

Thursday, April 7, 8pm
Friday, April 8, 1:30pm | The Walter Piston Society Concert
Saturday, April 9, 8pm

Anna Rakitina conducting

Tchaikovsky Piano Concerto No. 2 in G, Opus 44
Allegro brillante
Andante non troppo
Allegro con fuoco
Alexandre Kantorow, piano

{intermission}

Ellen Reid *When the World as You've Known It Doesn't Exist* (2019)
Eliza Bagg, Martha Cluver, and Estelí Gomez, sopranos

Sibelius Symphony No. 7 in C, Opus 105, in one movement
Adagio—Vivacissimo—Adagio—Allegro molto moderato—
Allegro moderato—Vivace—Presto—Adagio—Largamente molto—
Affetuoso—Tempo I

Bank of America is proud to sponsor the BSO's 2021-22 season.

The evening concerts will end about 9:50 and the afternoon concert about 3:20.

Thursday evening's performance by Alexandre Kantorow is supported by the Roberta M. Strang Memorial Fund.

This week's performances of Ellen Reid's *When the World as You've Known It Doesn't Exist* are supported in part by income from the Morton Margolis Fund in the BSO's endowment.

Friday-afternoon concert series sponsored by the Brooke Family

The Program in Brief...

BSO Assistant Conductor Anna Rakitina returns for this program featuring French pianist Alexandre Kantorow in his BSO debut in Pyotr Tchaikovsky's rarely performed Piano Concerto No. 2. It was composed for his friend Nikolai Rubinstein, who had initially criticized his First Concerto but who had, in the meantime, begun to champion that work; unfortunately Rubinstein died before he had a chance to play the Second. By coincidence, both concertos were premiered in the U.S.—the First in Boston and the Second in New York City. The Second Concerto is unusual in featuring solo violin and cello along with the piano in the second movement. The complete piece was last heard in Symphony Hall in a Boston Pops concert of 1940; the BSO itself last performed it in August 1986, at Tanglewood.

Tennessee-born sound artist Ellen Reid is active as a composer of concert music as well as for installations and film. She won the 2019 Pulitzer Prize for her opera *p r i s m*. Her sonically inventive orchestra work *When the World as You've Known It Doesn't Exist* was commissioned by the New York Philharmonic as part of their Project 19 series and was premiered in February 2020.

The music of the Jean Sibelius is inextricably linked to the culture and geography of Finland. Throughout his career he turned to Finnish legend for inspiration for his symphonic poems and infused his seven symphonies with a similar sense of narrative and atmosphere. In the Seventh Symphony, he abandons the symphonic genre's traditional structure of movements, casting the work in a single twenty-minute span in which contrasting episodes blend seamlessly from one to the next. Completed in 1924, the Seventh Symphony was among Sibelius's last works; no music survives from the final thirty years of his life.

Robert Kirzinger

Notes on the Program

Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky
Piano Concerto No. 2 in G, Opus 44

Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky was born at Kamsko-Votkinsk, Vyatka Province, Russia, on May 7, 1840, and died in St. Petersburg on November 6, 1893. He began writing the Piano Concerto No. 2 on October 22, 1879, in Kamenka, Ukraine, and finished it there on May 10, 1880. The work was dedicated to Nikolai Rubinstein. The premiere took place in New York City on November 12, 1881, with soloist Madeline Schiller and the New York Philharmonic conducted by Theodore Thomas. Sergei Taneyev was the soloist for the first Russian performance in Moscow in May 1882, conducted by Anton Rubinstein.

The score of Tchaikovsky's Piano Concerto No. 2 calls for solo piano, 2 flutes, 2 oboes, 2 clarinets, 2 bassoons, 4 horns, 2 trumpets, timpani, and strings (first and second violins, violas, cellos, and double basses). The concerto is about 45 minutes long.

"I have started writing a piano concerto in a leisurely sort of way. I only work in the mornings before lunch, but composition is something of an effort. I do not feel any great desire to write but experience on the other hand has shown that I cannot live without work.... Health excellent, sleep good."

So wrote Tchaikovsky in a letter to his brother Anatoly on October 29, 1879, from Kamenka in Ukraine. After her marriage in 1860, his beloved sister Alexandra (Sasha) lived at her husband's bucolic estate near Kamenka, in central Ukraine, where Tchaikovsky frequently spent long periods of time. Kamenka (Kamianka in Ukrainian) was known as a resort and artists' colony, and over the years had attracted (besides Tchaikovsky) such Russian cultural luminaries as Catherine II's lover Grigory Potemkin and poet Alexander Pushkin. Kamenka became a kind of second home and refuge for the chronically wandering composer. Many of his major symphonic and operatic works were created there in whole or in part, including the Symphony No. 2 ("Little Russian," or "Ukrainian"), the opera *Eugene Onegin*, and the Piano Concerto No. 2.

