

SATURDAY, JANUARY 21, 2017

TuneUp!

WELCOME TO THE YOUNG PEOPLE'S CONCERTS™!

NEW
YORK
PHILHARMONIC

It's time for the third stop on our journey through the Ages of Music! The **Romantic Age** brings new sounds from a bigger orchestra, more personal emotions, and different styles of music coming from different countries. Antonín Dvořák became one of the most popular composers of his age, writing music steeped in his native Czech traditions. And yet his story is also a New York story. He spent three years in New York, three years that changed American music. What did Dvořák think about American music, and where to find it? How did he portray his impressions of America in his Symphony No. 9, subtitled *From the New World*? It was premiered by the New York Philharmonic in 1893. We'll rediscover this symphony today as we travel back in time. Let's find out about Dvořák's New World!

THE PROGRAM

ANTONÍN DVOŘÁK Selections from Symphony No. 9, *From the New World*

MARISOL ESTRELLA *Lejanía*

ISAI RABIU *Aye Ni Ilu (Life Is a Rhythm)*

JOSHUA GERSEN Conductor

KENNETH OVERTON Baritone

BRENT BATEMAN Actor

THEODORE WIPRUD Host

KEVIN DEL AGUILA Scriptwriter and Director

What Is the Sound of Romantic Music?

Here are some tip-offs to help you recognize music from the Romantic Age!

EXTREMES Romantic composers adored extremes: when they wrote music that's fast, it's blazing, and when they wrote it slow, it's really slow. Extreme louds and softs — and really sudden or really gradual changes — created powerful expressions of emotions and stories.

BIG, BOLD BRASS In order to convey extreme emotions, Romantic composers needed a larger and larger orchestra. The brass section really came into its own: French horns, trumpets, trombones, and tubas give Romantic music a lot of punch and range of new sounds.

STORYTELLING Romantic composers were free to take inspiration from an endless variety of stories: poems, novels, plays, historic events, or the composer's own life story. Melodies often describe and represent a person, place, or idea. Listening to how the same melodies change and develop in a work can give us clues about what the Romantic composer might be thinking or feeling.



FOLK MUSIC Lots of new countries were born during the 19th century, and composers were eager to introduce fresh new sounds into the orchestra drawn from ethnic and folk music of their own countries.



ANTONÍN DVOŘÁK (1841–1904)

Born in a small village in Bohemia (part of the Czech Republic today), Dvořák loved his native land and his family. He learned much of his skill in orchestral writing while working as a violist in the Czech Philharmonic. He was known for being quite humble, with simple tastes (a sharp contrast to some of his over-the-top contemporaries!), and after years of quiet determination his unique voice was finally heard and celebrated. Dvořák had a genius for melody. He composed music steeped in the feeling of Czech folk song and dance, but never once used an existing melody — his tunes were all his own invention.

In 1892, Dvořák was invited to become the director of the National Conservatory of Music in New York City — a school offering music education to anyone, regardless of race, gender, physical ability, or ability to pay.

The conservatory's founder, Jeannette Thurber, was determined that American composers develop a sound and style independent from those of Western European composers. Dvořák had done just this for his homeland by writing music filled with the spirit of Bohemian folk traditions during a time when his compatriots were struggling to put Bohemia on the world map. Thurber thought he'd be an excellent candidate for the job and offered him a very generous salary. Dvořák, with his humble roots, must have been honored by such an invitation, and the idea of visiting America — a country that was home to so many immigrants in search of a better life — was likely very appealing, too. Soon he, his wife, and six children were aboard a ship bound for New York City.

Dvořák spent three years in America. He heard African American spirituals performed by his black students and Native American music performed in "medicine shows" in New York and in Iowa.

Dvořák was so impressed with the range of emotion expressed in this music that he suggested in interviews that they be the roots of a new "American" music. Not everyone agreed. And then he composed one of his most celebrated works, Symphony No. 9, *From the New World*, which was premiered by the New York Philharmonic. Can you hear signs of these African American and Native American sources? Listeners in Dvořák's own country say the tunes are all Czech, not American. While questions remain about the true nature and meaning of this symphony, Dvořák's bright melodies always ring clear. He admired the diversity of America's people and music and hoped that American composers would cherish the richness of their native folk traditions, just as he had.

NATIONALISM

The belief that people who share the same language, history, and culture should represent an independent country. As new countries came into being in Europe, patriotic feelings inspired many composers to use rhythms and melodies from their homeland's folk music.



Marisol Estrella: *Lejanía*

A senior at Hawthorne High School in New Jersey, Marisol Estrella studies classical piano with Hector Martignon and composition with Kevin James through the American Composers Orchestra's Compose Yourself program. She has performed recently at Roulette, Club Bonafide and Smalls with New York Jazz Academy, and other New York City venues with Face the Music. Marisol says, "My piece is a postcard from New York City to my family in Chile. The title, *Lejanía*, means distance. It is also the title of an album from the Chilean folk band, Inti-Illimani. My goal with this piece was to bridge the distance between Andean folk and contemporary music."



VERY YOUNG COMPOSERS

A program that enables students with diverse backgrounds to compose music to be performed by Philharmonic musicians. Each year, over 100 new children's compositions are played by Philharmonic musicians. Visit nyphil.org/vyc to learn more.

ROMANTIC

In the 19th century, a new generation of composers began taking music in exciting new directions. Unlike their predecessors from the Classical Age, when elegance and refinement were all the rage, composers in the **Romantic Age of Music** were free, imaginative, passionate, and inspired by folk music from their homelands. To intensify emotions in their music, Romantic musicians broke many of the Classical rules of composition. Melodies grew longer, dissonances became harsher, and the symphony swelled in size. And since musical style was now determined freely by each composer, developing an original, personal sound was the new craze!



