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BELOVED FRIEND — TCHAIKOVSKY AND HIS WORLD:
A PHILHARMONIC FESTIVAL
BYCHKOV CONDUCTS
January 24–February 11, 2017

SYMPHONY NO. 5
PIANO CONCERTO NO. 2 with YEFIM BRONFMAN
GLINKA’s VALSE FANTAISIE
January 26–28, 2017

MANFRED SYMPHONY
PIANO CONCERTO NO. 1 with KIRILL GERSTEIN
February 2–4 and 7, 2017

SYMPHONY NO. 6, PATHÉTIQUE
FRANCESCA DA RIMINI
TANEYEV’s ORESTEA OVERTURE
February 9–11, 2017

PYOTR THE GREAT: THE SONGS OF TCHAIKOVSKY AND HIS CIRCLE
Co-Presented by Kaufman Music Center and New York Festival of Song
January 24, 2017

CHAMBER MUSIC PROGRAM at 92nd Street Y with
YEFIM BRONFMAN and Musicians from the NEW YORK PHILHARMONIC
Co-Presented by New York Philharmonic and 92nd Street Y
January 29, 2017

Westminster Symphonic Choir To Perform RACHMANINOFF’s ALL-NIGHT VIGIL (VESPERS)
Church of St. Paul the Apostle, Presented by New York Philharmonic
February 3, 2017

The New York Philharmonic will present Beloved Friend — Tchaikovsky and His World: A
Philharmonic Festival, January 24–February 11, 2017, featuring Russian-born Semyon Bychkov
conducting works by Tchaikovsky as well as composers he was influenced by and whom he
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influenced, with piano soloists Yefim Bronfman and Kirill Gerstein. In addition to three orchestral programs conducted by Mr. Bychkov, the festival also includes a vocal concert featuring Tchaikovsky’s often autobiographical songs, giving expression to the emotional upheavals of his life, as well as songs by his students Taneyev and Arensky, and his teacher Anton Rubinstein, co-presented by the Kaufman Music Center and New York Festival of Song; a program of chamber music by Tchaikovsky, co-presented by the Philharmonic and 92nd Street Y; and Rachmaninoff’s All-Night Vigil (Vespers) performed by the Westminster Symphonic Choir at the Church of St. Paul the Apostle, presented by the Philharmonic.

Semyon Bychkov conceived of the programming for Beloved Friend, an international project that he launched in October 2016 with a BBC Symphony Orchestra concert series at London’s Barbican Centre and, that same month, the release of the first recording in a Tchaikovsky cycle with the Czech Philharmonic for Decca Classics. Beloved Friend will also include Tchaikovsky residencies planned for Paris and Vienna. He has made seven recordings featuring Tchaikovsky’s works; his recording of Eugene Onegin with the Orchestre de Paris was named one of the 30 “all-time great recordings” by Opera Magazine.

The festival programming demonstrates that Tchaikovsky, with his Western and Russian influences and his efforts to bring his works to European and American audiences, was an important bridge between the musical and cultural worlds of the nationalists, represented by Glinka, and his more internationally oriented students, such as Taneyev. The festival’s title takes its name from the sobriquet Tchaikovsky used when addressing his patron, Baroness Nadezhda von Meck, in their correspondence.

“I’ve loved Tchaikovsky’s music ever since I can remember,” Semyon Bychkov said. “Like all first loves, this one never died. In the music of Tchaikovsky, beneath the surface of beautiful melodies is a depth of tremendous sophistication in harmonic and rhythmic writing. We keep discovering in his music so much more about ourselves. In this festival we wanted to reunite composers around Tchaikovsky, to show that nothing exists in isolation. Every musical culture has its genetics. It was Tchaikovsky, after all, who said that from the bud of Glinka’s music the entire Russian music grew.”

In May 1891 Tchaikovsky conducted the New York Symphony (one of the forebears of today’s New York Philharmonic) during the five-day festival that marked the opening of Carnegie Hall, and both the New York Symphony and New York Philharmonic gave the World and U.S. Premieres of many of the works featured in the festival.


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Week I

The festival will open Tuesday, January 24, 2017, at 8:00 p.m., with *Pyotr the Great: The Songs of Tchaikovsky and His Circle*, a vocal concert at Merkin Concert Hall co-presented by the Kaufman Music Center and New York Festival of Song, featuring Tchaikovsky’s often autobiographical songs, giving expression to the emotional upheavals of his life, as well as songs by his students Taneyev and Arensky, and his teacher Anton Rubinstein, performed by soprano Antonina Chehovska, baritone Alexey Lavrov, and pianists Steven Blier and Michael Barrett.

Conductor Semyon Bychkov will discuss the inspiration behind the festival’s programming and music at the *Insights at the Atrium* event “Beloved Friend — Tchaikovsky and His World,” Wednesday, January 25, 2017, 7:30 p.m. at the David Rubenstein Atrium at Lincoln Center (Broadway at 62nd Street).

The opening New York Philharmonic program, conducted by Semyon Bychkov, features performances of Tchaikovsky’s *Symphony No. 5* and Piano Concerto No. 2, with Yefim Bronfman as soloist, as well as Glinka’s *Valse fantaisie*, Thursday, January 26, 2017, at 7:30 p.m.; Friday, January 27 at 8:00 p.m.; and Saturday, January 28 at 8:00 p.m at David Geffen Hall. The Philharmonic gave the World Premiere of Tchaikovsky’s Piano Concerto No. 2 in November 1881, led by Theodore Thomas, with Madeleine Schiller as soloist. The program demonstrates the influence of Glinka, a nationalist composer, on Tchaikovsky, who brought his own works, influenced by both Russia and the West, to European and American audiences.

