piano accompaniment rather than with full orchestra. Franz Strauss was not the soloist, ceding to one of his students, Bruno Hoyer, who later succeeded him as principal in the Court Orchestra. In any case, Strauss's sister later recalled that their father struggled at home playing the fiendishly difficult work and that he never attempted it in public.

The Concerto was soon taken up by the distinguished conductor Hans von Bülow, Franz Liszt's former son-in-law and one of the most powerful musical figures of the day—he premiered several Wagner operas and Brahms compositions. Bülow saw in the young Strauss a

*Strauss composed his First Horn Concerto from 1882 to 1883.*

*The first Philadelphia Orchestra performance of the piece was on a Pops Concert in February 1913, with former Principal Horn Anton Horner and Leopold Stokowski on the podium. The first subscription appearance was in November 1945, with former Principal Horn James Chambers and Eugene Ormandy. Most recently on subscription it was performed in November 1981 with Barry Tuckwell as soloist and Klaus Tennstedt.*

*Former Principal Horn Mason Jones recorded the Concerto with the Orchestra and Ormandy in 1966 for CBS.*

*In addition to the solo horn, the score calls for pairs of flutes, oboes, clarinets, bassoons, horns, and trumpets, timpani, and strings.*

*The work runs approximately 16 minutes in performance.*

brilliant if untamed talent and said he considered him the “most original composer since Brahms.” He championed the teenager’s cause in prominent commissions and premieres, including the first orchestral performance, in March 1885, of the Horn Concerto with his elite Meiningen Orchestra and its principal, Gustav Leinhos. Bülow also supported Strauss’s burgeoning conducting career and recommended him as deputy assistant conductor in Meiningen, in preference to Gustav Mahler and Felix Weingartner.

**A Closer Look** The three movements of the Concerto unfold without pause and are linked by shared thematic ideas. Most notable is an ascending motif outlining a simple triad that opens the principal theme of the first movement, then is ingeniously transformed to become the accompaniment to the lyrical horn melody in the middle one, and is ultimately made part of the merry rondo finale. The overall layout of the Concerto functions on two levels, both as three separate fast, slow, fast movements, but also as an overall sonata form design with the opening *Allegro* serving as the exposition, the *Andante* as the development, and the concluding *Allegro* as the recapitulation. This is a structure that Schubert, Mendelssohn, and Liszt had pioneered and that would later serve Strauss well in his vast single-movement tone poems.

After a single loud chord to kick off the Concerto (***Allegro***), an energetic theme is stated by the solo horn without any accompaniment. Much of the framing movements of the piece alternate between sections for the orchestra alone (some passages already sounding quintessentially Straussian even at this early stage) and parts where the orchestra gets out of the way and the soloist shines, as in the long-breathed second theme. A fanfare-like motif, making use of the rising triad that opens the work, is magically transformed in slow motion to form a bridge to the next movement (***Andante***), now serving as a string accompaniment for another long and lyrical horn melody on top. This middle movement is itself in three parts (ABA) featuring a louder central section with a repeated note accompaniment. The fanfare motif leads again without pause to the Rondo finale (***Allegro***) and a sprightly theme for the soloist that eventually builds to a “con bravura” coda.

—Christopher H. Gibbs

# The Music

## Symphony No. 2



**Robert Schumann**  
**Born in Zwickau, Saxony,**  
**June 8, 1810**  
**Died in Endenich (near**  
**Bonn), July 29, 1856**

"For several days, there has been much trumpeting and drumming within me (trumpet in C). I don't know what will come of it." The result of the inner tumult that Robert Schumann reported to his friend and colleague Felix Mendelssohn, in a letter of September 1845, was a symphony: the third of the four he would complete, though it was published as Symphony No. 2 in C major, Op. 61, in 1847.

**Schubert as Catalyst** The principal catalyst for Schumann's return to symphonic composition in 1845 was almost surely a performance of Franz Schubert's Symphony in C major (D. 944) on December 9 of that year, with the Dresden orchestra under Ferdinand Hiller. Schumann's association with Schubert's "Great" C-major Symphony dated back to the winter of 1838-39, when, during a trip to Vienna, he was introduced to the practically forgotten work by Schubert's older brother, and quickly arranged for Mendelssohn to lead the Leipzig Gewandhaus Orchestra in the long overdue premiere. The newly excavated masterpiece had a lasting impact on Schumann, revealing to him that it was indeed possible to make an original contribution in a realm where Beethoven reigned supreme.

In his celebrated 1839 review of Schubert's Symphony, Schumann described the work in superlatives the likes of which he had never before bestowed on a piece of instrumental music: "Here, apart from the consummate mastery of compositional technique, we find life in every vein, the finest shades of coloring, expressive significance in every detail, and the all-pervasive Romanticism to which Schubert's other works have already accustomed us." In addition to marveling at the Symphony's "heavenly length," Schumann also praised Schubert's uncanny ability to "emulate the human voice in his treatment of the instruments." Schumann would adopt both qualities as articles of aesthetic faith in his own Symphony in C major, especially in the magnificent valedictory hymn that crowns the finale.