Isai Rabiú: *Aye Ni Ilu (Life Is a Rhythm)*

Eleven-year-old Isai Rabiú began studying percussion at the age of 2½ and over the years he has studied a number of musical styles — jazz, blues, rock, and gospel. At age 9, he was selected for the New York Philharmonic's Very Young Composer's program, where his first composition *Transfictional*, and *Restless* the following year, were performed at David Geffen Hall. Isai currently performs in his middle school band at East Side Community High School and is an active member in the Philharmonic's Composer's Bridge program.

Aye Ni Ilu (pronounced Ah-yeh Nee Ee-loo) literally translates to "Life is a Rhythm or Drum" and in Yorùbá, people understand that with this translation you are comparing the ups and downs of life to the rhythm, beat, or tempo of the drum. Isai adds, "In my piece, I am trying to represent two things: 1) the feel of Nigerian late-night party music and 2) that everything has a beat, from pounding yam, to footsteps, to opening and closing doors, to harvesting crops and throwing fishnets, to the sound of the market.... This is my postcard to Nigeria."



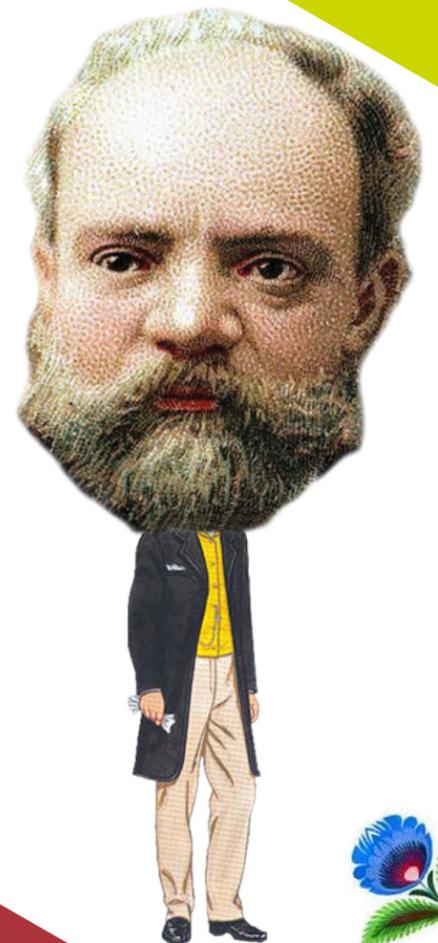
SPIRITUALS

Songs that were created by African slaves in America and describe the hardships of slavery while expressing religious faith and biblical stories. Some spirituals were work songs, some were sung at social occasions, and others were used as a way to communicate secret coded messages. Dvořák heard spirituals sung by one of his African American students, Harry Burleigh.



THE SONG OF HIAWATHA

An epic poem by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow about the warrior Hiawatha and other Native American legends. Dvořák suggested that a section of the poem, "The Dance of Pau-Puk-Keewis," inspired the third movement, of the *New World* Symphony.





New York City in 1892

If a time machine deposited you in lower Manhattan in 1892, would you recognize it? Here are some of the things Antonín Dvořák may have seen and experienced when he lived on East 17th Street.

Statue of Liberty

A New York Harbor fixture for just 6 years at that time, Lady Liberty was a dull copper color (it didn't oxidize and turn totally green until well into the 20th century). The light in her torch was so faint, it could barely be seen from Manhattan at night!

City Streets

In 1892 streets were filled with horse manure, piles of garbage one or two feet deep, and even dead animals! It wasn't until 1895 that a system was put into place for collecting and sorting garbage and cleaning the streets.

Manhattan Skyline

The first New York City skyscraper, The Tower Building, was built in 1889 and was 11 stories tall, followed by the World building which, at about 18 stories, was the tallest building in the world at the time. Before Dvořák left New York City, five towers graced the Manhattan skyline.

Elevated Lines

At the end of the 19th century, many elevated train lines rose all over the city. Ninth, Sixth, Third, and Second avenues were in the shadow of train tracks above them.

Meet the Artists



Joshua Gersen, music director of the New York Youth Symphony, began his tenure as New York Philharmonic Assistant Conductor in September 2015. A graduate of the Curtis Institute of Music, he has been assistant conductor to artistic director Michael Tilson Thomas at the New World Symphony and principal conductor of the Ojai Music Festival. Mr. Gersen has conducted the San Francisco, Pittsburgh, Indianapolis, and Jacksonville symphony orchestras.



Baritone **Kenneth Overton** has sung with the San Francisco, Nashville, and Connecticut operas, as well as Opera Memphis, Boheme Opera (New Jersey), and many other companies. He recently sang the title role in *Porgy and Bess* with Opéra de Montréal, Palacio Bellas Artes in Mexico City, and the Royal Danish Opera. He made his international debut at Deutsche Oper Berlin. This season Mr. Overton returns to David Geffen Hall in Mozart's Requiem with the National Chorale.



Actor and singer **Brent Bateman's** roles have included appearances in television, film, numerous plays, and musicals. He can be seen and heard as a motion capture and voice artist in several video games, including *Grand Theft Auto V*. A native of Anchorage, Alaska, Brent Bateman earned a master of fine arts degree from the Florida State University Asolo Conservatory for Actor Training and he is based in New York City.



Theodore Wiprud — Vice President, Education, The Sue B. Mercy Chair—has overseen the New York Philharmonic's wide range of in-school programs, educational concerts, adult programs, and online offerings since 2004. He has also created education and community-based programs at the Brooklyn Philharmonic, the Orchestra of St. Luke's, and the American Composers Orchestra, and worked as a teaching artist and resident composer in a number of New York City schools.

What's Coming Up?

THE AGES OF MUSIC: "Modern"

March 11, 2017

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