Week II

The festival continues with a program of chamber works by Tchaikovsky at 92nd Street Y, which is co-presenting the concert with the Philharmonic, Sunday, January 29, 2017, at 3:00 p.m. The all-Tchaikovsky program will feature selections from *The Seasons, Souvenir de Florence*, and Piano Trio, performed by pianist Yefim Bronfman and Concertmaster Frank Huang, Principal Associate Concertmaster Sheryl Staples, Principal Viola Cynthia Phelps, Associate Principal Viola Rebecca Young, Principal Cello Carter Brey, and Associate Principal Cello Eileen Moon.

The festival’s second program featuring the New York Philharmonic conducted by Semyon Bychkov includes Tchaikovsky’s *Manfred Symphony* and Piano Concerto No. 1 (1879 version), with Kirill Gerstein as soloist, Thursday, February 2, 2017, at 7:30 p.m.; Friday, February 3 at 11:00 a.m.; Saturday, February 4 at 8:00 p.m.; and Tuesday, February 7 at 7:30 p.m. at David Geffen Hall. Mr. Gerstein will perform the New York Premiere of a new edition of the 1879 version of the First Piano Concerto. This critical urtext edition was published in 2015 by the Tchaikovsky House-Museum. There are three versions of the First Piano Concerto, with the third version (published posthumously) being the most frequently heard. Tchaikovsky made changes in the original solo piano part to create the second version in 1879; this was the version he conducted — including at Carnegie Hall in 1891 — up until nine days before he died in 1893, when he led a performance of the work in St. Petersburg, Russia. Recent research conducted by (more)
the Tchaikovsky Museum and Archive has led scholars to believe that the changes in the third version were not authorized by Tchaikovsky. The Philharmonic performed the U.S. Premiere of the Manfred Symphony in December 1886, led by Theodore Thomas.

The Philharmonic will present Rachmaninoff’s All-Night Vigil (Vespers), performed by Westminster Symphonic Choir, directed by Joe Miller, at the Church St. Paul the Apostle, Friday, February 3, 2017, at 7:30 p.m. Rachmaninoff met Tchaikovsky while studying piano in Moscow. Tchaikovsky was impressed by the young Rachmaninoff, reportedly saying, “For him I predict a great future.” He encouraged Rachmaninoff throughout his studies at the Moscow Conservatory, and the two remained close. Rachmaninoff wrote in his memoir: “Of all the people and artists whom I have had occasion to meet, Tchaikovsky was the most enchanting. His delicacy of spirit was unique. He was modest like all truly great men and simple as only very few are.”

Week III

The festival concludes with the New York Philharmonic and Semyon Bychkov performing Taneyev’s Oresteia Overture as well as Tchaikovsky’s Francesca da Rimini and Symphony No. 6, Pathétique, Thursday, February 9, 2017, at 7:30 p.m.; Friday, February 10 at 8:00 p.m.; and Saturday, February 11 at 8:00 p.m. at David Geffen Hall. The New York Philharmonic gave the U.S. Premiere of Francesca da Rimini in 1878, led by Adolf Neuendorff; the New York Symphony (one of the forebears of today’s New York Philharmonic) gave the U.S. Premiere of Tchaikovsky’s Pathétique Symphony in 1894, led by Walter Damrosch. Taneyev was Tchaikovsky’s student and successor at the Moscow Conservatory as professor of harmony; a close friend and confidant, he was the dedicatee of Tchaikovsky’s Francesca da Rimini.

Related Events

• Philharmonic Free Fridays
  The New York Philharmonic is offering 100 free tickets to young people ages 13–26 for the concerts Friday, January 27 and Friday, February 10 as part of Philharmonic Free Fridays. Information is available at nyphil.org/freefridays. Philharmonic Free Fridays offers 100 free tickets to 13–26-year-olds to each of the 2016–17 season’s 16 Friday evening subscription concerts.

Artists

Semyon Bychkov won the Rachmaninoff Conducting Competition at age 20, but after being denied the prize of conducting the Leningrad Philharmonic, he left the former Soviet Union. By the time he returned in 1989, to be principal guest conductor of the Leningrad Philharmonic, he was internationally acclaimed and had served as music director of the Grand Rapids Symphony and Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra. He subsequently served as music director of the Orchestre de Paris (1989), chief conductor of Cologne’s WDR Symphony Orchestra (1997), and chief conductor of the Dresden Semperoper (1998). Semyon Bychkov studied conducting at the Leningrad Conservatory with Ilya Musin. His repertoire spans the music of four centuries. In the
opera house, Mr. Bychkov is especially recognized for his interpretations of Richard Strauss, Tchaikovsky, Wagner, and Verdi. He recently conducted Wagner’s Parsifal at Madrid’s Teatro Real and the Vienna Staatsoper, and Mozart’s Cosi fan tutte at the Royal Opera, Covent Garden. His return to Tchaikovsky’s Eugene Onegin in 2015 after 15 years signaled the beginning of a period in which the music of Russia — particularly Tchaikovsky — became a major focus of his repertoire. Projects in London and New York, together with recordings of Tchaikovsky’s symphonies and concertos with the Czech Philharmonic, form the backbone of Mr. Bychkov’s programming, which looks to the music of the conductor’s formative years. Mr. Bychkov’s symphonic engagements include regular invitations to the Berlin, Los Angeles, and New York philharmonic orchestras; BBC, Chicago, London, RAI National, and San Francisco symphony orchestras; and the Leipzig Gewandhaus Orchestra, Orchestre della Accademia Nazionale di Santa Cecilia, and Orchestre National de France, as well as annual tours with Amsterdam’s Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra and the Munich and Vienna Philharmonic Orchestras. His recordings include discs with the Bavarian Radio Symphony Orchestra, Berlin Philharmonic, London Philharmonic Orchestra, Orchestre de Paris, London’s Philharmonia Orchestra, and Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra, as well as a series of benchmark recordings with Cologne’s WDR Symphony Orchestra, including a cycle of Brahms’s complete symphonies; works by Richard Strauss, Mahler, Shostakovich, Rachmaninoff, and Verdi; and a recording of Wagner’s Lohengrin that was voted BBC Music Magazine’s Disc of the Year. Semyon Bychkov currently holds the Klemperer Chair of Conducting at the Royal Academy of Music, and the Günter Wand Conducting Chair with the BBC Symphony Orchestra, with which he appears annually at the BBC Proms. The International Opera Awards named him 2015’s Conductor of the Year. Mr. Bychkov made his New York Philharmonic debut in March 1984 leading works by Beethoven, Liszt, and Rachmaninoff. He most recently led the Orchestra’s February 2016 performances of Mahler’s Symphony No. 6.

