

Colorado Symphony Classics

The
Colorado
Symphony
announces
its

2021/22

Classics Season

Schedule taking place at downtown *Denver's Boettcher Concert Hall*.

This highly anticipated season offers a long-awaited return to normal concert operations, featuring *12 weeks* of masterworks programming, renowned guest artists, and revered symphonic works that will be music to the ears of Coloradans eager for live concert experiences.

Nov 5th
7:30pm

Beethoven Symphony No. 7

Beethoven’s Seventh Symphony was dubbed the ‘apotheosis of dance’ by Wagner, due to the whirling, spinning motion at the heart of the composition. The iconic Allegretto alone stands as a powerful, hauntingly beautiful, and relentlessly rhythmic piece of music that remains one of Beethoven’s most beloved and well-known works. A pair of rising stars – conductor Valentina Peleggi and violinist Paul Huang – make their Colorado Symphony debuts with Huang lending his virtuosic style to Bruch’s Violin Concerto No. 1, one of the most famous and beautiful of all works for the instrument. The program begins with Clarice Assad’s *Sin fronteras*, incorporating elements of her South American heritage in a work that imagines the resulting musical synergy that comes from tearing down invisible cultural boundaries.

Valentina Peleggi, conductor
Paul Huang, violin
CLARICE ASSAD *Sin fronteras*
BRUCH Violin Concerto No. 1 in G minor, Op. 26
BEETHOVEN Symphony No. 7 in A major, Op. 92

Jan 21th
7:30pm

Tchaikovsky Symphony No. 5

Join guest conductor Peter Oundjian in a revival of Tchaikovsky’s unforgettable Fifth Symphony. As intensely dramatic as any of Tchaikovsky’s other major works, the Fifth belies the composer’s fragile mental state in a work that portrays a triumphant struggle against fate. Rising star Steven Banks, who captured First Prize at the 2019 Young Concert Artists International Auditions, makes his Colorado Symphony debut on John Adams’ Saxophone Concerto, offering rich textures and a jazzy flair in a work demanding extraordinary skill from the soloist. Mozart’s genius is on full display in his ever-popular overture from *The Marriage of Figaro*, a lively and exuberant opener that is pure joy for musicians and audiences alike.

Peter Oundjian, conductor
Steven Banks, saxophone
MOZART *Le nozze di Figaro* Overture, K. 492
JOHN ADAMS Saxophone Concerto
TCHAIKOVSKY Symphony No. 5 in E minor, Op. 64

Apr 10th
7:30pm

Rachmaninoff Piano Concerto No. 2

Dynamic Norwegian conductor Rune Bergmann makes his Colorado Symphony debut lending elegance and expertise to the “Inextinguishable” Fourth Symphony from Nielsen. Of it, the Danish composer wrote “Music is life, and life is inextinguishable,” and indeed from the very first moment it offers an electrifying jolt of energy and rarely deviates from that dynamism. The addition of Finnish pianist Juho Pohjonen lends a distinctly Scandanavian flavor to this program. Pohjonen shows why he’s considered one of today’s most exciting pianists on Rachmaninoff’s prodigious Second Piano Concerto. Combining glorious melody and swelling orchestration, it’s no secret why this is regarded as one of the best piano concertos ever written. Verdi’s Overture from *La forza del destino* is theatrical even in its orchestral operatics, adding a fitting flourish to an evening of symphonic exuberance.

Rune Bergmann, conductor
Juho Pohjonen, piano
VERDI *La forza del destino* Overture
RACHMANINOFF Piano Concerto No. 2 in C minor, Op. 18
NIELSEN Symphony No. 4, Op. 29 “The Inextinguishable”

Nov 19th
7:30pm

Prokofiev Piano Concerto No. 2 with Natasha Paremski

Your Colorado Symphony welcomes back former Music Director Andrew Litton and Denver favorite Natasha Paremski for a program with a distinctly Russian flair. Paremski brings her signature fire and dynamic passion to Prokofiev’s romantic Second Piano Concerto, while his Classical Symphony subverts the expectations of the era in a work that is concise and playful, juxtaposing his own daring musical language with those more typical of Mozart’s time. Shostakovich’s Ninth Symphony similarly harkens back to that bygone era, eschewing the sprawling, bombastic works of the time in a composition that is short, witty, and classically oriented. But where the Classical Symphony sought to provoke sincere, uncomplicated joy, the Ninth evokes a range of changing moods and emotions. The music of these two titans will shine in the hands of Maestro Litton.

