

# LINCOLN CENTER'S 2017/18 GREAT PERFORMERS

## The Program

**Sunday, January 14, 2018, at 3:00 pm**

*Pre-concert lecture by Michael Beckerman at 1:45 pm in the Stanley H. Kaplan Penthouse*

### *Symphonic Masters*

## **Budapest Festival Orchestra**

**Iván Fischer**, *Conductor*

**Dénes Várjon**, *Piano*

### **BACH Orchestral Suite No. 2 in B minor (ca. 1738–39)**

Overture  
Rondeau  
Sarabande  
Bourrée I & II  
Polonaise & Double  
Menuet  
Badinerie  
GABRIELLA PIVON, *Flute*

### **BEETHOVEN Piano Concerto No. 3 in C minor (1800–03)**

Allegro con brio  
Largo  
Rondo: Allegro  
*Mr. Várjon will play Beethoven's cadenzas.*

### *Intermission*

### **RACHMANINOFF Symphony No. 2 in E minor (1906–07)**

Largo—Allegro moderato  
Allegro molto  
Adagio ma non troppo  
Allegro vivace

*Please make certain all your electronic devices are switched off.*

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These programs are supported by the Leon Levy Fund for Symphonic Masters.

Symphonic Masters is made possible in part by endowment support from UBS.

**This performance is made possible in part by the Josie Robertson Fund for Lincoln Center.**

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*Steinway Piano*

David Geffen Hall

Support is provided by Rita E. and Gustave M. Hauser, Audrey Love Charitable Foundation, Great Performers Circle, Chairman's Council, and Friends of Lincoln Center.

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## UPCOMING GREAT PERFORMERS EVENTS:

*Wednesday, January 24 at 7:30 pm in Alice Tully Hall*

### **Concerto Köln**

**Shunske Sato**, violin

*All-Vivaldi program*

The Four Seasons

Concerto for strings in G minor

Sinfonia al Santo Sepolcro

*Sunday, February 4 at 11:00 am in the Walter Reade Theater*

### **Trio con Brío Copenhagen**

HAYDN: Piano Trio No. 39 in G major ("Gypsy")

HANS ABRAHAMSEN: Serenade and Arabesque, from *Traumlieder*

SMETANA: Piano Trio in G minor

*Saturday, February 24 at 1:00 pm in the Walter Reade Theater*

### **FILM: Mstislav Rostropovich: The Indomitable Bow**

U.S. premiere of new biographical film on Mstislav Rostropovich, introduced by director Bruno Monsaingeon

*Tuesday, February 27 at 7:30 pm in Alice Tully Hall*

**Garrick Ohlsson**, piano

*All-Beethoven program*

Sonata No. 8 in C minor ("Pathétique")

Sonata No. 23 in F minor ("Appassionata")

Sonata No. 21 in C major ("Waldstein")

Sonata No. 14 in C-sharp minor ("Moonlight")

*Pre-concert lecture by Scott Burnham at 6:15 pm in the Stanley H. Kaplan Penthouse*

For tickets, call (212) 721-6500 or visit [LCGreatPerformers.org](http://LCGreatPerformers.org). Call the Lincoln Center Info Request Line at (212) 875-5766 to learn about program cancellations or to request a Great Performers brochure.

**Visit [LCGreatPerformers.org](http://LCGreatPerformers.org) for more information relating to this season's programs.**

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*We would like to remind you that the sound of coughing and rustling paper might distract the performers and your fellow audience members.*

*In consideration of the performing artists and members of the audience, those who must leave before the end of the performance are asked to do so between pieces. The taking of photographs and the use of recording equipment are not allowed in the building.*

# Snapshot

By David Wright

J.S. Bach was strongly drawn to the brilliant solo concertos of Vivaldi and other Italian masters. Today's program opens with Bach's Orchestral Suite No. 2, in form a standard assortment of French court dances, but in style a colorful concerto for the transverse (side-blown) flute, an instrument that was rather new on the scene in 1729. To complete the picture, the suite will be performed this afternoon on period instruments.

C minor was Beethoven's most dramatic key (think Fifth Symphony), and his Piano Concerto No. 3 in C minor made a powerful statement in the century-turning year of 1800. In this one work that looked both backward and forward, Beethoven established himself as a peer of the late Mozart and also introduced many features of the Romantic piano concerto, as later taken up so memorably by composers from Chopin to Rachmaninoff.