Pianist Yefim Bronfman works regularly with conductors Daniel Barenboim, Herbert Blomstedt, Semyon Bychkov, Riccardo Chailly, Christoph von Dohnányi, Gustavo Dudamel, Charles Dutoit, Daniele Gatti, Valery Gergiev, Alan Gilbert, Mariss Jansons, Vladimir Jurowski, James Levine, Riccardo Muti, Andris Nelsons, Yannick Nézet-Séguin, Simon Rattle, Esa-Pekka Salonen, Franz Welser-Möst, and David Zinman. Acknowledging a relationship of more than 30 years, Mr. Bronfman opened the Israel Philharmonic Orchestra’s 2016–17 season with Zubin Mehta in October, and participates in that orchestra’s 80th birthday celebrations in December. Mr. Bronfman returns to the New York Philharmonic (where he served as the 2013–14 season Mary and James G. Wallach Artist-in-Residence), Los Angeles Philharmonic, Philadelphia and Cleveland Orchestras, and the Boston, Chicago, San Francisco, St. Louis, Houston, and Dallas symphony orchestras, among many others. A cross-country series of recitals will culminate in the spring with a program at that orchestra’s 80th birthday celebrations in December. Mr. Bronfman returns to the New York Philharmonic (where he served as the 2013–14 season Mary and James G. Wallach Artist-in-Residence), Los Angeles Philharmonic, Philadelphia and Cleveland Orchestras, and the Boston, Chicago, San Francisco, St. Louis, Houston, and Dallas symphony orchestras, among many others. A cross-country series of recitals will culminate in the spring with a program at that orchestra’s 80th birthday celebrations in December. Mr. Bronfman’s chamber music partners have also included Martha Argerich, Magdalena Kožená, Anne-Sophie Mutter, Emmanuel Pahud, and many others. Mr. Bronfman was awarded the Avery Fisher Prize in 1991, and the Jean Gimbel Lane Prize in piano performance from Northwestern (more)
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University in 2010. He has been nominated for three Grammy Awards, one of which he won for his recording of the three Bartók Piano Concertos with the Los Angeles Philharmonic, led by Esa-Pekka Salonen. He was nominated for a 2013 Grammy for the recording of Magnus Lindberg’s Piano Concerto No. 2 with Alan Gilbert and the New York Philharmonic, commissioned for him by the Orchestra. Born in Tashkent in the Soviet Union in 1958, Yefim Bronfman immigrated to Israel with his family in 1973. He made his New York Philharmonic debut in May 1978 performing Beethoven’s Triple Concerto alongside violinist Shlomo Mintz and cellist Yo-Yo Ma, conducted by Alexander Schneider. He most recently performed works by Liszt and Schumann with the Orchestra, conducted by Juraj Valčuha, in February 2016 subscription concerts, and during the Orchestra’s annual Bravo! Vail residency in July 2016.

Pianist Kirill Gerstein is the recipient of the 2010 Gilmore Artist Award, and he won first prize at the 2001 Arthur Rubinstein Piano Competition in Tel Aviv. Highlights of his 2016–17 North American season include returns to The Cleveland Orchestra, New York Philharmonic, and the Atlanta, Boston, Detroit, New Jersey, San Diego, St. Louis, and Vancouver symphony orchestras. He gives solo recitals in Chicago, Kansas City, Miami, Princeton, Seattle, and Washington, D.C., as well as at Duke University. Summer festival appearances include Chicago’s Grant Park Music Festival, Rockport Chamber Music Festival, and Bravo! Vail with The Philadelphia Orchestra. Internationally Mr. Gerstein works with the Deutsches Symphonie-Orchester Berlin, Frankfurt Radio Symphony Orchestra, Leipzig Gewandhaus Orchestra, Netherlands Radio Philharmonic, Orchestre National de France, and Cologne’s WDR Symphony Orchestra; appears in recital at Vienna’s Musikverein; and performs at the BBC Proms in London and the Aldeburgh Festival. Born in 1979 in Voronezh, Russia, Mr. Gerstein studied piano at a special music school for gifted children. He came to the U.S. at age 14 to study jazz piano at Boston’s Berklee College of Music and subsequently attended the Manhattan School of Music, where he studied with Solomon Mikowsky and earned both bachelor’s and master’s degrees by age 20. Mr. Gerstein records for Myrios Classics and his recording of Tchaikovsky’s Piano Concerto No. 1 and Prokofiev’s Piano Concerto No. 2 with the Deutsches Symphonie-Orchester Berlin was released in March 2015; it is the first recording using the new critical edition of the Tchaikovsky concerto using the composer’s original second version, which Mr. Gerstein will be performing in these concerts. Kirill Gerstein made his New York Philharmonic debut in June 2011 performing Tchaikovsky’s Piano Concerto No. 1 as part of the Summertime Classics series, led by Bramwell Tovey. He most recently joined the Orchestra and conductor Susanna Mäkki in Brahms’s Piano Concerto No. 1 in May 2015.