Tchaikovsky completed the sketch for the long first movement in Kamenka before leaving for Moscow. While there, he heard his friend Nikolai Rubinstein give a "magnificent" performance of his new G major piano sonata. This inspired him to dedicate the new concerto to Rubinstein, who had also conducted the premiere of *Eugene Onegin* a few months earlier. By this time, Tchaikovsky had apparently forgiven Rubinstein for his savage criticism in 1875 of the First Piano Concerto, which he had denounced as "trivial," vulgar, and exhibitionistic. After it became popular with audiences, however, Rubinstein had reversed course and added the Concerto to his repertoire, becoming the first in a long line of virtuosi who helped to make it one of the most frequently performed (if not *the* most frequently performed) piano concertos in the classical repertoire, and one of Tchaikovsky's most beloved works.

From Moscow Tchaikovsky travelled to Europe, continuing work on the Concerto in Paris and Rome. By late February he had made a complete sketch and wrote to his publisher Pyotr Jurgenson, "I am very pleased and self-satisfied about this concerto, but what lies ahead—I cannot say."

Tchaikovsky returned to Kamenka in April and completed the orchestration there. Eager for a performance, he sent the score to Rubinstein and to his former student Sergei Taneyev, who had given the Moscow premiere of the First Piano Concerto under Rubinstein's direction. Taneyev replied that "there was absolutely nothing to be changed." Rubinstein was less enthusiastic in a letter to Tchaikovsky. "I played it through with Taneyev the other day and I would only say that it seemed, at first sight, strange to me that the piano part is so episodic and mostly in dialogue with the orchestra, and not enough in the foreground over the accompaniment of the orchestra. But as I say all this having scarcely played the concerto once through, perhaps I am wrong."

Sadly, Tchaikovsky would never hear Rubinstein perform the piece, for the virtuoso pianist and conductor, one of the major figures in 19th-century Russian music, died suddenly in Paris in March 1881 at the early age of 45. The responsibility of introducing the Concerto now fell to Taneyev. But as had been the case six years earlier with the First Concerto (premiered by Hans van Bülow in Boston), the world premiere in fact took place in the United States, this time in New York. Taneyev gave the Russian premiere six months later at the first concert of the Industrial and Cultural Exhibition.

Reviews were favorable. In a letter to Tchaikovsky written one month later, however, Taneyev expressed reservations he said were shared by others about the excessive length of the first two movements and the prominence of the violin and cello in the Andante at the expense of the piano part. In 1888, apparently responding to Taneyev's criticisms, Tchaikovsky made three small cuts for a series of performances he conducted with soloist Vasily Sapellnikov.

Pianist and composer-conductor Alexander Siloti (a future professor at New York City's Juilliard School, and soloist in the Boston Symphony's first performance of the Concerto No. 2, in 1898) made more extensive editorial changes for Jurgenson's planned republication of the score. But Siloti not only made cuts; he revised and simplified the piano part and altered the formal structure of the first two movements. Tchaikovsky strongly disapproved of some of the changes, especially those proposed for the enormous cadenza that occurs in the middle—rather than as

expected at the end—of the first movement. Tchaikovsky told Jurgenson that Siloti “is overdoing it in his desire to make this concerto easy, and wants me to literally *mutilate* it for the sake of simplicity.” Jurgenson agreed, but Tchaikovsky died before the revised score appeared in 1897—in Siloti’s unauthorized version. Today, most performances, including the present one by the BSO, use Tchaikovsky’s original version published by Jurgenson in 1881.

By far the longest of the concerto’s three movements, the Allegro brillante opens with a forthright orchestral statement of the martial main subject, which is immediately taken up by the piano. This theme has a formal, processional quality, almost like ballroom music, moving stepwise from the tonic G. No sooner has the tender, lyrical second theme in E-flat major appeared in the woodwinds (with string tremolo underneath) than it is taken up by the piano solo. The piano and orchestra play often separately in an episodic structure, with brilliant mini-cadenzas for the keyboard sprinkled throughout. But the centerpiece is a knuckle-twisting six-minute cadenza that comes much earlier than expected, serving as the second part of the development section and the climax of the first movement. What follows is more repetition of the two themes in turn by piano and orchestra.

What surprises many observers about the Andante non troppo in D major is how little music goes to the piano. So prominent are the violin and cello parts, both solo and in duet, that the movement becomes almost a triple concerto. But the heartfelt melody that Tchaikovsky uses for a charming series of chamber-style variations (with another piano cadenza in the middle) has the clear stamp of his nostalgic, slightly sentimental musical personality, heard in fuller expression in the recently completed *Eugene Onegin*.

For the rapid-fire finale, Tchaikovsky adopts what several critics have labeled a “Schumannesque” approach, with a characteristic dotted 2/4 rhythm. Three carnivalesque themes rush by in a sort of modified rondo form without extensive development. This movement does feature much greater integration of the piano and orchestra parts, and is the only one lacking a cadenza.

