



For immediate release
Thursday, March 6, 12 p.m.

Boston Symphony Orchestra Music Director Andris Nelsons Returns in April to Lead Programs Dedicated to Shostakovich, Marking the Completion of Its Decade-Long Recording Project and the 50th Anniversary of the Composer's Death

Decoding Shostakovich Offers Four Weeks of Concerts (**Apr. 6–May 3**) Along with Six Humanities Events, Celebrating the March 28 Release of Deutsche Grammophon's Box Set of the BSO's Complete Shostakovich Recordings since 2015

Soloists on the Shostakovich Programs Include **Yo-Yo Ma** (Apr. 11) and **Baiba Skride** (May 2 & 3), Both Featured on Newly Released Concerto Recordings in the Box Set

Standout Beethoven Interpreter **Mitsuko Uchida** Performs the Composer's Fourth Piano Concerto on a Program with Shostakovich's Symphony No. 15 (Apr. 17–19)

A World Premiere BSO Commission by Grawemeyer Prize Winner **Aleksandra Vrebalov** Featuring the **Tanglewood Festival**

Chorus on a Program with Stravinsky's *Symphony of Psalms* and Shostakovich's *Symphony No. 6* (Apr. 26 & 27)

The **Coolidge Corner Theatre** Will Screen the 1964 Version of *Hamlet* Scored by Shostakovich and Starring Laurence Olivier Accompanied by a Talk by Historian and Author **Harlow Robinson** (Apr. 23)

Spring Programs Continue at the **Tanglewood Learning Institute** in Lenox, Culminating with the "**Close to Home**" **Mini-Festival** (May 16–18)

Other Previously Announced Spring Highlights Include:

The **Boston Symphony Chamber Players** to Perform Shostakovich Piano Quintet with Guest **Gilbert Kalish** (Apr. 6)

BSO to Perform Shostakovich-Focused Programs at **Carnegie Hall** with **Uchida** and **Ma** as Guest Soloists (Apr. 23 & 24)

BSO to Perform Shostakovich Programs in Vienna, Riga, and Prague, and at the **Shostakovich Festival Leipzig** with Skride as Guest (May 8–24)

[Click here for the list of BSO concerts and events this spring](#)

[Click here for a listing of *Decoding Shostakovich* events](#)

[Click here for a season press kit](#)



Andris Nelsons conducts Beethoven Symphony No. 7 with the BSO, January 2025 (Winslow Townson)

Over the final four weeks of the 2024–25 Symphony Hall season (Apr. 6–May 3), **Andris Nelsons** caps his tenth anniversary season at Symphony Hall by revisiting the music of Dmitri Shostakovich that has featured so prominently throughout his tenure at the BSO. The programs celebrate the completion of the BSO’s decade-long recording project with the highly anticipated March 28 release of a 19-CD box set on the Deutsche Grammophon label ([see announcement](#)). Prior recordings in the cycle have earned four Grammy Awards and a mountain of rave reviews, and the forthcoming box set offers new concerto recordings featuring cellist **Yo-Yo Ma**, pianist **Yuja Wang**, and violinist **Baiba Skride** as well as the towering *Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk* opera with **Kristine Opolais** in the title role. The programs also mark the 50th anniversary year of the Russian composer’s death, which is the focus of the Leipzig Gewandhaus’ [Shostakovich Festival Leipzig](#), where the BSO will conclude its May 2025 European tour.

Following an all-Shostakovich program with Symphonies No. 6 and No. 11 (*The Year 1905*) on April 10, Nelsons pairs performances of the symphonies with a concerto performance by acclaimed soloists: a single, sold-out performance of Symphony No. 11 with **Yo-Yo Ma** in Shostakovich’s Cello Concerto No. 1 (April 11); Symphony No. 15, his final symphony, with **Mitsuko Uchida** in Beethoven’s

Piano Concerto No. 4 (Apr. 17–19); and Symphony No. 8 with **Baiba Skride** in Violin Concerto No. 1 (May 2 & 3). The Uchida and Ma programs travel to Carnegie Hall on April 23 and 24, respectively.

