

Season 2018-2019

Thursday, April 4, at 7:30

Friday, April 5, at 2:00

Saturday, April 6, at 8:00

The Philadelphia Orchestra

Yannick Nézet-Séguin Conductor

Brian Sanders's JUNK

Julia Higdon Juliet

Teddy Fatscher Romeo

Darren Dash Robinson Mercutio/
Prince Escalus

Jared Cutler Benvolio/Count Paris

Prokofiev Selections from *Romeo and Juliet*, Op. 64

Act I

Introduction

Interlude

Masks

Dance of the Knights

Juliet's Variation

Tybalt Recognizes Romeo

Gavotte (The Departure of the Guests)

The Balcony Scene

Romeo's Variation

Love Dance

Act II

Folk Dance

Romeo at Friar Laurence's Cell

Juliet at Friar Laurence's Cell

The People's Merry-Making Continues

Tybalt Encounters Mercutio

Tybalt Fights with Mercutio

The Death of Mercutio

Romeo Decides to Avenge Mercutio's Death

Finale of Act II

Intermission

Act III

Introduction

Farewell Before Parting

Juliet Refuses to Marry Paris

Juliet Alone

Interlude

At Friar Laurence's Cell

Interlude

Juliet Alone

Dance of the Girls with Lilies

At Juliet's Bedside

Act IV

Juliet's Funeral

The Death of Juliet

Additional cast:

Aaron Mitchell

Frank Leone

Kyle Yackoski

Kelly Trevlyn

Amelia Estrada

Briannon Holstein

Jess Adams

This program runs approximately 2 hours, 5 minutes.

These concerts are part of the Fred J. Cooper Memorial Organ Experience, supported through a generous grant from the **Wyncote Foundation**.

These concerts are made possible, in part, through income from the **Allison Vulgamore Legacy Endowment Fund**.

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The April 6 concert is sponsored by the

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The Philadelphia Orchestra

Yannick Nézet-Séguin Music Director



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The Philadelphia Orchestra

Jeffrey Griffin



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 inspiring the future and 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 connection to the Orchestra's musicians has been praised by both concertgoers and critics since his inaugural season in 2012. Under his leadership the Orchestra returned to recording, with four celebrated CDs on the prestigious Deutsche Grammophon label, continuing its history of recording success. The Orchestra also reaches thousands of listeners on the radio with weekly broadcasts on WRTI-FM and SiriusXM.

Philadelphia is home and the Orchestra continues to discover new and inventive ways to nurture its relationship with its loyal patrons at its home in the Kimmel Center, and also with those who enjoy the Orchestra's 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, all of which create greater access and engagement with classical music as an art form.

The Philadelphia Orchestra serves as a catalyst for cultural activity across Philadelphia's many communities, building an offstage presence as strong as its onstage one. With Nézet-Séguin, a dedicated body of musicians, and one of the nation's richest arts ecosystems, the Orchestra has launched its **HEAR** initiative, a portfolio of integrated initiatives that promotes **H**ealth, champions music **E**ducation, eliminates barriers to **A**ccessing the

orchestra, and maximizes impact through **R**esearch. The Orchestra's award-winning Collaborative Learning programs engage over 50,000 students, families, and community members through programs such as PlayINs, side-by-sides, PopUP concerts, free Neighborhood Concerts, School Concerts, and residency work in Philadelphia and abroad.

Through concerts, tours, residencies, presentations, and recordings, the Orchestra is a global cultural ambassador for Philadelphia and for the US. Having been the first American orchestra to perform in the People's Republic of China, in 1973 at the request of President Nixon, the ensemble today boasts five-year partnerships with Beijing's National Centre for the Performing Arts and the Shanghai Media Group. In 2018 the Orchestra traveled to Europe and Israel. The Orchestra annually performs at Carnegie Hall while also enjoying summer residencies in Saratoga Springs and Vail. For more information on The Philadelphia Orchestra, please visit www.philorch.org.

Music Director

Chris Lee



Music Director **Yannick Nézet-Séguin** will lead The Philadelphia Orchestra through at least the 2025-26 season, an extraordinary and significant long-term commitment. Additionally, he became the third music director of the Metropolitan Opera, beginning with the 2018-19 season. Yannick, who holds the Walter and Leonore Annenberg Chair, is an inspired leader of The Philadelphia Orchestra. His intensely 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 him “phenomenal,” adding that under his baton, “the ensemble, famous for its glowing strings and homogenous richness, has never sounded better.”