Like so much of Tchaikovsky’s music, the Second Piano Concerto makes one want to dance. In 1941, Russian-American choreographer George Balanchine created a work called *Ballet Imperial* based on the piece (as “abridged, rewritten and rearranged by Alexander Siloti”) for the American Ballet Caravan. Balanchine described it as a “tribute to St. Petersburg, [the French ballet master] Petipa, and Tchaikovsky, set in the grandeur of a palace, the scenic view suggesting the splendors of the Imperial capital of Russia.” First staged at the Teatro Municipal in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, on June 25, 1941, *Ballet Imperial* remained in the repertoire of the New York City Ballet for many years, revised and retitled as *Piano Concerto No. 2* and *Tschaikovsky Piano Concerto No. 2*. In *Balanchine’s Tchaikovsky*, a book of interviews with Balanchine compiled by Solomon Volkov, Balanchine (who had set many ballets to Tchaikovsky scores) remarked that the Second Piano Concerto “may not be the greatest music, but it’s perfect for dancing. After we did it, everyone started playing it. Before, no one played it at all. Now, when I turn on the radio, I hear the Second Concerto more and more frequently.”

Harlow Robinson

Harlow Robinson is an author, lecturer, and Matthews Distinguished University Professor of History, Emeritus, at Northeastern University. His books include Sergei Prokofiev: A Biography, The Last Impresario: The Life, Times and Legacy of Sol Hurok, and Russians in Hollywood, Hollywood’s Russians. He has contributed essays and reviews to The Boston Globe, The New York Times, Los Angeles Times, Symphony, Musical America, and Opera News, and program essays to The Boston Symphony, Los Angeles Philharmonic, New York Philharmonic, Aspen Music Festival, and Metropolitan Opera.

The first American performance of Tchaikovsky’s Piano Concerto No. 2, as mentioned above, was the world premiere, with Madeline Schiller as soloist and the New York Philharmonic led by Theodore Thomas on November 12, 1881.

The first Boston Symphony Orchestra performance of Tchaikovsky’s Piano Concerto No. 2, featuring Alexander Siloti as soloist, was led by Emil Paur on February 5, 1898 (following an open rehearsal February 4) in Boston Music Hall. Before this week, the BSO’s most recent performances at Symphony Hall were in November 1912, with George Proctor as soloist and Karl Muck conducting. The piece was played by the Boston Pops under Arthur Fiedler in the 1940s, but prior to this week the BSO’s only two performances since 1912 were at Tanglewood: Gary Graffman’s with Erich Leinsdorf in July 1969, and Viktoria Postnikova’s with Carl St. Clair on August 15, 1986.

Ellen Reid

***When the World as You’ve Known It Doesn’t Exist* (2019)**

Ellen Reid was born in Oak Ridge, Tennessee, on March 23, 1983, and lives in New York and Los Angeles. She composed *When the World as You’ve Known It Doesn’t Exist* in 2019 as part of the New York Philharmonic’s

Project 19 commissioning initiative. Jaap van Zweden led the New York Philharmonic and sopranos Eliza Bagg, Martha Cluver, and Estelí Gomez in the premiere, February 20, 2020. These are the first performances by the BSO of music by Ellen Reid.

The score of *When the World as You've Known It Doesn't Exist* calls for 3 flutes (3rd doubling piccolo), 3 oboes, 3 clarinets, 2 bassoons and contrabassoon, 4 horns, 3 trumpets, 3 trombones, tuba, percussion (vibraphone, suspended cymbal, crash cymbals, tam-tam, snare drum, tom-toms, bass drum), three soprano vocalists, piano, and strings (first and second violins, violas, cellos, and double basses). The piece is about 10 minutes long.

Although Ellen Reid sang in choirs and played piano as a youngster, she did not begin composing music until after her freshman year at Columbia University. She had grown interested in musicology and the sociology of music and was thinking of going into ethnomusicology, but a professor there—the trombonist, composer, and musical experimentalist George Lewis—raised the idea of her becoming a composer. After she received her bachelor's degree she taught at an international school in Thailand for a couple of years, acquiring a firsthand appreciation for that country's musical traditions. She returned to the United States for graduate work at CalArts (California Institute of the Arts), where she earned a master's degree in 2011, studying composition with David Rosenboom.

Reid quickly staked her place as a composer of breadth and originality—so quickly, in fact, that she was awarded the Pulitzer Prize for Music in 2019 for her opera *p r i s m*. That work, to a libretto by Roxie Perkins, features a cast of two solo singers and four plot-driving dancers. It was premiered in November 2018 as part of the Los Angeles Opera's Off Grand series, and since then has received further airings in New York and in São Paulo, Brazil. The opera considers a survivor's psychological struggles in the aftermath of sexual assault.