Although Schumann completed the sketches for the Second Symphony in just two weeks toward the end

of December 1845, he needed the better part of the following year to fill in the details. Indeed, he was still touching up the orchestration of the draft not long before the premiere, with the Leipzig Gewandhaus Orchestra under Mendelssohn's direction, on November 5, 1846. As indicated by several entries in Schumann's household account books, his labor on the Symphony was frequently interrupted by recurrent bouts of poor health. During the winter and spring months of 1846, Schumann made reference to severe headaches, fits of depression, anxiety attacks, and auditory disturbances.

**Memories of a Dark Time** As with so many of Schumann's compositions, the Second Symphony lends itself to interpretation as an essay in musical autobiography. Schumann himself encouraged a reading of this kind. In a note to the composer and critic J.C. Lobe written just after the repeat performance of the Symphony in Leipzig on November 16, 1846, he claimed that the new work "told a tale of many joys and sorrows." Schumann offered a more detailed account of the Symphony's personal connotations in a letter of April 1849 to D.G. Otten, founder of the Hamburg Musical Association: "I wrote the C-major Symphony in December 1845 while I was still half sick, and it seems to me that one can hear this in the music. Although I began to feel like myself while working on the last movement, I recovered totally only after completing the entire piece." Above all, Schumann confided to Otten, the Symphony reminded him of a "dark time," symbolized musically "by the melancholy bassoon in the Adagio."

While a composer's view of his own work obviously lays claim to a special sort of authority, Schumann's words do not do justice to the fundamentally affirmative character of his Second Symphony, which projects just about as much sorrow as most other symphonic compositions of comparable scope in a major key, which is to say, rather little. Even the melancholy mood of the Adagio is relatively short-lived, confined as it is to the deeply affective opening phrase and to fleeting shadows in a movement that strives for—and achieves—an overall quality of consolation. Heard in the context of the broader symphonic narrative, the somber hues of the Adagio are rather like passing storm clouds: ominous but quickly dispelled. In the final analysis, these darker tints serve as a foil to the brighter moods of the music that precedes and follows: the dignified jubilation of the first movement, the witty repartee between strings and winds in the Scherzo, and the serene, hymnic apotheosis of the finale.

The initial reaction to Schumann's Second Symphony was not entirely positive. According to reliable reports, the November 1846 premiere fell considerably short of the success that the composer had hoped for, despite concertmaster Ferdinand David's assiduous drilling of the Gewandhaus violins on the finger-twisting passagework in the Scherzo and the perilously high trills in the Adagio. Before long, however, the critics were making the expected obeisances, comparing Schumann's work to Mozart's "Jupiter" Symphony and Beethoven's Fifth.

**Schumann's "New Manner"** In their eagerness to situate the Second Symphony within the classical repertory, 19th-century journalists tended to overlook an inspirational source in the even more distant musical past: the art of J.S. Bach. The initial phase of work on the Symphony marked the culmination of a nearly year-long period during which Schumann was in the throes of what he called *Fugenpassion*—a veritable "fugal passion" that led both Schumanns, Robert and his wife, Clara, to undertake a self-designed course of contrapuntal study whose chief texts were Luigi Cherubini's esteemed counterpoint manual of 1835 and the fugues of Bach's *Well-Tempered Clavier*. The creative yield of this erudite pastime included Clara's Three Preludes and Fugues for piano (Op. 16)—some on themes by her husband—and Robert's Four Fugues for piano (Op. 72), Six Studies, in canonic form, for pedal-piano (Op. 56), and Six Fugues on the Name BACH for organ (Op. 60).

While this was not the first time (nor would it be the last) that Schumann had immersed himself in the mysteries of counterpoint, his exploration in the mid-1840s of the contrapuntal genres—not to mention the steady diet of Bach—had a particularly decisive impact on the subsequent direction of his compositional style. In a diary entry dating from these years, Schumann called attention to his adoption of a "completely new manner of composing" that ran parallel with his refresher course in counterpoint. Characterized by a more reflective approach to the invention and development of musical ideas, the "new manner" is much in evidence in the Second Symphony. At this stage of his career, Schumann no longer conceived the "musical idea" as an elemental motif—like the famous four-note motto of Beethoven's Fifth—but rather as a contrapuntal combination of two distinct melodic lines. The Second Symphony begins with an idea of precisely this kind: a solemn chorale-like melody, stated quietly by the horns, trumpets, and

*The Second Symphony was composed from 1845 to 1846.*

*Fritz Scheel conducted the first Philadelphia Orchestra performances of Schumann's Second Symphony, in February 1903. The work has appeared consistently throughout the years, most recently on subscription in May 2013, with Yannick Nézet-Séguin conducting.*

*The Philadelphians have recorded the work three times: in 1937 with Eugene Ormandy for RCA; in 1977 with James Levine for RCA; and in 2003 with Wolfgang Sawallisch on the Orchestra's own label.*

*Schumann scored the work for two flutes, two oboes, two clarinets, two bassoons, two horns, two trumpets, three trombones, timpani, and strings.*

*Performance time is approximately 40 minutes.*

trombones, and supported by a flowing counterpoint in the strings. Though presented simultaneously at the outset, these melodic strands are developed independently as the music unfolds, a process that Schumann invokes across the entire four-movement span of the Symphony.