Andrew Litton, conductor
Natasha Paremski, piano
PROKOFIEV Classical Symphony, Op. 25
PROKOFIEV Piano Concerto No. 2 in G minor, Op. 16
SHOSTAKOVICH Symphony No. 9 in E-flat major, Op. 70

Dec 4th
7:30pm

Dragon Conducts Elgar Enigma Variations

Resident Conductor Christopher Dragon lends his patented zeal to this program highlighted by Elgar’s Enigma Variations, wistfully portraying a host of the composer’s friends, family, and acquaintances in an emotional journey through tenderness, bluster, and melancholy. Tubin’s Concerto for Double Bass features your Colorado Symphony’s own Principal Bass Steve Metcalf in a starring role while Rossini’s Overture from *William Tell* highlights some of the most recognizable musical passages of all time, including the thunderous finale which is sure to have you on the edge of your seat. Christopher Dragon, conductor

Steve Metcalf, bass
ROSSINI William Tell Overture
TUBIN Concerto for Double Bass
ELGAR Enigma Variations, Op. 36

Jan 7th
7:30pm

Marin Alsop Conducts

Marin Alsop, the famed Conductor Laureate and former Music Director for your Colorado Symphony, makes her long-awaited return, leading a thrilling program of illustrious works. Copland’s signature American sound is on full display in this beautiful suite from the ballet *Appalachian Spring*, while Barber’s Second Essay exhibits exhilarating power throughout. This curated suite from Prokofiev’s *Romeo and Juliet* provides a stirring finale to Maestra Alsop’s return.

Marin Alsop, conductor
BARBER Essay No. 2, Op. 17
COPLAND *Appalachian Spring*: Suite
PROKOFIEV *Romeo and Juliet*: Suite

Feb 11th
7:30pm

Berlioz Symphonie fantastique

Esteemed former Principal Guest Conductor Douglas Boyd returns to Boettcher Concert Hall for a program brimming with emotion beginning with Mendelssohn’s *The Hebrides*. Inspired by the composer’s initial viewing of the misty Scottish Isle of Staffa, “Fingal’s Cave” features swirling and soaring string lines, beautifully portraying sea waves and the rugged, rural landscape of Scotland. Your Colorado Symphony’s own Principal Flute, Brook Ferguson, takes center stage on Mozart’s elegant Flute Concerto No. 1, overflowing with tantalizing melodies that will highlight the virtuosity of the soloist. Berlioz’s *Symphonie fantastique* – a work epic in scale and ambition – requires tremendous forces and uses a recurrent melodic theme that foreshadows the Wagnerian Leitmotif. The composer’s own self-destructive passions are on full display as he takes the audience through the gamut of human emotions in a programmatic finale that is both dramatic and stirring.

Douglas Boyd, conductor
Brook Ferguson, flute
MENDELSSOHN *The Hebrides*, Op. 26 “Fingal’s Cave”
MOZART Flute Concerto No. 1 in G major, K. 313
BERLIOZ *Symphonie fantastique*, Op. 14

Feb 25th
7:30pm

Beethoven Symphony No. 5

One of the most sought-after conductors of his generation, Markus Stenz leads your Colorado Symphony in a Beethoven double feature, showcasing two cornerstones of the orchestral canon together, just as when they premiered in Vienna in 1808. Beethoven’s “Pastorale” Symphony originally dubbed “recollections of life in the country” is a brilliant programmatic projection of nature and the composer’s ultimate homage to the great outdoors, brimming with color and texture that seem accessible to all the senses as it instantly transports you to the Viennese countryside. The Fifth Symphony which famously begins with the ominous four-note motif signifying “fate knocking at the door” is one of the most recognizable and well-known compositions in the classical –, capping an exhilarating tour through Beethoven’s heroic middle period.