As it happens, Rachmaninoff, most famous for his Technicolor concertos, is the only composer on this afternoon's program *not* represented by a brilliant piece for soloist and orchestra. But his Symphony No. 2, a near contemporary of his Second Piano Concerto, offers generous helpings of his trademark dry wit and lush lyricism, plus the opportunity, with no piano around, to appreciate more fully his skill and imagination in writing for orchestra.

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## Timeframe

### ARTS

**ca. 1738–39**

**Bach's Orchestral Suite**

**No. 2**

Samuel Johnson publishes his first major work, *London: A Poem*.

**1800**

**Beethoven's Piano Concerto No. 3**

Library of Congress is founded in Washington, D.C.

**1906–07**

**Rachmaninoff's Symphony No. 2**

Gustav Klimt begins painting *The Kiss*.

### SCIENCE

**ca. 1738–39**

Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences is founded.

**1800**

William Herschel discovers infrared rays.

**1906–07**

Major earthquake devastates San Francisco.

### IN NEW YORK

**ca. 1738–39**

Organization of the first volunteer fire company

**1800**

Alexander Hamilton establishes *The New York Evening Post*.

**1906–07**

The Plaza Hotel opens on Central Park South.

# Notes on the Program

By David Wright

## **Orchestral Suite No. 2 in B minor, BWV 1067 (ca. 1738–39)**

JOHANN SEBASTIAN BACH

*Born March 21, 1685, in Eisenach, Germany*

*Died July 28, 1750, in Leipzig*

*Approximate length: 24 minutes*

Bach's four orchestral suites deliver elegant French dances with brilliant Italian *concertante* style, which contrasts a small group of solo instruments (or, in the Suite No. 2, a single solo instrument) with the larger orchestra. At this performance, in order to approach more closely the sound that Bach's original listeners would have heard, a small ensemble from the orchestra performs the Suite No. 2 on replica instruments of the Baroque period.

In 1729, Bach's audience in Leipzig consisted not of Frenchified noblemen and ladies but of sturdy burghers whose tastes in music ran to the virtuosic and the overtly emotional. The Suite No. 2 features an especially brilliant part for the transverse flute, which was then just coming into fashion as a solo instrument. The key of B minor—traditionally associated with saturnine, even gloomy, music—points toward deeper emotional realms.

The suite's *Overture* is French in form, but its B-minor gravity precludes any feeling of courtly splendor. The fugue section, on the other hand, has a spring in its step. This dramatic tension between dark tonality and vital rhythm is the emotional engine that drives the entire suite. The term *Rondeau* denotes not a dance but a musical form (ancestor of the Classical rondo) in which a recurring tune alternates with contrasting episodes. A contemporary writer, Johann Gottfried Walther, called the sarabande "a grave melody particularly popular and common among the Spaniards." Bach moves this *Sarabande* along with less ornament and at a faster clip than is typical for the genre.

Excitement picks up in *Bourrée I*, where layering the parts in close imitation sends the music tumbling pell-mell. The flute takes the lead in the chattering *Bourrée II*. Soloistic writing and metric ambiguity raise the temperature of the haughty *Polonaise*. In its pre-Chopin form, the polonaise was a stately processional dance with six slow beats to the bar. A *Double* is a type of variation in which the prevailing note values are halved, apparently "doubling" the tempo.

A formal *Menuet* is now brought in to restore order, but its sinewy character preserves much of the underlying tension of the suite. It is up to the final *Badinerie* to release that tension, which it does very satisfyingly, with the flute skipping and skittering over a propulsive beat. Although its title means "banter" or "trifling," this movement is still in B minor, which gives the repartee a tasty touch of sarcasm.

**Piano Concerto No. 3 in C minor, Op. 37 (1800–03)**

LUDWIG VAN BEETHOVEN

*Born December 16, 1770, in Bonn, Germany*

*Died March 26, 1827, in Vienna*

*Approximate length: 35 minutes*

Beethoven's conquest of the Classical style reached its climax, appropriately enough, in the century-closing year of 1800, with the composition of his First Symphony, Third Piano Concerto, and the six String Quartets, Op. 18. In each of these works, Beethoven completed his climb to full mastery of a form made famous by Haydn, Mozart, or both.