Reid has assumed a leading role in the Los Angeles arts scene, having been commissioned to write works for all four of that city's most prominent musical organizations: the Los Angeles Philharmonic, Los Angeles Master Chorale, Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra (where she has served as creative adviser and composer-in-residence), and Los Angeles Opera. She identifies herself as a composer and a sound artist, suggesting the extent to which her work is not restrained within what was traditionally considered the composer's domain. Many of her works are multidisciplinary collaborations: some are immersive, and others are site-specific. Her *Playground*, for example, was an interactive sound sculpture in which participants engaged with a swing set tricked out with such sound-making additions as car mufflers, tailpipes, and gas containers. She provided the music for *Thought Experiments in F-sharp minor*, an artwork by Janet Cardiff and George Bures Miller, for which musicians of the Los Angeles Philharmonic were arrayed on different levels of Walt Disney Concert Hall as the audience circulated through the space. She was one of six composers who contributed to *Hopscotch*, by director Yuval Sharon and The Industry, a "mobile opera" played out in various locations in Los Angeles, during which audience members were transported along predetermined routes in vehicles, repeatedly changing cars along the way.

Her oeuvre ranges through orchestral pieces, chamber music, choral works, jazz collaborations, compositions using electronic sampling, and works drawing on non-Western musical traditions. It should not be a surprise that a composer strongly connected to Los Angeles should also become involved in film music. Reid composed the score for the 2014 feature film *The Midnight Swim*, a drama-mystery written and directed by Sarah Adina Smith; she also contributed music to Smith's 2016 film *Buster's Mal Heart* (which also featured music by the Los Angeles underground artist Mister Squinter). With composer Missy Mazzoli she co-founded Luna Composition Lab, a New York-based mentorship program for young self-identified female, non-binary, and gender non-conforming composers.

Reid has synesthetic tendencies as a composer, though not as a listener. She explained in an interview, "When I write, I think a lot about color, and these pieces have really different colors, which I think then makes the orchestration sound different. ... It's almost like the color happens first, and then I search for the color with the sound."

Ellen Reid composed *When the World as You've Known It Doesn't Exist* as part of the New York Philharmonic's Project 19 commissioning initiative, through which 19 women are writing new works to celebrate the centennial of the 19th Amendment, which gave women the right to vote. In this work, the specific musical color involves a much-divided string section (the strings sometimes sounding simultaneously in up to 12 separate parts), prominent percussion lines, and the inclusion of three soprano singers employed selectively for textless tones—an unorthodox inclusion in an orchestral piece.

James M. Keller

James M. Keller has been the New York Philharmonic's Program Annotator, the Leni and Peter May Chair, since 2000 and also serves as the program annotator of the San Francisco Symphony.

Essay reprinted from the New York Philharmonic's February 2020 program book with the author's permission.

Ellen Reid on her *When the World as You've Known It Doesn't Exist*

My piece is not directly about the 19th Amendment, but it is about unabashedly presenting my artistic voice. This, at times, feels like my most political action.

When the World as You've Known It Doesn't Exist begins in a musical landscape of exhausted and disembodied questioning. The piece then moves through waves of blazing anger and strength toward something close to acceptance. Its musical vocabulary consists of clouds of sound, exaggerated contrasts, large drop-offs, and surprise.

I enjoyed focusing on rhythm as a central theme in this work; a rhythmic ostinato spirals into focus as the piece progresses, alternatively taking on a driving identity and a jagged, antagonistic character in different sections of the work. The largely chromatic melodic material points toward the numb and disoriented mood I evoke in the beginning of the piece. One of these melodies is at first presented tightly coiled and, like the work's rhythmic ostinato, it spirals outward as the piece progresses.

One of music's greatest attributes is that it can mean something different for each listener. While the work holds much specific significance for me, I hope each listener has their own journey.

Jean Sibelius

Symphony No. 7, Opus 105, in one movement

Jean (Johan Julius Christian) Sibelius was born at Tavastehus (Hämeenlinna), Finland, on December 8, 1865, and died at Järvenpää, at his country home near Helsinki, on September 20, 1957. He completed his Seventh Symphony on March 2, 1924, and conducted the first performance on March 24, 1924, in Stockholm. The first performance in Helsinki took place on April 25 that year, Robert Kajanus conducting.

The score of the Seventh Symphony calls for 2 each of flutes, oboes, clarinets, and bassoons, 4 horns, 3 trumpets, 3 trombones, timpani, and strings (first and second violins, violas, cellos, and double basses). The piece is about 20 minutes long.

Sibelius's affinity for his country's land and folklore is apparent in his music from the start. His earliest piece, for violin and cello pizzicato, was called *Waterdrops*. As a young violin student, he would spend hours improvising on the instrument while wandering in the woods or by the lake near his family's quiet home in Finland's interior. Years later, as he observed in his diaries, the beauties of the land near his country estate in Järvenpää, the small country village, northeast of Helsinki, to which he moved in 1904, helped distract him from the atrocities of civil war that ravaged Finland in the final phase of its struggle against Russia at the close of World War I. Perhaps it is the elemental nature of his music that explains the composer's international popularity even during his own lifetime: the basic impulse strikes home entirely without our needing to analyze his achievement.