Recognized as one of the world’s leading choral ensembles, the Westminster Symphonic Choir is composed of students at Westminster Choir College of Rider University in Princeton, New Jersey. It has recorded and performed with major orchestras under many internationally acclaimed conductors for the past 82 years, and the choir has sung more than 400 performances with the New York Philharmonic alone. The ensemble’s 2016–17 season includes Beethoven’s Symphony No. 9 with the New York Philharmonic conducted by Alan Gilbert; Mozart’s C-minor Mass and Ravel’s Daphnis et Chloé with The Philadelphia Orchestra, conducted by Yannick Nézet-Séguin; and Britten’s War Requiem with The Philadelphia Orchestra conducted by Charles Dutoit. Recent seasons have included performances of Bernstein’s Mass with The
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Philadelphia Orchestra and Yannick Nézet-Séguin; Villa-Lobos’s Choros No. 10 with the Simón Bolívar Symphony Orchestra of Venezuela and Gustavo Dudamel; and Christopher Rouse’s Requiem with the New York Philharmonic and Alan Gilbert at Carnegie Hall. Westminster Choir College is a division of Rider University’s Westminster College of the Arts, which has campuses in Princeton and Lawrenceville, New Jersey. A professional college of music with a unique choral emphasis, Westminster prepares students for careers in teaching, sacred music, and performance. The Westminster Symphonic Choir made its Philharmonic debut in January 1959 in Elgar’s The Dream of Gerontius, conducted by John Barbirolli; it most recently performed in the Orchestra’s December 2015 presentation of Handel’s Messiah, conducted by Jane Glover.

Joe Miller is conductor of two of America’s most renowned choral ensembles: the Westminster Choir and the Westminster Symphonic Choir. He is also director of choral activities at Westminster Choir College of Rider University. He is also artistic director for choral activities for the Spoleto Festival USA and director of the Philadelphia Symphonic Choir. Mr. Miller’s 2016–17 season with the Westminster Choir includes a concert tour of the southern U.S., several national radio broadcasts, the ensemble’s annual residency at Spoleto Festival USA, and performances at the World Symposium on Choral Music in Barcelona. As conductor of the Westminster Symphonic Choir, Mr. Miller has collaborated with some of the world’s leading orchestras and conductors, earning him critical praise. Joe Miller is also founder and conductor of the Westminster Summer Choral Festival Chamber Choir, a program that offers professional-level choral and vocal artists the opportunity to explore challenging works for one week each summer on the Westminster campus in Princeton.

Frank Huang joined the New York Philharmonic as Concertmaster, The Charles E. Culpeper Chair, in September 2015, and made his solo debut with the Orchestra as leader and soloist in Vivaldi’s The Four Seasons in June 2016. He previously served as concertmaster of the Houston Symphony, was first violinist of the Ying Quartet, and won the 2003 Walter W. Naumburg Foundation’s Violin Competition and the 2000 Hannover International Violin Competition. Solo engagements have included The Cleveland Orchestra, Los Angeles Philharmonic, Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra, Indianapolis Symphony, and NDR Radio Philharmonic orchestras. Recent highlights include debuts at Wigmore Hall (London), Salle Cortot (Paris), and Kennedy Center (Washington, D.C.), and the World Premiere of Donald Martino’s Sonata for Solo Violin at Alice Tully Hall. He has performed at the Marlboro, Ravinia, Seattle Chamber, and Caramoor music festivals, and has toured with Musicians from Marlboro. Frank Huang was born in Beijing, China, and moved to Houston, Texas, at the age of seven. He earned a bachelor of music degree from the Cleveland Institute of Music, attended The Juilliard School, and is a Music Academy of the West alumnus. Mr. Huang serves on the faculties of the Shepherd School of Music at Rice University and the University of Houston.

Principal Associate Concertmaster Sheryl Staples, The Elizabeth G. Beinecke Chair, joined the New York Philharmonic in September 1998. She has been featured in more than 30 solo performances with the Philharmonic in concertos by Tchaikovsky, Mendelssohn, Mozart, Haydn, J.S. Bach, and Vivaldi with conductors including Alan Gilbert, Lorin Maazel, Kurt Masur, Kent Nagano, Jeffrey Kahane, and Colin Davis. In the 2014–15 season, she performed Mozart’s Sinfonia concertante with Principal Viola Cynthia Phelps, led by Jaap van Zweden, in (more)
November, and led by Alan Gilbert in July. Previously, she was associate concertmaster of The Cleveland Orchestra and concertmaster of the Pacific Symphony and Santa Barbara Chamber orchestras. She has appeared as soloist with more than 45 orchestras, including The Cleveland Orchestra and Los Angeles Philharmonic. Ms. Staples has participated in the La Jolla, Boston, Salt Bay, Santa Fe, Mainly Mozart, and Aspen chamber music festivals, and she was a member of The Cleveland Orchestra Piano Trio. Ms. Staples is on the faculty of the Manhattan School of Music, Juilliard Pre-College Division, and The Juilliard School. She performs on the “Kartman” Guarnerius del Gesù, ca. 1728.