In another highlight, Nelsons, the BSO, and the **Tanglewood Festival Chorus** under Choral Director **James Burton** perform the world premiere of *Love Canticles*, a new commission for chorus and orchestra by **Aleksandra Vrebalov**. (Apr. 26 & 27). With support from the Massachusetts Cultural Council's New Works Fund, the BSO commissioned Vrebalov to compose a psalm setting using the same musical forces as Stravinsky's work, which Serge Koussevitzky commissioned for the BSO's 50th anniversary. Originally from the former Yugoslavia and influenced in part by Orthodox chant, Vrebalov is a 1999 composition alumna of the Tanglewood Music Center and winner of the prestigious 2023 Grawemeyer Award for Music Composition. The same program includes both Stravinsky's choral masterpiece *Symphony of Psalms* and Shostakovich's Symphony No. 6. These two works launch the BSO's multi-season initiative "faith in our time," a reflection on the religious and spiritual dimensions of compositions past and present. The survey will continue at Tanglewood with performances of Poulenc's *Gloria*, the world premiere of a new work by Carlos Simon for the Tanglewood Festival Chorus, and a recital by the vocal ensemble The Sixteen, as well as in to-be-announced programs in the BSO's 2025–26 season.

Quote from Andris Nelsons, BSO Music Director and Head of Conducting at Tanglewood:

"The musicians of the Boston Symphony Orchestra and I are thrilled to share our passion for the genius music of Dmitri Shostakovich with audiences in Boston, New York and in Europe this spring. We look forward to revisiting many of the works that we have recorded together over the past decade, including Shostakovich's Cello Concerto No. 1 with Yo-Yo Ma and Violin Concerto No. 1 with Baiba Skride. We are also delighted to return to Europe for concerts in Vienna, Riga, Prague, and furthering our Alliance with the Gewandhausorchester Leipzig at the Leipzig Shostakovich Festival. The fear and darkness, humor and irony, and hidden hope within Shostakovich's music allow us to experience facets of both his personal experience as well as those of collective human existence."

Quote from Chad Smith, BSO President and CEO:

"It is hard to believe that fifty years have passed since Shostakovich's death. His music is as urgent and relevant as ever, coded with messages that continue to illuminate much of the darkness in our world. In the months ahead, the BSO will traverse many of Shostakovich's major works—in Boston, in New York, in the

Baltics, and across Europe—as we bring to a close our decade-long immersion in his works. I am particularly pleased that our emerging humanities work will allow us to explore those threads of meaning across a number of programs, large and small.

"Shostakovich created deeply personal works which grappled with humanity's most challenging questions. Similarly, our work at the BSO compels us to grapple with those issues. In our concerts, our humanities programs, and indeed in our forthcoming box set of the complete Shostakovich Symphonies, we encourage you to join us in this journey of discovery."

***Decoding Shostakovich*, Humanities Events to Contextualize and Complement the Concerts**

As with the Beethoven symphonies in January, the BSO Humanities Institute spotlights this monthlong exploration of Shostakovich's legacy with *Decoding Shostakovich*, a series of six events that combine lectures, discussion, and live music to dive into the Soviet composer's biography and examine and contextualize his music in relation to his political and cultural environment.

Festival events begin with two lecture performances at the **BYSO Youth Center for Music** featuring **Matthew Heck**, Director of the Conservatory Program at The Rivers School and acclaimed Shostakovich scholar. Heck will first present "*Muddle Instead of Music*": *Shostakovich and Censorship*, discussing "formalism" in Shostakovich's work in tandem with a performance of the composer's Sonata for Cello and Piano in D minor by BSO cellist **Christine Lee** and pianist **Gilbert Kalish** (Apr. 2, 6 p.m.). The following week's program, *Decoding Shostakovich, Literally*, considers the self-referential musical monogram Shostakovich wove throughout his music and features a performance by the Grammy Award-winning **Parker Quartet** (Apr. 9, 6 p.m.).

