

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
March 23, 2020

**NEW YORK PHILHARMONIC CONCERTS THROUGH JUNE 13, 2020
AND 2020 EUROPEAN TOUR HAVE BEEN CANCELLED**

**Launch of *NY Phil Plays On*
New Portal for Free Digital Content, nyphil.org/playson**

The New York Philharmonic's concerts through June 13, 2020 — the final performance of the Philharmonic's subscription season — have been cancelled. This is to protect the Philharmonic's audience, musicians, employees, and community from COVID-19 (the novel coronavirus). In addition, the 2020 European Tour has been cancelled. The tour, scheduled to take place April 30–May 12, would have featured ten concerts in six cities: London, Cologne, Luxembourg, Amsterdam (Mahler Festival), Berlin, and Dresden.

Members of the New York Philharmonic will retain all health benefits through their current contract (September 20, 2020). All members will be paid minimum scale from April 1 through 30, 2020, then 75% of scale through May 31, 2020. (The Philharmonic staff is working from home during this period in which concerts are cancelled and the Lincoln Center Campus is closed.) To help the Philharmonic reach out to its community during the crisis, the musicians have agreed to allow the Philharmonic to use all the assets in its considerable media archives, to be distributed through a newly developed, free portal. Currently, the New York Philharmonic is projecting incremental operating losses of approximately \$10 million directly due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

President and CEO Deborah Borda said: "The decision to cancel our concerts was particularly painful: music is a powerful source of comfort and healing, and we know that this closing is as profound a loss for our audiences as it is to our musicians and, indeed, the institution. As the situation continues to rapidly evolve, we are developing plans to address the ever-changing and unpredictable landscape. In our 178-year history, the New York Philharmonic has weathered the US Civil War and two World Wars and survived the 1918 Spanish flu pandemic. We will be back!"

The New York Philharmonic has taken the following actions to date:

- cancelling remainder of subscription season (through June 13, 2020) and 2020 European Tour
- maintaining full orchestra salary and benefits through March 31, 2020
- agreeing to retain all orchestra health benefits through September 20, 2020
- paying orchestra salary at minimum scale April 1–30, 2020, and 75% of scale through May 31, 2020
- staff to work remotely

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Further, the Philharmonic continues to assess the following:

- viability of June concerts in the parks, and July performances in China and Bravo! Vail in Colorado
- monitoring of ticket sales (actual and potential) for the 2020–21 season
- call-to-action for subscribers and single ticket buyers to donate the value of their tickets for cancelled concerts
- special fundraising campaign, NY Phil Plays On Emergency Fund, to bridge losses due to COVID-19 pandemic
- evaluating operating costs and ways to reduce spending on current budget of \$87 million
- continuing to monitor endowment, which has declined from \$210 million earlier this year to less than \$180 million last week
- thorough analysis of staffing requirements and appropriate plan, which may include pay reductions (starting with senior leadership) and / or furloughs
- monitoring of cash flow, which is currently stable due to careful planning

Deborah Borda added: “The New York Philharmonic will be here when the worst has passed, when people can finally come together for the unique shared experience of a live concert. Until then, we will do our best to provide musical and emotional sustenance through launching *NY Phil Plays On*, our new collection of free digital content, including messages from our musicians. The musicians share this commitment, and we are grateful that they have given us special permission to make this digital platform come to life.”

NY Phil Plays On is available at nyphil.org/playson. The initial release of material includes:

- video of Music Director Jaap van Zweden conducting the Orchestra in Mahler’s Symphony No. 5
- video of Philharmonic cellists Nathan Vickery and Sumire Kudo performing a duo from miles apart, and a solo performance by Principal Flute Robert Langevin
- episodes of the award-winning radio program *The New York Philharmonic This Week*, hosted by Alec Baldwin
- an installment of *Young People’s Concerts Play!*, featuring select Young People’s Concerts on video accompanied by innovative lessons and learning games
- highlights from the New York Philharmonic Leon Levy Digital Archives

Many more hours of digital content — including messages from the musicians, performance footage past and new, education content, and radio broadcasts — will be released in the coming weeks. In addition, the Philharmonic will release an online version of *Mahler’s New York*, a celebration of composer / former Music Director Gustav Mahler that had been scheduled to take place April 15–25, 2020.

In addition, each Thursday at 7:30 p.m. EDT, the New York Philharmonic will post video of a past performance on Facebook, simulating the experience of a live concert. This is designed to
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foster a sense of community among classical music fans worldwide. The first broadcast, to take place on March 26, will feature the 2017 performance of Mahler's Symphony No. 5, conducted by Music Director Jaap van Zweden. The second, on April 2, will present the 2018 performance of Act I of Wagner's *Die Walküre* (in concert), conducted by Jaap van Zweden and featuring soprano Heidi Melton as Sieglinde, tenor Simon O'Neill as Siegmund, and bass John Relyea as Hunding.

For information about donating the value of unused tickets or obtaining refunds for the cancelled concerts, ticketholders may contact New York Philharmonic Customer Relations at (212) 875-5656. More information is available at nyphil.org/health.

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