Even these works, however, are anything but conservative. The Third Piano Concerto, for example, contains many details rarely, if ever, heard in a piano concerto before: a big finish to the first movement, with the piano joining in; a long, song-like interlude in the slow movement with the piano serving merely as accompanist to a Romantic wind duet; a triumphant, sped-up coda in the tonic major key. Fans of piano concertos will recognize these as the standard trappings of the great 19th-century works in this category. In the process of mastering one of Mozart's great genres, Beethoven set a pattern for Tchaikovsky.

There is certainly weight and moment in the opening phrase of the first movement, and subsequent themes are expansively lyrical with some heroic muscle underneath. And so the contest is joined between C-minor "fate" and E-flat major "bravery and grace," a conflict in which the piano eagerly joins when its turn comes.

To open the slow movement with the piano alone, and in the remote key of E major (from C minor) at that, was a masterful touch that hasn't lost its power to surprise. In one stroke, Beethoven takes us to a place of intimate meditation, thousands of miles from the battlefield.

There is athletic vigor in the finale's rondo theme, but also more than a little anxiety, symbolized by an obsessive emphasis on the dissonant notes A-flat and B-natural. At last the clouds part and the rondo theme is transformed into a jubilant *Presto* dance in C major for the brilliant coda.

**Symphony No. 2 in E minor, Op. 27 (1906–07)**

SERGE RACHMANINOFF

*Born April 1, 1873, in Oneg, Russia*

*Died March 28, 1943, in Beverly Hills*

*Approximate length: 55 minutes*

By 1907, Rachmaninoff had put behind him the creative crisis that followed the fiasco of his Symphony No. 1. With the aid of a hypnotist-therapist practicing a form of “positive thinking,” he had broken a mental barrier, and out came his immortal Piano Concerto No. 2, many preludes for piano, and other works. Now he was in constant demand as both pianist and conductor, and his new problem with composing was not inhibition, but finding the time to do it. He sensed that the time had come to get back on the symphonic horse that had thrown him on his first attempt, so he went into seclusion, moving his entire family to Dresden while he sketched, completed, and orchestrated his Symphony No. 2. The resulting work gives us a generous dose of Rachmaninoff’s wit and lyricism from the peak of his Romantic earlier period.

Like the Fourth and Fifth Symphonies of Rachmaninoff’s mentor Tchaikovsky, this work begins with a slow introduction that presents a motto theme for the work, soon to be transformed into the theme of the *Allegro moderato* portion of the first movement, and destined to reappear in the later movements as well. The scherzo is where Rachmaninoff’s biting wit comes to the fore, leavened by some amorous lyricism. But the real love song is the *Adagio*, which begins with a classically lush Rachmaninoff theme for strings, which then alternates with a tender melody for clarinet. The dancing finale again looks back to Tchaikovsky for its high-spirited, carnival atmosphere, but there’s no mistaking who wrote that swooping tune for strings that positively drips with romance.

*David Wright, a music critic for New York Classical Review, has provided program notes for Lincoln Center since 1982.*

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# Meet the Artists



AKOS STILLER

## **Iván Fischer**

Iván Fischer is the founder and music director of the Budapest Festival Orchestra, as well as the music director of the Konzerthaus and Konzerthausorchester Berlin. In recent years he has also gained a reputation as a composer, with his works being performed in the U.S., the Netherlands, Belgium, Hungary, Germany, and Austria. In addition, he has directed a number of successful opera productions.

The BFO's international tours and a series of critically acclaimed records, released first by Philips Classics and later by Channel Classics, have contributed to Mr. Fischer's reputation as one of the world's leading music directors. He has guest-conducted the Berlin Philharmonic more than 10 times; every year he spends two weeks with Amsterdam's Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra; and he is a frequent guest conductor of pre-eminent U.S. symphonic orchestras, including the New York Philharmonic and the Cleveland Orchestra.

As music director, Mr. Fischer has led the Kent Opera and the Opéra National de Lyon, and he was principal conductor of the National Symphony Orchestra in Washington, D.C. Many of his recordings have been awarded prestigious international prizes. He studied piano, violin, and later the cello and composition in Budapest before continuing his education in Vienna, where he studied conducting under Hans Swarowsky.