In partnership with the **Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy at Tufts University**, the BSO presents a panel discussion *Music Diplomacy and U.S.-Soviet Cultural Exchanges* at **ASEAN Auditorium** at The Fletcher School. Hosted by **Arik Burakovsky**, Associate Director of the Russia and Eurasia Program at Tufts, panelists **Alan Henrikson**, **Carla Canales**, **Ivan Kurilla**, and **Gabrielle Cornish** will reflect on the role of music and the arts as a vehicle for cultural diplomacy in both Shostakovich's time and modern society. Retired BSO violinist **Victor Romanul** will play Shostakovich's Romance from *The Gadfly*, Op. 97a and selections from the composer's Five Pieces (Apr. 15, 6 p.m.).

Author, journalist, and Northeastern Professor Emeritus **Harlow Robinson** gives an introductory lecture for *Shostakovich in Soviet Cinema* at **Coolidge Corner Theatre**, followed by a complete showing of the 1964 Lenfilm adaptation of *Hamlet*, for which Shostakovich wrote one of his most highly regarded film scores (Apr. 23, 6:30 p.m.). Robinson also hosts *Judaism in the Soviet Union* at the **Vilna Shul** in Beacon Hill, including a performance of Shostakovich's song cycle *From Jewish Folk Poetry* with soprano **Josie Larsen**, mezzo-soprano **Mary Kray**, tenor **Matthew Anderson**, and pianist **Joey Vasconi** (Apr. 30, 6 p.m.).

Decoding Shostakovich concludes with *Form and Function: The Legacy of Brutalism*, an exploration of the history of Brutalist architecture taking place at **Boston City Hall**, itself a prominent example of Brutalist design. **Mark Pasnik**, Professor of Architecture at Wentworth Institute of Technology and founding principal of the architecture firm OverUnder, hosts the discussion, which includes a performance from Shostakovich's 24 Preludes, Op. 34 by pianist **Jonathan Senik** (May 7, 6 p.m.).

All *Decoding Shostakovich* festival events are free and may be reserved on the [BSO website](#), with the exception of *Shostakovich in Soviet Cinema* at Coolidge Corner Theatre. Paid tickets for the film event may be reserved on the [Coolidge Corner Theatre website](#). [Click here](#) for a listing of festival events and more detailed descriptions.

Boston Symphony Chamber Players Welcome Pianist Gilbert Kalish

In their final performance of the season, the **Boston Symphony Chamber Players** perform Shostakovich's Piano Quintet in G minor, Op. 57, featuring pianist **Gilbert Kalish** (Apr. 6 at Jordan Hall). The program also offers contemporary works by two of today's most prominent female composers, Sofia Gubaidulina (Sonata for bass and piano) and Elena Langer (*Five Reflections on Water* for winds and strings, conducted by BSO Assistant Conductor **Anna Handler**). A former Dudamel Fellow, Handler was recently named Kapellmeister of the Deutsche Oper Berlin starting in the 2025–26 season.

Open Rehearsal Series Offers Unique Glimpse into the Orchestra at Work

The season's final High School Open Rehearsal (Apr. 10, 10:30 a.m.) is an all-Shostakovich program for students in grades 8–12. Students and teachers from Boston Public Schools may attend [High School Open Rehearsals](#) for free, subject to availability and with advance reservation. Students from other schools are welcome to attend at discounted rates. Please contact our Group Sales office at 617-638-9345 or groupsales@bso.org.

BSO's Shostakovich Programs Continue in Europe (May 8–24)

Immediately following the conclusion of the Symphony Hall season, Nelsons and the BSO travel to Europe along with Skride and **Gautier Capuçon** to perform works by Shostakovich in Vienna, Riga, and Prague before spending ten days in Leipzig, where the complete 15 symphonies and six concertos will be performed by the BSO, the Gewandhausorchester Leipzig, and a Festival Chamber Orchestra composed of Tanglewood Music Center Fellows and students of the Mendelssohn Orchestra Academy as part of the [Shostakovich Festival Leipzig](#) marking the 50th anniversary of the composer's death. Former BSO Assistant Conductor **Anna Rakitina** will conduct the Festival Orchestra in two concerts. [Click here](#) for the BSO's European tour press release.