In the spring of 1889, in his last days as a student at the Helsinki Conservatory, Sibelius was named "foremost amongst those who have been entrusted with bearing the banner of Finnish music" by the influential Finnish critic Karl Flodin. On April 28, 1892, the first performance of the twenty-six-year-old composer's eighty-minute-long symphonic poem *Kullervo* for soloists, male chorus, and orchestra proved something of a national event. Soon after this came the symphonic poem *En Saga*, written for Robert Kajanus, conductor of the Finnish National Orchestra. Shortly after that, Sibelius wrote the *Karelia* Suite for an historical pageant at the University of Helsingfors. Other tone poems would include the four episodes of the *Lemminkäinen* Suite (begun in 1895; *The Swan of Tuonela* is the third of these), *Finlandia* (1900), *Pohjola's Daughter* (1906, based on the same segment of the *Kalevala* that inspired an aborted operatic project about ten years earlier), and, much later, *Tapiola* (1926), the only major orchestral work to follow his last symphony, No. 7 (1924).

At the same time, a sense of geography informs the symphonies: Sibelius's writing for the strings can be biting and jagged on the one hand, open and ethereal on the other. Woodwinds frequently undulate in pairs, birdlike. Groundswells of brass and drums, rocking figures throughout the orchestra, somehow seem relevant to the Nordic land- and seascape. Bengt de Torne, one of Sibelius's biographers, recalled that "One day I mentioned the impression which always takes hold of me when returning to Finland across the Baltic, the first forebodings of our country being given us by low, reddish granite rocks emerging from the pale blue sea, solitary islands of a hard, archaic beauty, inhabited by hundreds of white sea-gulls. And I concluded by saying that this landscape many centuries ago was the cradle of the Vikings. 'Yes,' Sibelius answered eagerly, and his eyes flashed, 'and when we see those granite rocks we know why we are able to treat the orchestra as we do!'"

The essential background to Sibelius's Seventh Symphony is simply enough set out, and tied to that of the Fifth and Sixth symphonies. On his fiftieth birthday, December 8, 1915—celebrated as a national holiday—Sibelius conducted the premiere of his Fifth Symphony in Helsinki. He had subjected the score to last-minute alterations even at the final rehearsal and, despite its success, was not satisfied. He introduced a revised version a year later, in December 1916, but still continued to work on the score, finishing only several years later and presenting *that*

version to the public in November 1919. Meanwhile, however, ideas for two more symphonies had begun to germinate: in May 1918, Sibelius wrote that he “might come out with all three symphonies [i.e., the Fifth, Sixth, and Seventh] at the same time” and even offered general descriptions of the two new works. The Seventh was to be “in three movements—the last an Hellenic rondo.” As it happened, Sibelius did not finish all three works at once: the Sixth was completed in January 1923, the Seventh, as he noted in his diary, “on the second of March 1924, at night.”

Sibelius’s Seventh Symphony would be his last. The year 1925 saw the completion of his symphonic poem *Tapiola*, but then, aside from some minor works and revisions to earlier ones, the final three decades of the composer’s life were marked by musical silence, the so-called “silence from Järvenpää”—described by one writer as “perhaps the most profound silence in musical history.” For a long time there were rumors of an Eighth Symphony, and it was even announced for presentation on several occasions—one of them the first-ever Sibelius symphony cycle, given by Serge Koussevitzky and the Boston Symphony Orchestra during the 1932-33 season. Sibelius himself seems to have confirmed the score’s existence on several occasions; perhaps it was destroyed after his death in accordance with his own wishes. Confronted with the Seventh Symphony, one is tempted to wonder whether Sibelius could have produced a satisfactory Eighth, one that could have satisfied him at all: the Seventh is absolutely breathtaking in its individuality and achievement. But we know from the succession of his earlier works that Sibelius was a composer capable of enormous strides when he moved from one work to the next, so we are left without a satisfactory answer. We have only the Seventh as his last word on the subject of the symphony.

The Seventh did not turn out, as projected, in three movements, but as a single movement, and it was called on the occasion of its premiere not a “symphony” but a “symphonic fantasia.” The music is continuous, but there are divisions that help us know where we are as the music proceeds. Following the printed score, we have this sequence of tempo markings (underlinings mine):

Adagio—Vivacissimo—Adagio—
Allegro molto moderato—Allegro moderato—
Vivace—Presto—Adagio—
Largamente molto—Affettuoso—Tempo I

But we do not *hear* all these changes as they happen and should not try to do so during the course of a performance. However, *three* of the divisions—and perhaps this reflects something of Sibelius’s original three-movement intent after all—are large enough that they shape our sense of the symphony’s overall structure: the opening Adagio, which, at about eight minutes, takes a bit more than one-third of the symphony’s total playing time; the scherzo-like Vivacissimo, whose material returns briefly following its associated Adagio; and the Allegro moderato, which has two themes and which behaves in outline almost like a “normal” symphonic movement. We can hear the material from the Presto onward as a coda to and reflection upon the whole.