**Cynthia Phelps** is the New York Philharmonic’s Principal Viola, The Mr. and Mrs. Frederick P. Rose Chair. Her solo appearances with the Orchestra have included the New York Premiere—Philharmonic Co-Commission of Julia Adolphe’s *Unearth, Release*, in 2016; Mozart’s Sinfonia concertante in 2010 and 2014; and Sofia Gubaidulina’s *Two Paths*, a concerto for two violas that the Orchestra commissioned for her and Philharmonic Associate Principal Viola Rebecca Young, in 1999 and 2011. Other solo engagements have included the Minnesota Orchestra, San Diego Symphony, Orquesta Sinfónica de Bilbao, and Hong Kong Philharmonic. Ms. Phelps performs with The Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center, Jupiter Chamber Players, and the Santa Fe, La Jolla, Seattle, Chamber Music Northwest, and Bridgehampton festivals. She has appeared with the Guarneri, Tokyo, Orion, American, Brentano, and Prague quartets, and the Kalichstein-Laredo-Robinson Trio. She is a founding member of Les Amies, a chamber group formed with Philharmonic Principal Harp Nancy Allen and flutist Carol Wincenc. Winner of the Pro Musica International Award, Ms. Phelps’s recording *Air*, for flute, harp and viola, was nominated for a Grammy Award. She has performed as soloist on *Live From Lincoln Center*, American Public Media’s *Saint Paul Sunday Morning*, and Radio France.

Violist **Rebecca Young** joined the New York Philharmonic in 1986 as its youngest member, and in 1991 was named the Orchestra’s Associate Principal Viola, The Joan and Joel Smilow Chair. After serving as principal viola of the Boston Symphony Orchestra in 1992–93, she resumed her Philharmonic Associate Principal position in 1994. An avid chamber musician, she has performed with groups such as the Boston Chamber Music Society, Boston Symphony Chamber Players, and The Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center, and has recorded Schubert’s *Trout* Quintet with Yo-Yo Ma, Emanuel Ax, Pamela Frank, and Edgar Meyer (on Sony Classical). Her Philharmonic solo performances include the 1999 World Premiere of Sofia Gubaidulina’s *Two Paths*, a concerto for two violas commissioned by the Philharmonic and underwritten by then Music Director Kurt Masur’s wife, Tomoko, for Ms. Young and Philharmonic Principal Viola Cynthia Phelps. The two reprised the work with the Philharmonic on several of the Orchestra’s tours and in New York, most recently in April 2011. She is a graduate of The Juilliard School and host of the Philharmonic’s popular Very Young People’s Concerts.

**Carter Brey** was appointed New York Philharmonic Principal Cello, The Fan Fox and Leslie R. Samuels Chair, in 1996. He has since appeared as soloist almost every season, most recently performing Schumann’s Cello Concerto on the CALIFORNIA 2016 tour; he was also featured in *The Bach Variations*: A Philharmonic Festival, performing all six Bach cello suites. His honors include the Rostropovich International Cello Competition, Gregor Piatigorsky Memorial Prize, (more)
Avery Fisher Career Grant, and Young Concert Artists’ Michaels Award; he was the first musician to win the Arts Council of America’s Performing Arts Prize. Mr. Brey has appeared as soloist with virtually all of the major American orchestras, performing under conductors Claudio Abbado, Semyon Bychkov, Sergiu Comissiona, and Christoph von Dohnányi. He has collaborated regularly with the Tokyo and Emerson String Quartets and appeared at the Spoleto, Santa Fe, and La Jolla chamber music festivals. His most recent recording features Chopin’s complete works for cello and piano with pianist Garrick Ohlsson. Mr. Brey studied at the Peabody Institute and Yale University, where he was a Wardwell Fellow and Houpt Scholar. His cello is a rare J.B. Guadagnini made in Milan in 1754.

**Eileen Moon** joined the New York Philharmonic in 1998, and in 2007 was named Associate Principal Cello, The Paul and Diane Guenther Chair. Born and raised in Los Altos, California, she studied with Irene Sharp in the Pre-College Division of the San Francisco Conservatory. As a member of the Palo Alto Chamber Orchestra, Ms. Moon toured Europe and the West Coast, often as a featured soloist. She continued her studies at The Juilliard School, where she earned her bachelor of music degree, and then moved to Vienna to study with Valentin Erben of the Alban Berg Quartet. She was a top prize winner in numerous competitions, including YoungArts (Florida) in 1987, Irving Klein (California) in 1988, Geneva International Competition (Switzerland) in 1991, and Tchaikovsky International Competition (Moscow) in 1994. She has performed in prestigious festivals, and is the founder of the Warwick Music Series in Warwick, New York. Ms. Moon’s biggest passions are music presentation, cooking, running, and animal advocacy. She co-founded Friends of Warwick Valley Humane Society and aims to open a sanctuary for injured, abandoned, and “retired” animals and wildlife.