Yannick has established himself as a musical leader of the highest caliber and one of the most thrilling talents of his generation. He has been artistic director and principal conductor of Montreal’s Orchestre Métropolitain since 2000, and in summer 2017 he became an honorary member of the Chamber Orchestra of Europe. He was music director of the Rotterdam Philharmonic from 2008 to 2018 (he is now honorary conductor) and was principal guest conductor of the London Philharmonic from 2008 to 2014. He has made wildly successful appearances with the world’s most revered ensembles and has conducted critically acclaimed performances at many of the leading opera houses.

Yannick signed an exclusive recording contract with Deutsche Grammophon (DG) in May 2018. Under his leadership The Philadelphia Orchestra returned to recording with four CDs on that label. His upcoming recordings will include projects with The Philadelphia Orchestra, the Metropolitan Opera, the Chamber Orchestra of Europe, and the Orchestre Métropolitain, with which he will also continue to record for ATMA Classique. Additionally, he has recorded with the Rotterdam Philharmonic on DG, EMI Classics, and BIS Records, and the London Philharmonic for the LPO label.

A native of Montreal, Yannick studied piano, conducting, composition, and chamber music at Montreal’s Conservatory of Music and continued his studies with renowned conductor Carlo Maria Giulini; he also studied choral conducting with Joseph Flummerfelt at Westminster Choir College. Among Yannick’s honors are an appointment as Companion of the Order of Canada; an Officer of the Order of Montreal; *Musical America’s* 2016 Artist of the Year; the Prix Denise-Pelletier; and honorary doctorates from the University of Quebec in Montreal, the Curtis Institute of Music, Westminster Choir College of Rider University, McGill University, and the University of Pennsylvania.

To read Yannick’s full bio, please visit philorch.org/conductor.

The Philadelphia Orchestra

Yannick Nézet-Séguin Music Director

Itzhak Perlman Performs One Night Only!

The Philadelphia Orchestra is pleased to welcome back four-time Emmy Award- and 16-time Grammy Award-winning violinist **Itzhak Perlman** for a special one-night-only concert, conducted by **Marin Alsop**.



April 9 7:30 PM

Featuring works from famous film scores by **John Williams** (*Far and Away*, *Sabrina*, and *Schindler's List*) and others arranged by **Williams** (*Casablanca* and *The Adventures of Robin Hood*), this performance is not to be missed! Order your tickets today before they sell out.

Don't miss this unique event!

Itzhak Perlman's appearance is made possible in part by a gift from Joan N. Stern, in memory of Clarence and Diana Stern.

The musicians of The Philadelphia Orchestra have graciously donated their services for this concert.

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Photo: Lisa-Marie Mazzucco

Artists

JUNK was founded in 1992. Its mission is to open minds to new perspectives through the creation and production of unpredictable, provocative, physically intense, and accessible performance experiences. Blending traditional dance-theater, acrobatics, and circus arts, the company approaches the art form with a no-holds-barred perspective—never declaring any idea or object too old or unwanted. Hailed by critics as “Philly’s most imaginative perpetrator of dare-devilish physical theater,” JUNK strives to endlessly push the boundaries of the performance experience. Additionally, through its programming the organization implements the principles of creativity and mentorship to introduce young people to the arts and to encourage creative thought within the greater community. In the fall of 2019, JUNK will unveil a free virtual reality experience available throughout the area in partnership with the Free Library of Philadelphia. While JUNK works both nationally and internationally, it maintains its home season in Philadelphia each fall as a mainstay of the Fringe Festival.