While the “new manner” was inspired by an apparently old-fashioned compositional technique, it lives up to its name in the Second Symphony. Generally speaking, symphonic architecture tends toward one of two poles: the highly articulated designs of Haydn and Mozart, and the rhapsodic, continuously evolving forms of Liszt and Richard Strauss. Schumann's Second Symphony lies somewhere between these extremes, spinning out a web of ideas whose musical potential is not fully realized within the boundaries of a single movement. The initial motto in the brass (whose upward gesture has been linked by some listeners to the opening of Haydn's “London” Symphony, No. 104) puts in an unexpected appearance at the conclusion of the Scherzo, and comes in for spectacular treatment in the closing phase of the last movement. Similarly, the plaintive Adagio theme is swept up in the propulsive march rhythms of the first part of the finale. In a surprising turn of events, Schumann then transforms the march music into a gentler, more lyrical idea that he proceeds to combine with the first movement's brass chorale. The expressive aim of this contrapuntal tour de force is unmistakable: In fusing “secular” song and “sacred” chorale melody, Schumann demonstrated how it might be possible to transcend both spheres, the mundane and the religious, through the medium of the symphony orchestra. Therefore the message of the Symphony is an eminently “modern” one, and indeed, it was not lost on later composers as diverse in stylistic orientation as Bruckner, Dvořák, and Tchaikovsky. While deeply rooted in the musical past, Schumann's Second Symphony pointed confidently toward the future.

—John Daverio

# Musical Terms

## GENERAL TERMS

**Canon:** A device whereby an extended melody, stated in one part, is imitated strictly and in its entirety in one or more other parts

**Chorale:** A hymn tune of the German Protestant Church, or one similar in style. Chorale settings are vocal, instrumental, or both.

**Chord:** The simultaneous sounding of three or more tones

**Chromatic:** Relating to tones foreign to a given key (scale) or chord

**Coda:** A concluding section or passage added in order to confirm the impression of finality

**Contrapuntal:** See counterpoint

**Counterpoint:** A term that describes the combination of simultaneously sounding musical lines

**Dissonance:** A combination of two or more tones requiring resolution

**Fugue:** A piece of music in which a short melody is stated by one voice and then imitated by the other voices in succession, reappearing throughout the entire piece in all the voices at different places

**Op.:** Abbreviation for opus, a term used to indicate the chronological position of a composition within a composer's output. Opus

numbers are not always reliable because they are often applied in the order of publication rather than composition.

**Rondo:** A form frequently used in symphonies and concertos for the final movement. It consists of a main section that alternates with a variety of contrasting sections (A-B-A-C-A etc.).

**Scale:** The series of tones which form (a) any major or minor key or (b) the chromatic scale of successive semi-tonic steps

**Scherzo:** Literally "a joke." Usually the third movement of symphonies and quartets that was introduced by Beethoven to replace the minuet. The scherzo is followed by a gentler section called a trio, after which the scherzo is repeated. Its characteristics are a rapid tempo in triple time, vigorous rhythm, and humorous contrasts. Also an instrumental piece of a light, piquant, humorous character.

**Sonata form:** The form in which the first movements (and sometimes others) of symphonies are usually cast. The sections are exposition, development, and recapitulation, the last sometimes followed by a coda. The exposition

is the introduction of the musical ideas, which are then "developed." In the recapitulation, the exposition is repeated with modifications.

## Symphonic poem:

A type of 19th-century symphonic piece in one movement, which is based upon an extramusical idea, either poetic or descriptive

**Triad:** A three-tone chord composed of a given tone (the "root") with its third and fifth in ascending order in the scale

## THE SPEED OF MUSIC (Tempo)

**Adagio:** Leisurely, slow

**Allegro:** Bright, fast

**Andante:** Walking speed

**Espressivo:** With expression, with feeling

**Sostenuto:** Sustained

**Vivace:** Lively

## TEMPO MODIFIERS

**Assai:** Much

**Ma non troppo:** But not too much

**Molto:** Very

# January

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**Tchaikovsky** Symphony No. 5

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**Marc-André Hamelin** Piano

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**Turnage** Piano Concerto (North American premiere)

**Rachmaninoff** Symphony No. 2

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