Operating at another level of activity, and clearly audible, is a very specific bit of musical material that serves to herald our arrival at important junctures: a solemn incantation for solo trombone, which grows almost mystically from the opening Adagio, shapes the brass-dominated character of the second Adagio (midway through, following the Vivacissimo), and then returns near the end to restore the atmosphere of awe and nature-awareness that characterizes the beginning and serves to frame the work in its entirety.

The symphony begins with a call to attention from the timpanist (whose contribution to this piece must be one of the most extraordinary in the entire musical literature), strings rising slowly from the depths, a curiously-hued chord for strings, drum, winds, and horns, and woodwinds fluttering like birds against an ocean backdrop. Then, richly colored by the violas, music, for divided strings, of an awe-inspired reverence. Slowly, the entire orchestra adds to the texture, and from this full sound, to which the individual sonorities of strings, winds, brass, and drums each make their particular contribution, as they will throughout the symphony, the trombone incantation sounds apart, summoning our attention and drawing us into the proceedings, preparing us for all that is to follow. Now, everything that happens—from the rushing strings and chattering woodwinds of the Vivacissimo, to the brass-subdued tidewaters of the second Adagio, to the near dancelike simplicity (at least at its start) of the Allegro, to the echoes, in the closing pages, of the beginning, and that final chord of barely relieved tension—happens logically and inevitably.

Our sense of “inevitability in music” can serve with reference to specific elements of the music itself—rhythm, motivic construction, thematic relationships—and the way these elements work together to determine the course of the music’s progress. This holds for the music of Sibelius, but there is also something more—the inevitability of nature. Sibelius, from his childhood, cherished a continued awareness of the world around him; he was awed by those forces that would exercise their control for centuries to come. And through his music we sense that, for Sibelius, “those granite rocks” of the Baltic seascape were but the smallest physical embodiment of nature’s powers.

Marc Mandel

Marc Mandel joined the staff of the Boston Symphony Orchestra in 1978 and managed the BSO's program book from 1979 until his retirement as Director of Program Publications in 2020.

The first American performance of Sibelius's Symphony No. 7 was given by Leopold Stokowski and the Philadelphia Orchestra on April 3, 1926.

The first BSO performances of the Sibelius Seventh were given by Serge Koussevitzky in December 1926. Later Boston Symphony performances were given by Charles Munch, Richard Burgin, Colin Davis, Antonio Pappano, Paavo Berglund, and John Storgårds (the most recent subscription performances, in January 2019).

To Read and Hear More...

For a complete BSO performance history of any piece on the program, readers are encouraged to visit the BSO Archives' online database, "HENRY," named for BSO founder Henry Lee Higginson, at archives.bso.org.

David Brown's four-volume *Tchaikovsky* is the major biography of the composer (Norton). Brown is also the author of the single-volume *Tchaikovsky: The Man and His Music* (Pegasus Books). Anthony Holden's biography *Tchaikovsky* gives ample space to the theory that Tchaikovsky committed suicide because of his homosexuality (Bantam Press). The useful BBC Music Guide volume on Tchaikovsky's symphonies and concertos is by John Warrack (University of Washington Press). The Tchaikovsky article in *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians* is by Roland John Wiley, whose several books on the composer include the Tchaikovsky volume in the Oxford University Press "Master Musicians" series.

Recordings of the Second Piano Concerto include Elisabeth Leonskaja's with Kurt Masur and the New York Philharmonic (Warner Classics), Garrick Ohlsson's with Vladimir Ashkenazy and the Sydney Symphony Orchestra (SSO Live), and Denis Matsuev's with Valery Gergiev and the Mariinsky Orchestra (Mariinsky).

Ellen Reid's career and work are well documented at ellenreidmusic.com, the composer's website. Many of her works or portions of works can be found on YouTube and other video streaming services. Her Pulitzer Prize-winning opera *prism* was recorded by the Choir of Trinity Wall Street, NOVUS NY, and soloists Rebecca Jo Loeb and Anna Schubert led by Julian Wachner (Decca).

Robert Layton's *Sibelius* in the "Master Musicians" series is a useful life-and-works study (Schirmer). Layton translated Erik Tawaststjerna's three-volume Sibelius biography into English, but only the first two are available in the U.S. (University of California Press, though Faber and Faber issued all three as ebooks). Also useful are Andrew Barnett's *Sibelius* (Yale University Press), the essay compendium *The Sibelius Companion*, edited by Glenda Dawn Ross (Greenwood Press), and Lionel Pike's essay collection *Beethoven, Sibelius, and "the Profound Logic"* (Athlone Press, London). Michael Steinberg's essays on all seven Sibelius symphonies are in *The Symphony—A Listener's Guide* (Oxford). Philip Coad discusses the symphonies in the "Sibelius" chapter of *A Guide to the Symphony*, edited by Robert Layton (Oxford).