Growing up in Princeton, New Jersey, as a brother of six, **Brian Sanders's** reckless fun was easily channeled once he found his love for gymnastics and classical dance. Inspired by shows such as Bob Fosse's *Dancin'* and *Pilobolus on Broadway*, he resolved to become a choreographer. He would eventually sustain an extensive working relationship with one of the founding members of *Pilobolus*, Moses Pendleton, who also founded MOMIX. Mr. Sanders went on to choreograph and perform with MOMIX for 10 years. He has since gone on to choreograph and perform nationally and internationally for dance, television, theater, and video. In Italy he choreographed two nationally televised mini-series and a touring show, *NOGRAVITY*, which was performed at the 2006 Paralympic Winter Games in Torino. In 1992 Mr. Sanders founded JUNK. His recent creative visions with the company include partnering with mural artist Meg Saligman to launch *Figmago* and choreographing Pennsylvania Ballet's *Chicken Bone Brain*. His next project, a new virtual reality and performance experience in collaboration with Drexel University, premieres at the 2019 Philadelphia Fringe Festival.

Artists

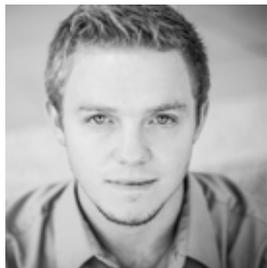


Julia Higdon (Juliet) was raised on the Eastern Shore of Maryland, where she first began her years of dance education. By the age of 12 she was receiving her formal training at various institutions, including the Kirov Academy of Ballet, the Rock School for Dance Education, American Ballet Theatre, and the North Carolina School of the Arts. In 2013, while enrolled at the University of the Arts, she was first introduced to Brian Sanders's work, and for the last five years, she has worked with his dance troupe JUNK. Offstage, Ms. Higdon educates many young, aspiring dancers in the hopes of carrying on the inspiration and traditions of the art form. In recent years, she has performed with, and managed, several Philadelphia-based dance companies, including JUNK, Archedream for Humankind, and Cardell Dance Theater. She is also a local entrepreneur, recently becoming owner of Dancewear on Broad.



Teddy Fatscher (Romeo) was born and raised in Massapequa, Long Island, New York. He attended Long Island High School for the Arts for his junior and senior years of high school. After graduating he moved to Philadelphia to further his studies in dance performance at the University of the Arts, which provided many opportunities to work with such world renowned artists as Roni Koresch, Douglas Becker, and Brian Sanders. He began working with Brian Sanders's JUNK during his freshman year. He has recently started his own company, Matter Movement Group.

Artists



Darren Dash Robinson (Mercutio/Prince Escalus) is excited to be making his East Coast debut with Brian Sanders's *JUNK*. He was most recently seen as Race in *Newsies* (Hale Centre Theatre) following a one-year contract as a dancer/singer for Universal Studios Japan. He next embarks on Royal Caribbean's Harmony of the Seas as a dancer/vocalist in *Grease*. He hails from rural Utah, where he developed a passion for physical activity and the great outdoors. His other hobbies include rock climbing, mountain biking, hiking, ultimate Frisbee, and piano. His other appearances at the Hale Centre Theatre include *Big Fish* and *The Little Mermaid* (Flotsam).



Jared Cutler (Benvolio/Count Paris) was born and raised in Buffalo, New York, where he received a Bachelor's of Fine Arts in Dance from the University at Buffalo. He was a leading performer of the Zodiacque Dance Company and director of *Dancer's Workshop 2015*. He has worked onboard Norwegian and Royal Caribbean cruises as a dancer/aerialist, fulfilling his passion of traveling the world. He recently held the role of a male ensemble member in a production of *Mamma Mia!* at the Kavinoky Theatre in Buffalo. He has also worked as a choreographer, teacher, and judge for several competitions, schools, and venues.

The Philadelphia Orchestra

Yannick Nézet-Séguin Music Director



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Framing the Program

Parallel Events

1935

Prokofiev

Romeo and Juliet

Music

Orff

Carmina burana

Literature

Steinbeck

Tortilla Flat

Art

Dalí

Giraffe on Fire

History

Roosevelt signs
Social Security

Act

Shakespeare's plays have inspired an untold number of composers and provided the basis for a vast range of pieces, from intimate songs to monumental symphonies and grand operas. The tragic tale of *Romeo and Juliet* alone led to a great *symphonie dramatique* from Berlioz, a beloved fantasy overture from Tchaikovsky, enduring operas by Bellini and Gounod, Leonard Bernstein's modernization in *West Side Story*, and many other pieces.