Year-Round Programming Continues at the Linde Center in Lenox through the Tanglewood Learning Institute (TLI) Events April 13–May 18

Previously announced TLI events in Studio E at the Linde Center for Music in Lenox include a chamber concert featuring four **BSO string musicians** (Apr. 13), *Modern Jazz Ministry* with award-winning pianist **Isaiah J. Thompson** (May 2), and a recital by acclaimed flutist **Claire Chase** (May 10).

The 2024–25 TLI fall/winter/spring season will conclude with the recently announced “Close to Home” mini festival (May 16–18). Featuring artists and ensembles who call the Berkshires and surrounding area home, this series of events further solidifies TLI's commitment to be “of the community.” On Friday (May 16), jazz musician **Natalia Bernal** and her quartet will be featured along with special guests, **Kids 4 Harmony**. Next, on Saturday (May 17), the Linde Center plays host to the **Berkshire's Children's Chorus**—celebrating 35 years of songs and smiles—and the **Berkshire Concert Choir**, with special guest **Wanda Houston**, who create community with choral music. Finally, on Sunday

(May 18), TLI will offer a special morning event in collaboration with **Families Like Ours** to welcome individuals with diverse abilities and their families to the Linde Center in an environment with relaxed house rules, reduced volume and lighting levels, extra space for movement, available noise-reduction headphones, and a designated quiet room. That afternoon, TLI welcomes back the **Eagles Trombone Ensemble** founded by **Mike Oft** and led by retired BSO principal trombone **Ron Baron** to close out the festival. For more information, check the [full TLI schedule](#).

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How to Get Tickets

Tickets are available to purchase by calling 888-266-1200 or visiting [bso.org](#). Tickets for the five free *Decoding Shostakovich* humanities events also may be reserved at [bso.org](#). Tickets for the *Hamlet* film screening and lecture may be purchased through the Coolidge Corner Theatre at [coolidge.org](#). Tickets to the BSO's Carnegie Hall concerts are available for purchase at [carnegiehall.org](#). Tickets for BSO performances in Europe are available through the concert venues in each city.

Discounts and Special Ticket Opportunities

- BSO's highly successful [\\$25 tickets for people under 40 program](#)
- **College Card** and **High School Card** available throughout the season
- **\$10 Rush Tickets program**, offering significantly discounted tickets to concertgoers on the day of concert, continues for select performances throughout the year
- We offer discounts to groups of 15 or more people through our [Group Sales](#) office
- Discounts for health care professionals, members of the Massachusetts Teachers Association, military personnel and veterans, and EBT, WIC, and ConnectorCare Card holders

Brief Information About the BSO

Led by Music Director **Andris Nelsons** since 2014, the Boston Symphony Orchestra gave its inaugural concert in 1881 and opened Symphony Hall—widely acclaimed as one of the greatest concert halls in the world—in 1900. Today, the BSO reaches millions of listeners through not only its concert performances in Boston and at Tanglewood—the orchestra’s summer home in Lenox and Stockbridge, Mass.—but also via educational and community programs, radio, television, recordings, and tours. [Click here](#) for further information about the Boston Symphony Orchestra and Symphony Hall. [Click here](#) for an Andris Nelsons bio.

Titles for BSO Artistic and Executive Leadership

Andris Nelsons, Ray and Maria Stata BSO Music Director and Head of Conducting at Tanglewood

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Keith Lockhart, Julian and Eunice Cohen Boston Pops Conductor

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James Burton, Alan J. and Suzanne W. Dworsky BSO Choral Director and Conductor of the Tanglewood Festival Chorus

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Press Contacts

Jan Devereux, Senior Director of Public Relations & Communications, BSO
(jdevereux@bso.org)

Matthew Erikson, Senior Publicist and Media Relations Lead
(merikson@bso.org)

Rena Cohen, Publicist (rcohen@bso.org)

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