**Repertoire, January 26–28**

As one of the first important Russian composers to find inspiration in the nation’s folk music, **Mikhail Glinka** (1804–57) was considered by Tchaikovsky to be “the cornerstone of Russian music.” Tchaikovsky was one of the first recipients of the Glinka Prize (for his *Romeo and Juliet*, Overture-Fantasy), and he revered Glinka so much that he promoted his music throughout his career. Glinka’s first purely instrumental work to become a success was the *Valse fantaisie*, which he first wrote for solo piano in 1839 and dedicated to Yekaterina Yermolaevna, whom he described as “a pale tall young lady with wonderful eloquent eyes and charm.” Six years later he decided to adapt it for orchestra, and created the version that was premiered in Paris but subsequently lost. He once again arranged the *Valse fantaisie* for orchestra in 1856, and that version brought the work much wider fame. Inspired by a popular dance genre of the time, the *Valse fantaisie* was in Leo Tolstoy’s mind as he wrote the scene for Natasha Rostova and Andrei Bolkonsky’s waltz during the ball in *War and Peace*. The Philharmonic has performed the *Valse fantaisie* only once before, during a July 1956 Stadium Concert conducted by Hugo Florato.

**Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky** (1840–93) composed his *Piano Concerto No. 2* between October 1879 and April 1880, partly at Kamenka (his sister’s country estate) and partly in Paris. Having received harsh criticism from his mentor Nikolai Rubinstein four years earlier for his First Concerto, Tchaikovsky decided to dedicate his second to the noted pianist, composer, and conductor, hoping it would convince him to be the soloist in its premiere. However, Rubinstein (more)
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died in March 1880, so Tchaikovsky handed the concerto to Sergei Taneyev to play in Moscow in May 1882, on the first concert of the city’s Industrial and Cultural Exhibition. That delay in scheduling led to the New York Philharmonic having the honor of giving the World Premiere of the Piano Concerto No. 2 on November 12, 1881, with Madeline Schiller as soloist and Theodore Thomas as conductor. The Orchestra most recently performed it in July 2012 during its annual Bravo! Vail residency, conducted by Bramwell Tovey, with Anne-Marie McDermott as soloist.

Tchaikovsky’s guilt about his homosexuality and his brief, disastrous marriage to hide it had already found expression in his Fourth Symphony. Eleven years later, in correspondence about his Symphony No. 5 with his patroness, Nadezhda von Meck, he wrote: “Now I shall work my hardest. I am exceedingly anxious to prove to myself, as to others, that I am not played out as a composer… Have I told you that I intend to write a symphony?” Ever the fragile, self-doubting composer, Tchaikovsky saw himself as a play-thing of fate, struggling for happiness. After the work’s successful St. Petersburg premiere in 1888, and the orchestra’s triple fanfare in his honor, Tchaikovsky wrote: “I have come to the conclusion that [the Fifth Symphony] is a failure. The applause and ovations referred not to this but to other works of mine, and the Symphony itself will never please the public.” The work has become adored by both audiences and performers. The Philharmonic’s first presentation of the Fifth Symphony was in February 1890, conducted by Theodore Thomas; Alan Gilbert led the most recent performance on the Annual Free Memorial Day Concert at St. John the Divine in May 2014.

Repertoire, January 29
In November 1875 N.M. Bernard, the publisher of the St. Petersburg journal Nouvelliste, commissioned Tchaikovsky to write 12 character pieces for solo piano, each of which would be inspired by a poetic epigraph supplied by Bernard. The agreement was announced in the following month’s edition of the magazine: “Our famous composer P.I. Tchaikovsky has agreed to work with the Nouvelliste, and in the coming year will write a full series of piano compositions especially for our magazine. The character of the music will correspond with both the titles of the pieces and the image that will appear in the magazine that month; for example, ‘January: By the Fireplace’; ‘February: Shrovetide Festival’; ‘March: Song of the Lark’; ‘April; Snowdrop’...[etc.]” Tchaikovsky began work that December, and promptly delivered a new work each month for the following year. The collection was ultimately published in 1885 as The Seasons.

In 1890 Tchaikovsky began work on his string sextet Souvenir de Florence while he was in Florence working on his opera Pique Dame, and completed it back home in Russia while he was awaiting the opera’s premiere. Although the sextet resonates with the contentment he felt working in the idyllic, inspiring Tuscan city, he didn’t intend it to be a programmatic, musical postcard; in fact, it includes some tunes and rhythms that he had sketched three years earlier, with the hallmarks of Tchaikovsky’s Russian style. At first he was pleased with the way he had responded to the challenge of writing for a sextet (he was much more comfortable writing for orchestras), but he decided to withhold the work after hearing a read-through in November 1890; it was only after he made revisions to the scherzo and finale that it was published, in 1892.

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Tchaikovsky was deeply saddened by the death of his teacher Nikolai Rubinstein, the pianist and conductor who was an enormous presence in Russia’s musical life, in the spring of 1881. Late in the year, he wrote his patroness Nadezhda von Meck, who several months earlier had asked him to write a piano trio for her resident trio; he had initially declined, stating an antipathy toward that combination of instruments, but now had found inspiration. He completed his Piano Trio quickly, and it was premiered in a private concert at the Moscow Conservatory on March 23, 1882 — the first anniversary of Rubinstein’s death. Although the ambitious, 50-minute, two-movement work received mixed critical reviews, it quickly became part of the chamber music canon, and may have inspired a new Russian tradition of writing piano trios to commemorate musical luminaries, such as Rachmaninoff’s own Trio Élégique, dedicated to Tchaikovsky after his death.

Repertoire, February 2–4 and 7
Tchaikovsky composed three piano concertos, of which his Piano Concerto No. 1 is the most popular. However, the work’s original dedicatee, Nikolai Rubinstein, rejected the piece. As Tchaikovsky later recalled of his presenting the work to Rubinstein: “I played the first movement. Not a word, not a remark. If you only knew how disappointing, how unbearable it is when a man offers his friend a dish of his work, and the other eats and remains silent!” Rubinstein told him it was “worthless, impossible to play, the themes have been used before ... there are only two or three pages that can be salvaged and the rest must be thrown away!” (Rubinstein would later change his mind and champion the work, and Tchaikovsky did eventually make some changes, despite having initially insisted, “I won’t change a single note.”)