Sergei Prokofiev's brilliant ballet take of the "star-crossed lovers" premiered in 1938, two years after the composer returned to the Soviet Union following nearly two decades living in America and Western Europe. He made three different concert suites for independent orchestral performance and conductors have chosen favorite sections from its rich offerings. Today we hear an unusually generous selection from the entire ballet.

This performance will be highlighted by selected vignettes from the Philadelphia-based choreographer Brian Sanders. His compact, athletic choreography will bring an edgy perspective to Verizon Hall with performers utilizing aerial techniques.

The Philadelphia Orchestra is the only orchestra in the world with three weekly broadcasts on SiriusXM's *Symphony Hall*, Channel 76, on Mondays at 7 PM, Thursdays at 12 AM, and Saturdays at 6 PM.

The Music

Selections from *Romeo and Juliet*



Sergei Prokofiev
Born in Sontsovka,
Ukraine, April 23, 1891
Died in Moscow, March 5,
1953

Many Russian composers of the mid-20th century were compelled to write under the oppressive restrictions of Stalinism. But Sergei Prokofiev lived in the Soviet Union by choice, not by fate. After establishing a youthful reputation as the next Russian *enfant terrible*, then tempering that reputation with more orthodox works like the “Classical” Symphony and the First Violin Concerto, he decided to leave his native Russia in 1918. Even though his Modernism would have been welcomed at first by the post-Revolutionary Communist government, Prokofiev hoped to pursue a career in the West, moving first to the United States before settling in France. But like his compatriot Rachmaninoff, he felt alienated while abroad, separated from his friends and his culture. He gradually re-established ties with Moscow, and with assurances that he would be given special advantages and privileged treatment, moved back to the Soviet Union in early 1936.

Prokofiev was, however, no communist. Soviet apparatchiks were consistently suspicious of his experiences in the West. He was denounced in the 1948 “purge” at the Union of Soviet Composers, which also humiliated Shostakovich and Khachaturian. And Stalin personally intervened to complicate Prokofiev’s late career. His spirit broken, his health (which was never robust) worsened. It seemed somehow emblematic of his career that Prokofiev died on the same day as Stalin: March 5, 1953. It took almost a week for the news of this great composer’s death to be reported in the Russian newspapers, and even then it was hidden in the middle pages. He was always more highly regarded in the West than in his own country.

Just as Prokofiev’s career path followed an uneasy balance of Western and Russian experiences, his music also wavered between acerbic Modernism and the influence of traditional musical styles, both national and foreign. His compositional style blends the familiar with the abstract; he was able to avoid the cloying simplicity of much Soviet-produced music while largely eschewing the experiments of the Western avant-garde.

One constant thread in Prokofiev’s oeuvre was his interest in music for the stage, and his best-known works tend

to be inherently dramatic. From the operas *The Love for Three Oranges* and *War and Peace* to the melodrama of *Peter and the Wolf* and his most famous ballet, *Romeo and Juliet*, he excelled in creating musical narratives.

An Often-Told Story The commission for *Romeo and Juliet* began with an inquiry from the Kirov Ballet in 1934, while Prokofiev was still living abroad. This tale of “star-crossed lovers,” doomed to a tragic end, was already well known not just to theater audiences, of course, but also through its symphonic and operatic treatments over the previous centuries. A German *Singspiel* by Georg Benda in the 18th century paved the way for an 1830 opera by Vincenzo Bellini (*I Capuleti e i Montecchi*) and Charles Gounod’s beloved *Roméo et Juliette* from 1867. Hector Berlioz’s operatically-conceived “dramatic symphony” *Roméo et Juliette* was premiered in 1839, and numerous other composers in the 19th and early 20th centuries had translated the story’s impassioned drama and deep tragedy onto the opera and concert stages. But for Prokofiev, and the Kirov audiences, the most significant forerunner was undoubtedly Tchaikovsky’s *Romeo and Juliet* fantasy-overture for orchestra, which was premiered in its third and final version in 1886—well within the memories of older audience members and music administrators in 1934.