The Boston Symphony Orchestra's cycle of the seven Sibelius symphonies under Colin Davis in 1975 set a standard for recordings of these works (Philips). Other recordings of the cycle include Paavo Berglund's with the Helsinki Philharmonic (Warner Classics), Osmo Vänska's with the Lahti Symphony Orchestra (bis), and Leif Segerstam's with the Helsinki Philharmonic.

Robert Kirzinger/Marc Mandel

Guest Artists

Anna Rakitina

Appointed an assistant conductor of the Boston Symphony Orchestra in the 2019-20 season, Anna Rakitina is only the second woman in the orchestra's history to be awarded that position. Ms. Rakitina makes her subscription series debut with this week's concerts. She made her Tanglewood debut in August 2021, and in January 2021 she led the orchestra in an episode of the 2020-21 BSO NOW streaming season. Among the highlights of her 2021-22 season, she makes debuts with the Vancouver Symphony Orchestra, Orchestre National de Lille, Malmö Symphony Orchestra, Gothenburg Symphony Orchestra, and Deutsche Staatsphilharmonie Rheinland-Pfalz. In 2019-20 Ms. Rakitina was a Dudamel Fellow of the Los Angeles Philharmonic, conducting the orchestra's youth concerts at Walt Disney Concert Hall as well as education and community programs such as Youth Orchestra Los Angeles (YOLA). She has also worked with WDR Sinfonieorchester, Danish National Symphony Orchestra, Orchestra of the Maggio Musicale Fiorentino, Lucerne Festival Strings, Gürzenich Orchester Köln, Orchestre Philharmonique de Radio France, George Enescu Philharmonic Orchestra, Hamburger Symphoniker, National Philharmonic Orchestra of Russia, Taipei Symphony Orchestra, and National Taiwan Symphony Orchestra. In 2018 she became a fellow of the National Philharmonic Orchestra of Russia. Anna Rakitina was second-prize winner of the Malko Competition

2018, and further won prizes at the Deutscher Dirigentenpreis 2017 and TCO International Conducting Competition Taipei 2015. Born in Moscow to a Ukrainian father and a Russian mother, Ms. Rakitina began her musical education as a violinist and studied conducting at Moscow Tchaikovsky Conservatory in the class of Stanislav Diachenko, assistant of Gennady Rozhdestvensky. From 2016 to 2018 she studied conducting in Hamburg, Germany, with Ulrich Windfuhr. She was a finalist of Das kritische Orchester in Berlin in 2018. Anna Rakitina was a conducting fellow of the Lucerne Festival Academy led by Alan Gilbert and Bernard Haitink, and has attended masterclasses with Gennadiy Rozhdestvensky, Vladimir Jurowski, and Johannes Schlaefli. Together with Russian conductor Sergei Akimov, she founded the Moscow-based Affrettando Chamber Orchestra, an ensemble renowned for its high artistic level and innovative programs.

Alexandre Kantorow

Making his BSO debut this week, Alexandre Kantorow became in 2019 the first French pianist to win the gold medal at the Tchaikovsky Competition, also winning the Grand Prix, which has only been awarded three times before in the competition's history. At age 16, he made his debut at La Folle Journée festival in Nantes. Since then, he has played with many of the world's major orchestras. Highlights of this and future seasons include concerts with the Orchestre de Paris, Staatskapelle Berlin, Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, Philharmonia, and Royal Stockholm Philharmonic, and tours with the Orchestre National de Toulouse, Budapest Festival Orchestra, and Munich Philharmonic; conductors with whom he performs include Rouvali, Yamada, Petrenko, and Pappano. In recital, Mr. Kantorow appears at major concert halls such as the Concertgebouw Amsterdam in their Master Pianists series, Konzerthaus Berlin, Philharmonie de Paris, BOZAR in Brussels, and Stockholm Konserthus, and at the most prestigious festivals, such as La Roque d'Anthéron, Piano aux Jacobins, Verbier Festival, and Klavierfest Ruhr. He is artist in residence at Radio France, the Orchestre Philharmonique de Monte Carlo, and the Gstaad Festival. Chamber music is also one his great pleasures, and he regularly performs with cellist Victor Julien-Laferrrière, violinists Renaud Capuçon and Daniel Lozakovich, and baritone Matthias Goerne. Highly acclaimed as a recording artist, Mr. Kantorow records exclusively with BIS. His latest album of Brahms solo works received the 2022 Diapason d'Or and the 2021 Trophée Radio Classique. His recordings of the Saint-Saëns concertos nos. 3-5 and his solo disc of Brahms, Bartók, and Liszt also won the Diapason d'Or and *Classica's* Choc de l'Année in 2019 and 2020 respectively. In 2020, he won the Victoires de la Musique Classique in two categories: Recording of the Year and Instrumental Soloist of the Year. In 2021 he received the Trophée d'Année from Radio Classique. Born in France and of French-British heritage (he has three British grandparents), Mr. Kantorow has studied with Pierre-Alain Volondat, Igor Lazko, Franck Braley, and Rena Shereshevskaya.