The premiere fell to Hans von Bülow, who played it in Boston as part of an American tour in 1875. The dramatic opening theme of the first movement, which is never developed and never returns, has been borrowed repeatedly over the years for films and popular music. The concerto was first performed by the New York Philharmonic in November 1879, with Franz Rummel as soloist, conducted by Theodore Thomas. Alan Gilbert led its most recent Philharmonic performance, at Carnegie Hall in October 2015, with Evgeny Kissin as soloist.

Tchaikovsky’s Manfred Symphony (1885) is a programmatic work inspired by Lord Byron’s 1817 tragic work Manfred. Written at the behest of composer Mily Balakirev and based on a program treatment by critic Vladimir Stasov, it is the only one of Tchaikovsky’s symphonies that isn’t numbered, and is more of a tone poem with descriptive headings at the beginning of each of the four movements that tell the story of the Byronic Hero. Although Tchaikovsky was initially proud of the work, he later considered destroying most of it, but never did, and this rich and characteristically unusual work for Tchaikovsky survived. Manfred was first performed in Moscow in 1886, and it took less than a year for the work to find its way to the United States, where the New York Philharmonic gave its U.S. Premiere on December 4, 1886, led by Theodore Thomas. The most recent Philharmonic performance was in September 2007, conducted by Lorin Maazel, as part of The Tchaikovsky Experience.
Repertoire, February 3
Sergei Rachmaninoff (1873–1943) was sent to Moscow in 1885 to study piano with Nikolay Zverev, and he first met Tchaikovsky at one of the musical gatherings that Zverev hosted at his home, where Rachmaninoff was also boarding. Tchaikovsky was impressed by the young Rachmaninoff, reportedly saying, “For him I predict a great future.” He encouraged Rachmaninoff through his studies at the Moscow Conservatory, and the two remained closely connected until Tchaikovsky’s death. Rachmaninoff wrote in his 1930 memoir: “Of all the people and artists whom I have had occasion to meet, Tchaikovsky was the most enchanting. His delicacy of spirit was unique. He was modest like all truly great men and simple as only very few are.” Rachmaninoff composed the All-Night Vigil (Vespers) in 1915, and it was premiered that March in Moscow as a benefit for war relief. It received immediate critical acclaim, and was performed five more times over the following month. The a cappella choral work is a setting of the Russian Orthodox service that is traditionally used on Saturday evenings or before major feast days. Set in Church Slavonic, the piece combines elements of Vespers, Matins, and Prime and uses some traditional Orthodox chant. It comprises the 12 traditional parts of the service, as well as three additional movements Rachmaninoff added, as he wrote, “in a conscious counterfeit of the ritual.”

Repertoire, February 9–11
Composer, pianist, teacher, theorist, and author Sergei Taneyev (1856–1915) studied composition with Tchaikovsky at the Moscow Conservatory, and ultimately became one of Tchaikovsky’s most trusted friends. Taneyev offered Tchaikovsky compositional criticism, performed and transcribed a number of his works, and was engaged to complete some unfinished works after Tchaikovsky’s death in 1893. Taneyev composed his only opera, Oresteia, between 1887 and 1894, based on the ancient Greek tragic trilogy The Oresteia by Aeschylus, adapted in Russian by A.A. Wenkstern. Taneyev used the entr’acte before “The Temple of Apollo at Delphi” (from Act III) and most of the other major dramatic themes from the opera to create the Oresteia Overture, a separate, 18-minute symphonic poem completed and premiered six years before he finished work on the opera itself. Tchaikovsky conducted the overture’s October 1889 Moscow premiere. This is the first time the New York Philharmonic will perform the work.

The most famous episode in Dante’s Divine Comedy is the tragedy of Francesca da Rimini, from the epic’s “Inferno” portion. Francesca is deceived into marrying the elderly Gianciotto Malatesta by proxy. She falls in love with Gianciotto’s proxy, who is really his younger brother Paolo, but discovers the truth about the real identity too late. Both she and Paolo are murdered by Gianciotto. Tchaikovsky abandoned his original intention of creating an opera based on this story, feeling it impractical; instead he wrote this symphonic poem based on the description and illustration of the scene where Dante meets the souls of Paolo and Francesca in the Second Circle of Hell. Composed in Bayreuth during the fall of 1876 and dedicated to Sergei Taneyev, Francesca da Rimini was premiered in Moscow on March 9, 1877. The New York Philharmonic presented its U.S. Premiere on December 21, 1878, conducted by Adolph Neuendorff; its most recent performance was in January 2007, conducted by Lorin Maazel.

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Tchaikovsky composed his *Symphony No. 6, Pathétique*, in February and March 1893. “I certainly regard it as easily the best — and especially the most ‘sincere’ — of all my works, and I love it as I have never before loved one of my musical offspring,” the composer wrote to a friend. To the Grand Duke Constantine he wrote, “Without exaggeration, I have put my whole soul into this work.” Tchaikovsky conducted the symphony’s premiere on October 28, 1893; five days later he fell ill, and he died on the morning of November 6, 1893. The work received its U.S. Premiere in November 1894, with Walter Damrosch leading the New York Symphony (which merged with the New York Philharmonic in 1928 to form today’s New York Philharmonic). The Philharmonic performed the symphony most recently in July 2015 during the Orchestra’s Bravo! Vail annual residency, conducted by Joshua Weilerstein.