The Kirov’s director, Sergei Radlov, had worked with Prokofiev on *The Love for Three Oranges* some years earlier, and asked the composer in 1934 if he might be interested in writing a *Romeo and Juliet* ballet for the following season. It was an important development in Prokofiev’s career, as commissions from Moscow rather than the West would help facilitate the composer’s planned return to Russia. Radlov and Adrian Piotrovsky, the Kirov’s dramaturg, worked on a scenario for the ballet that adhered to the government-imposed precepts of the “*drambalet*,” which replaced the traditional virtuosic displays of classical ballet with pantomime and Russian folk-inspired dance movements intended to highlight a dramatic narrative. Ballet had been co-opted to support the Soviet ideals of unity and hard work. From the Kirov’s point of view, though, *Romeo and Juliet* seemed the perfect vehicle: Tchaikovsky-esque in subject matter, but open to a more “Soviet” treatment.

From Theater to Theater Prokofiev worked on this *Romeo and Juliet* project during 1935, fully aware that the Kirov’s audience was probably expecting something a little more traditional than what he had recently been

producing. But before the score was complete, the Kirov backed out of the deal, and the composer was compelled to find a new company. He approached the Moscow Bolshoi Theatre, which initially signed a contract (including a clause that Piotrovsky would stay on the project) but then also broke it, declaring the music “undanceable.”

The Bolshoi had also tried to give the work a happy ending, creating (according to the composer) “quite a fuss” among Russian Shakespeare scholars. Believing that it's easier for dancers to portray living characters than dead ones, the Bolshoi's choreographers had decided that at the conclusion Romeo should arrive one minute earlier to find Juliet still alive. Prokofiev composed music for this “happy ending,” but had second thoughts when a friend remarked that even this music was not especially joyful. Prokofiev later recalled, “After several conferences with the choreographers, it was found that the tragic ending could be expressed in the dance and in due time the music for that ending was written.” But the ballet was still not performed.

In 1937 the Leningrad School of Choreography also signed a production contract only to later renege. In the meantime, Piotrovsky had been denounced in *Pravda* as a “degenerate modernist” and the as-yet unproduced ballet had been tainted by that association. Despite these setbacks, Prokofiev revised the music into two orchestral suites and 10 piano pieces, which were well-received in 1936 and 1937. (Prokofiev also published a third orchestral suite in 1946.) He recorded some of the ballet's music in 1938 with the Moscow Philharmonic Orchestra.

Finally, a Ballet Premiere The world premiere of *Romeo and Juliet* as a fully staged ballet was given at the provincial theater in Brno, Czechoslovakia, in December 1938. (Prokofiev was denied permission to leave the Soviet Union and did not attend.) But it was the Soviet premiere by the Kirov in January 1940, with a significantly revised score, that established the work as a classic. The production was awarded a Stalin Prize, and the 1955 film version of the ballet was nominated for the Palm d'Or at the Cannes Film Festival. Now a staple in the ballet repertoire, Prokofiev's *Romeo and Juliet* has been choreographed by dozens of dance luminaires over the years, including Frederick Ashton, John Cranko, Kenneth MacMillan, and Rudolf Nureyev.

Outside of the concert hall and ballet theater, Prokofiev's music for *Romeo and Juliet* continues to find a wide

Romeo and Juliet was composed from 1935 to 1936.

Pierre Monteux was on the podium for the first Philadelphia Orchestra performances of music from Prokofiev's Romeo and Juliet, in January 1945 (in a performance of the First Suite). Most recently on subscription Stéphane Denève conducted excerpts in February 2016.

The Orchestra recorded several movements from the ballet in 1981 for EMI, under Riccardo Muti's direction.

The score for the excerpts heard today includes piccolo, two flutes, two oboes, English horn, two clarinets, bass clarinet, tenor saxophone, two bassoons, contrabassoon, six horns, three trumpets, cornet, three trombones, tuba, timpani, percussion (bass drum, cymbals, maracas, orchestra bells, snare drum, tambourine, triangle, xylophone), two harps, piano (doubling celesta), organ, and strings.

The excerpts on today's concert run approximately 90 minutes in performance.

audience through cinema and television, with the "Dance of the Knights" (titled "Montagues and Capulets" in the orchestral suites) emerging as a popular excerpt in contexts ranging from *The Simpsons* and *Caligula* to a long-running television commercial for perfume. Though this single excerpt provides a rather limited sampling of the full drama of Prokofiev's entire score, it serves as a familiar point of entry into this vivid and remarkable composition.

—Luke Howard

The Philadelphia Orchestra

Yannick Nézet-Séguin Music Director



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