Eliza Bagg

Los Angeles-based experimental musician and soprano Eliza Bagg makes her BSO debut in these concerts. Along with creating her own work, she has collaborated with prominent composers on projects ranging from Meredith Monk's opera *Atlas* with the Los Angeles Philharmonic, directed by Yuval Sharon, to chamber motets by John Zorn. Other highlights include Michael Gordon's opera *Acquanetta*, directed by Daniel Fish, new works by David Lang and Bryce Dessner with Roomful of Teeth, and collaborations with electronic artists Ben Frost and Julianna Barwick in the Liquid Music Series. Ms. Bagg writes, produces, and performs as Lisel, a solo avant-pop project, whose 2019 debut album on Luminelle Records received critical acclaim from publications including *Pitchfork*, *Billboard*, and *The Fader*. She is noted for her use of extended techniques and her unique vocal sound, the basis for her music's ethereal, otherworldly landscape. She sings regularly as a member of Roomful of Teeth and ModernMedieval trio and has sung with such groups as the Bang on a Can All-Stars, Lorelei Ensemble, Trinity Wall Street, A Far Cry, New Morse Code, andplay, NOW Ensemble, TENET, Conspirare, and Victoire. She has performed as a soloist in the new music series of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, New York Philharmonic, Los Angeles Philharmonic, North Carolina Symphony, and San Francisco Symphony. Eliza Bagg graduated in 2012 with a BA from Yale University. She was born and raised in Durham, North Carolina.

Martha Cluver

Soprano Martha Cluver, making her BSO debut, is an original member of Roomful of Teeth, performs regularly with Pomerium, and is a former longtime member of the Church of Trinity Wall Street Choir. Among her recent projects is the vocal trio ModernMedieval with Eliza Bagg and artistic director Jacqueline Horner-Kwiatek. The group has collaborated with electronic musician Julianna Barwick and has performed new works by Barwick, Caleb Burhans, Daniel Thomas Davis, Joel Friedman, Ben Frost, Horner-Kwiatek, Angélica Negrón, Caroline Shaw, and more. Ms. Cluver has been a guest soloist with AXIOM, Albany Symphony's Dogs of Desire, Remix Ensemble Casa da Música, Janáček Philharmonic, Prague Modern, Deutsches Symphonie-Orchester Berlin, S.E.M. Ensemble,

Rebel Baroque, Alarm Will Sound, ACME, Wordless Music Orchestra, Vox Vocal Ensemble, Voices of Ascension, Signal, ICE, American Composers Orchestra, Fifth House Ensemble, Clarion Music Society, S^o Percussion, and Nexus Percussion. Notable solo performances include works by Morton Feldman, John Adams, Louis Andriessen, Arvo Pärt, Kaija Saariaho, Claude Vivier, and George Benjamin and world premieres by Caleb Burhans, John Zorn, Alice Shields, and Emmanuel Nunes. Ms. Cluver spends most of her musical life as a chamber musician, focusing on early and new music. She has performed and recorded many works by Steve Reich, and frequently works with the composers of Bang on a Can. She attended the Eastman School of Music, where she earned her bachelor's degree in music performance, viola, in 2003. She lives in Brooklyn with her husband and fellow musician Caleb Burhans and their daughter, Fiona.

Esteli Gomez

Soprano Esteli Gomez is quickly gaining recognition as a stylish interpreter of early and contemporary repertoires; this week's concerts mark her BSO debut. In January 2014 she was awarded a Grammy with contemporary octet Roomful of Teeth for Best Chamber Music/Small Ensemble Performance; in November 2011 she received first prize in the Canticum Gaudium International Early Music Vocal Competition in Poznan, Poland. An avid performer of early and new music, Ms. Gomez can be heard on the Juno-nominated recording *Salsa Baroque* with Montreal-based Ensemble Caprice, as well as Roomful of Teeth's self-titled debut album. Recent highlights include her solo debut with the Seattle Symphony in Nielsen's Symphony No. 3, the role of Francesca Cuzzoni in a concert of Handel arias with Mountainside Baroque, the world premiere of a song cycle by Andrew McIntosh with the piano/percussion quartet Yarn/Wire, soprano solos in Haydn's *Lord Nelson* Mass with Bach Collegium San Diego, performances of Craig Hella Johnson's oratorio *Considering Matthew Shepard* in Boston and Austin, solo teaching residencies at University of Oregon, Eugene, and University of Missouri, Kansas City, and tours with Roomful of Teeth across North America and Europe. Originally from Santa Cruz, California, Ms. Gomez received her bachelor of arts with honors in music from Yale College and her master of music from McGill University, studying with Sanford Sylvan.