Mr. Fischer is a founder of the Hungarian Mahler Society and patron of the British Kodály Academy. He has received the Golden Medal Award from the President of the Republic of Hungary, and the Crystal Award from the World Economic Forum for his services in promoting international cultural relations. The French government made him a Chevalier de L'Ordre des Arts et des Lettres, and in 2006 he was honored with the Kossuth Prize, Hungary's most prestigious arts award. In 2011 Mr. Fischer received the Royal Philharmonic Society Music Award, Hungary's

Prima Primissima Prize, and the Dutch Ovatie Prize. In 2013 he was accorded honorary membership to the Royal Academy of Music in London. In 2015 he was presented with the Abu Dhabi Festival Award.

## Dénes Várjon



PILVAX STUDIO

Pianist Dénes Várjon is one of today's most exciting and respected musical talents. His outstanding skills as a soloist, chamber musician, musical director of festivals, and acclaimed teacher make him a truly universal artist.

As a chamber musician, Mr. Várjon is frequently invited to perform in concert halls from Carnegie Hall to Vienna's Konzerthaus and London's Wigmore Hall. He also regularly takes part in major international festivals

including the Marlboro Music, Salzburg, and Edinburgh International festivals. His many recordings have been released by Naxos, Capriccio, ECM, and Hungaroton, and include Schumann's Piano Concerto with Heinz Holliger and WDR Sinfonieorchester Köln, as well as Beethoven's complete piano concertos alongside Concerto Budapest and András Keller (both in 2015).

Mr. Várjon graduated from the Franz Liszt Academy of Music in 1991, where he studied under Sándor Falvai, György Kurtág, and Ferenc Rados, and regularly took part in András Schiff's master classes. His career took off when he won the first prize at three prestigious piano competitions: the Hungarian Radio National Piano Competition, the National Leó Weiner Chamber Music Competition, and the Concours Géza Anda in Zurich. Mr. Várjon is a professor at the Franz Liszt Academy of Music and has received the Liszt, Veress Sándor, and Bartók-Pásztory awards in recognition of his achievements.

## Budapest Festival Orchestra

The Budapest Festival Orchestra is one of the major success stories of the international music scene. Since its founding in 1983 by Iván Fischer, its music director, and Zoltán Kocsis, the BFO has presented Hungarian audiences with such stars as Georg Solti—who was the orchestra's principal guest conductor until his death—as well as luminaries such as Yehudi Menuhin, Pinchas Zukerman, Gidon Kremer, Radu Lupu, András Schiff, and Richard Goode. Mr. Fischer also makes great efforts to invite young, internationally acclaimed musicians and singers to perform for domestic audiences.



The orchestra is a regular guest at the world's most important music venues and concert halls, including Lincoln Center and Carnegie Hall, Vienna's Musikverein, Amsterdam's Royal Concertgebouw, and London's Royal Albert Hall. The BFO has regularly been invited to international festivals including the Mostly Mozart Festival, Salzburger Festspiele, and the Edinburgh International Festival. The orchestra's famous Music Marathons and its own Bridging Europe Festival, focusing on the culture of a different nation every year, are organized in partnership with Műpa Budapest, one of Hungary's leading cultural institutions. Opera performances, directed by Mr. Fischer, are also staged as joint productions, including highly acclaimed renditions of *Don Giovanni* and *The Marriage of Figaro*, as well as *The Magic Flute*.

Since 2014, the BFO has been dedicating itself to Community Weeks of free concerts given in nursing homes, churches, abandoned synagogues, and child-care institutions. Its innovative concerts include Dancing on the Square, which promotes communal creativity, tolerance, and equal opportunities, and the autism-friendly Cocoa Concerts.

The BFO's recordings have twice won Gramophone Awards, and its rendition of Mahler's First Symphony was nominated for a 2013 Grammy. In 2014, the orchestra's recording of Mahler's Symphony No. 5 was awarded the Diapason d'Or and Italy's Toblacher Komponierhäuschen for Best Mahler Recording. In 2016 the Association of Music Critics of Argentina selected the BFO as best foreign symphonic orchestra.