Markus Stenz, conductor
BEETHOVEN Symphony No. 6 in F major, Op. 68 “Pastorale”
BEETHOVEN Symphony No. 5 in C minor, Op. 67

Mar 26th
7:30pm

Holst The Planets conducted by Peter Oundjian

Holst’s mystical masterpiece – *The Planets* – offers an enchanting portrayal of Earth’s celestial neighbors. Listen as Holst draws on astrological traits and mythological nature to create seven unique scores that are both timeless and otherworldly – from the ominous, fierce, and remorseless Mars to the majestic and poignant beauty of Saturn. One-to-watch pianist Jan Lisiecki – who charmed audiences and critics alike during his last performance alongside your Colorado Symphony – brings the color and moods of Grieg’s Piano Concerto to life. Under the baton of guest conductor Peter Oundjian, Florence Price’s *The Oak* overflows with rich, vibrant texture, completing a blissful performance you’ll need to see to believe.

Peter Oundjian, conductor
Jan Lisiecki, piano
PRICE *The Oak*
GRIEG Piano Concerto in A minor, Op. 16
HOLST *The Planets*

Apr 29th
7:30pm

R. Strauss conducted by Jun Märkl

After conducting lauded performances of Mozart’s Requiem in 2017 and Debussy’s *La Mer* in 2020, Jun Märkl returns leading your Colorado Symphony through three German romantic masterpieces. Ingrid Fliter lends sensitivity, poise, and clarity to Schumann’s seminal Piano Concerto, one of the most beautiful in the –. Strauss’ *Don Juan* is wildly modern for the time, and incredibly challenging for the orchestra, as evidenced by a horn player’s famous utterance prior to its premiere, “Dear God! What sin have we committed, for You to send us this rod for our backs!” Strauss’ *Till Eulenspiegel’s Merry Pranks* is a tone poem depicting Till – a mischievous rogue who scorns authority through brevity and humor, a delightful ode to one of the most colorful figures in German folklore that will come alive before your eyes in the hands of Maestro Märkl.

Jun Märkl, conductor
Ingrid Fliter, piano
R. SCHUMANN Piano Concerto in A minor, op. 54
R. STRAUSS *Don Juan*, Op. 20
R. STRAUSS *Till Eulenspiegel’s Merry Pranks*, Op. 28

May 13th
7:30pm

Mahler Symphony No. 5

Your Colorado Symphony welcomes acclaimed conductor Asher Fisch to the podium, leading Mahler’s riveting Fifth Symphony. Known for his use of colossal orchestras, Mahler offers a musical landscape that is transfixing and varied – proceeding from tragedy to triumph over five daunting movements in a work Marin Alsop once dubbed the “orchestral equivalent of climbing Mount Everest”. The first half features a pair of female composers with Joan Tower’s Fanfare for the Uncommon Woman – and Jessie Montgomery’s Piano Concerto. The fanfare is a series of five, each dedicated to noteworthy women who are “risk-takers and adventurers,” including Alsop to whom the first fanfare is dedicated and who previously recorded all five of Tower’s fanfares while with the Colorado Symphony. Awadagin Pratt will dazzle audiences on Montgomery’s Piano Concerto. A former pupil of Tower’s, Montgomery is a star on the rise, having recently been named composer in residence for the Chicago Symphony Orchestra. These compositions will shine alongside one of Mahler’s most revered works.

Asher Fisch, conductor
Awadagin Pratt, piano
JOAN TOWER Fanfare for the Uncommon Woman
JESSIE MONTGOMERY Piano Concerto
MAHLER Symphony No. 5 in C-sharp minor

May 27th
7:30pm

Beethoven Symphony No. 9 with the Colorado Symphony & Chorus

Your Colorado Symphony and Colorado Symphony Chorus, plus a star-studded cast of vocal soloists, cap a joyous return season with a pair of colossal choral masterpieces that are sure to delight and inspire. Guest conductor Peter Oundjian lends his experienced hand to Bruckner’s *Te Deum*, a majestic hymn of thanksgiving and one of the most remarkable declarations of faith ever composed. Beethoven’s Ninth Symphony – so often enlisted for its brilliance, magnitude, and thematic potency – has endured for almost two centuries as the greatest artwork about peace, freedom for all, and brotherhood ever created. This grand hymn to humanity offers a hopeful and inspiring sendoff to a remarkable season.

Peter Oundjian, conductor
Angela Meade, soprano
Kelley O’Connor, alto
Matthew Plenk, tenor
Thomas Cannon, baritone
Colorado Symphony Chorus
BRUCKNER *Te Deum*
BEETHOVEN Symphony No. 9 in D minor, Op. 125, “Choral”

Boettcher Concert Hall /
Denver Performing Arts Complex
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