* * *

Semyon Bychkov’s appearances are made possible by the Daisy and Paul Soros Endowment Fund (January 26–28) and the Charles A. Dana Distinguished Conductors Endowment Fund (February 2–11).

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Tickets
Single tickets for these performances start at $31. Tickets for Pyotr the Great: The Songs of Tchaikovsky and His Circle may be purchased online at kaufmanmusiccenter.org/mch/event/new-york-festival-of-song-pyotr-the-great or by calling (212) 501-3330. Tickets for the January 29 chamber music program at 92nd Street Y may be purchased at 92y.org/Event/Yefim-Bronfman-NY-Philharmonic or by calling (212) 415-5500. Tickets for Open Rehearsals are $20. Tickets may be purchased online at nyphil.org or by calling (212) 875-5656, 10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. Monday through Friday; 1:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. Saturday; and noon to 5:00 p.m. Sunday. Tickets may also be purchased at the David Geffen Hall Box Office. The Box Office opens at 10:00 a.m. Monday through Saturday, and at noon on Sunday. On performance evenings, the Box Office closes one-half hour after performance time; other evenings it closes at 6:00 p.m. A limited number of $18 tickets for select concerts may be available through the Internet for students within 10 days of the performance, or in person the day of. Valid identification is required. To determine ticket availability, call the Philharmonic’s Customer Relations Department at (212) 875-5656. (Ticket prices subject to change.)

Insights at the Atrium events are free and open to the public. Seating is available on a first-come, first-served basis. Subscribers, Friends at the Fellow level and above, and Patrons may secure guaranteed admission by emailing AdultEd@nyphil.org. Space is limited.

For press tickets, call Lanore Carr in the New York Philharmonic Communications Department at (212) 875-5714, or email her at carrl@nyphil.org.

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PYOTR THE GREAT: THE SONGS OF TCHAIKOVSKY AND HIS CIRCLE
A Co-Presentation of the Kaufman Music Center and New York Festival of Song

Merkin Concert Hall at Kaufman Center
129 West 67th Street

Tuesday, January 24, 2017, 8:00 p.m.

Antonina Chehovska, soprano
Alexey Lavrov, baritone
Michael Barrett, piano
Steven Blier, piano and arranger

This vocal concert features Tchaikovsky’s often autobiographical songs, giving expression to the emotional upheavals of his life, as well as a selection of songs by his students Taneyev and Arensky, and his teacher Anton Rubinstein.

INSIGHTS AT THE ATRIUM: “BELOVED FRIEND — TCHAIKOVSKY AND HIS WORLD”

Wednesday, January 25, 2017, 7:30 p.m.

Semyon Bychkov, speaker
New York Philharmonic Vice President, Artistic Planning, Edward Yim, moderator

On the eve of the New York Philharmonic’s three-week festival dedicated to Tchaikovsky and composers close to him, January 24–February 11, 2017, conductor Semyon Bychkov discusses the inspiration behind the festival’s programming and music. What can we learn from Tchaikovsky’s closest confidants?

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NEW YORK PHILHARMONIC

David Geffen Hall at Lincoln Center

Thursday, January 26, 2017, 7:30 p.m.
Open Rehearsal — 9:45 a.m.
Friday, January 27, 2017, 8:00 p.m.
Saturday, January 28, 2017, 8:00 p.m.

Semyon Bychkov, conductor
Yefim Bronfman, piano

GLINKA
Valse fantaisie

TCHAIKOVSKY
Piano Concerto No. 2
Symphony No. 5

CHAMBER MUSIC CONCERT
A Co-Presentation of the New York Philharmonic and 92nd Street Y

92nd Street Y
1395 Lexington Avenue

Sunday, January 29, 2017, 3:00 p.m.

Frank Huang, Sheryl Staples, violin
Cynthia Phelps, Rebecca Young, viola
Carter Brey, Eileen Moon, cello
Yefim Bronfman, piano

TCHAIKOVSKY
Selections from The Seasons
Souvenir de Florence
Piano Trio

(more)
NEW YORK PHILHARMONIC

David Geffen Hall at Lincoln Center

Thursday, February 2, 2017, 7:30 p.m.
Open Rehearsal — 9:45 a.m.
Friday, February 3, 2017, 11:00 a.m.
Saturday, February 4, 2017, 8:00 p.m.
Tuesday, February 7, 2017, 7:30 p.m.

Semyon Bychkov, conductor
Kirill Gerstein, piano

TCHAIKOVSKY
Piano Concerto No. 1 (1879 version)

TCHAIKOVSKY
Manfred Symphony

RACHMANINOFF’S VESPERS
Presented by the New York Philharmonic

Church of St. Paul the Apostle

Friday, February 3, 2017, 7:30 p.m.

Westminster Symphonic Choir
Joe Miller, director

RACHMANINOFF
All-Night Vigil (Vespers)

NEW YORK PHILHARMONIC

David Geffen Hall at Lincoln Center

Thursday, February 9, 2017, 7:30 p.m.
Open Rehearsal — 9:45 a.m.
Friday, February 10, 2017, 8:00 p.m.
Saturday, February 11, 2017, 8:00 p.m.

Semyon Bychkov, conductor

TANEYEV
Orestes Overture

TCHAIKOVSKY
Francesca da Rimini

TCHAIKOVSKY
Symphony No. 6, Pathétique

(more)
ALL PROGRAMS SUBJECT TO CHANGE

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