## **Lincoln Center's Great Performers**

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Initiated in 1965, Lincoln Center's Great Performers series offers classical and contemporary music performances from the world's outstanding symphony orchestras, vocalists, chamber ensembles, and recitalists. One of the most significant music presentation series in the world, Great Performers runs from October through June with offerings in Lincoln Center's David Geffen Hall, Alice Tully Hall, Walter Reade Theater, and other performance spaces around New York City. From symphonic masterworks, lieder recitals, and Sunday morning coffee concerts to films and groundbreaking productions specially commissioned by Lincoln Center, Great Performers offers a rich spectrum of programming throughout the season.

## **Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts, Inc.**

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Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts (LCPA) serves three primary roles: presenter of artistic programming, national leader in arts and education and community relations, and manager of the Lincoln Center campus. A presenter of more than 3,000 free and ticketed events, performances, tours, and educational activities annually, LCPA offers 15 programs, series, and festivals including American Songbook, Great Performers, Lincoln Center Out of

## Great Performers

Doors, Midsummer Night Swing, the Mostly Mozart Festival, and the White Light Festival, as well as the Emmy Award-winning *Live From Lincoln Center*, which airs nationally on PBS. As manager of the Lincoln Center campus, LCPA provides support and services for the Lincoln Center complex and the 11 resident organizations. In addition, LCPA led a \$1.2 billion campus renovation, completed in October 2012.



MARCO BORGGREVE

## Budapest Festival Orchestra

Iván Fischer, *Music Director*

### Violin I

Raphael Christ  
Violetta Eckhardt  
Ágnes Bíró  
Mária Gál-Tamási  
Radu Hrib  
Erika Illési  
István Kádár  
Péter Kostyál  
Eszter Lesták Bedő \*  
Gyöngyvér Oláh  
Gábor Sipos  
Tímea Iván  
Csaba Czenke  
Emese Gulyás  
Bence Asztalos  
Balázs Bujtor

### Violin II

János Pilz \*  
Györgyi Czírók  
Tibor Gátay  
Krisztina Haják  
Zsófia Lezsák  
Levente Szabó  
Zsolt Szefcsik  
Antónia Bodó  
Noémi Molnár  
Anikó Mózes  
Zsuzsa Szlávik  
Erika Kovács  
Gabriella Nagy  
Pál Jász

### Viola

Ferenc Gábor  
Csaba Gálfi  
Ágnes Csoma \*  
Cecília Bodolai  
Zoltán Fekete  
Barna Juhász  
Nikoletta Reinhardt  
Nao Yamamoto  
Joshua Newburger  
László Bolyki  
György Fazekas  
István Polónyi

### Cello

Péter Szabó  
Lajos Dvorák  
Éva Eckhardt  
György Kertész  
Gabriella Liptai  
Kousay Mahdi \*  
Rita Sovány  
Orsolya Mód  
György Markó  
Theresa Schneider

### Bass

Zsolt Fejérvári  
Attila Martos \*  
Károly Kaszás  
Géza Lajhó  
László Lévai  
Csaba Sipos  
Rui Rodrigues  
Csaba Magyar

### Flute

Erika Sebők  
Anett Jófföldi  
Gabriella Pivon \*

### Oboe

Johannes Grosso  
Eva Neuszerova  
Marie-Noëlle Perreau

### Clarinet

Ákos Ács  
Roland Csalló  
Rudolf Sztika

### Bassoon

Dániel Tallián  
Sándor Patkós

### Horn

Zoltán Szőke  
András Szabó  
Dávid Bereczky  
Zsombor Nagy

### Trumpet

Zsolt Czeglédi  
Tamás Póti  
Zoltán Tóth

### Trombone

Balázs Szakszon  
Attila Sztán  
Csaba Wagner

### Tuba

József Bazsinka

### Timpani

Roland Dénes

### Continuo

Soma Dinyés,  
*Harpischord* \*

### Percussion

László Herboly  
István Kurcsák  
Ulf Breuer  
Nikolai Petersen

\* *Bach Orchestral Suite No. 2, on period instruments. János Pilz, Concertmaster*

**Budapest Festival Orchestra Administration**

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Stefan Englert, *Executive Director*

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Juliane Stansch, *Personal Assistant to Iván Fischer*

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