

## Bronfman Plays Rachmaninoff's Third

Los Angeles Philharmonic  
**Philippe Jordan**, conductor  
**Yefim Bronfman**, piano

INVITATIONAL  
REHEARSAL  
THURSDAY,  
FEBRUARY 3, 2022  
10:00AM

**BORODIN** Overture to *Prince Igor* (c. 10 minutes)

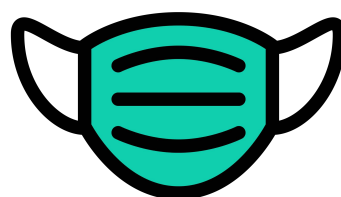
**RACHMANINOFF** Piano Concerto No. 3 in D minor, Op. 30  
(c. 39 minutes)  
Allegro ma non tanto  
Intermezzo  
Finale  
**Yefim Bronfman**

### INTERMISSION

**PROKOFIEV** Suite from *Romeo and Juliet* (c. 35 minutes)  
Montagues and Capulets  
The Young Juliet  
Madrigal  
Minuet  
Masks  
Romeo and Juliet  
Friar Laurence  
Death of Tybalt  
Romeo and Juliet Before Parting  
Romeo at Juliet's Tomb  
Death of Juliet

There may be an intermission during this rehearsal.

Thank you for attending the Friends Invitational Rehearsal  
and for your generous support of the LA Phil!



## MASK POLICY

Please keep mask on for the  
duration of the rehearsal.

Guests must wear a mask at  
all times unless they are  
actively eating or drinking.

Food or drink is not  
permitted inside the theater.

Thursday's performance is  
made possible by the generous  
support of the **Elaine and Bram  
Goldsmith Great Artists Fund**.

Concerts in the Thursday 2  
subscription series are  
generously supported by the  
**Otis Booth Foundation**.

Please note that this is a working rehearsal.

Programs and artists subject to change.

# AT A GLANCE

## So Russian!

Russia's secular art music has always been concerned with aspects of national identity, in part because it came late to the game. It is not really surprising that Alexander Borodin was a composer by avocation rather than profession, since there were no Russian conservatories or professional concert orchestras when he was born, or that his great (and unfinished) work was *Prince Igor*, an opera about Russian political and cultural expansion.

But once going, Russian musical institutions quickly produced a flood of extraordinary talent, such as the phenomenal composer-pianists Sergei Rachmaninoff and Sergei Prokofiev. Both were distinctively individual creative artists and yet both were also self-consciously and identifiably Russian, as these dramatically different but quintessentially Russian works demonstrate. Inescapably Russian, perhaps: as John Updike wrote, "Russia is so Russian!" —**John Henken**

## OVERTURE TO *PRINCE IGOR* Alexander Borodin (1833–1887)

**Composed:** 1869–1887

**Orchestration:** piccolo, 2 flutes, 2 oboes, 2 clarinets, 2 bassoons, 4 horns, 2 trumpets, 3 trombones, tuba, timpani, and strings

**First Los Angeles Philharmonic performance:** August 6, 1942, Thomas Beecham conducting

Little could he have known what life had in store for him when, at age 25, with a medical degree in hand, Alexander Borodin went to Heidelberg to do research in chemistry. While there, the world of music opened up to him, and he became as immersed in it as he was in science. Wagner operas, and the works of Mendelssohn, Chopin, and Schumann—many introduced to him by a young pianist who was to become his wife—were the volatile elements that produced a passion that became the source of new-found joy. Unfortunately, considering his full-time occupation as a very successful chemist, music—or rather, finding time for it—also became a source of frustration. After leaving Heidelberg and traveling throughout Europe, Borodin returned to Mother Russia where,

along with the other members of the "Mighty Five" (Balakirev, Cui, Mussorgsky, and Rimsky-Korsakov), he began to research his country's folk music and then to use it as a basis for his compositions. Obviously, Borodin was a man of determination and energy, for in his second occupation he was able to be extremely productive, writing a variety of works including symphonies, chamber music, songs, piano pieces, and the opera *Prince Igor*.

Indeed, crucial to the story of Borodin and to virtually all the music he wrote was that opera. He planned it as early as 1869, but ironically, although he worked on it at various times throughout his life, it remained unfinished at his death in 1887. The setting of the opera is Russia in the 12th century, and the story deals with the battles of the Prince and the Polovtsi. The opera was completed by Rimsky-Korsakov (who also completed and/or reworked many of Mussorgsky's pieces) and Alexander Glazunov. Part of the finishing-up work had to do with the Overture, which was one of the last parts Borodin undertook to write. According to an account of the situation, the composer had played the Overture—which he based on various themes from

the opera—at the piano for friends but had not yet written it down. Glazunov's reconstruction of it was accomplished by his referring to the particular sections of the opera that corresponded to Borodin's outline and consulting sketches found in the composer's effects. —**Orrin Howard**

## PIANO CONCERTO NO. 3 IN D MINOR, OP. 30 Sergei Rachmaninoff (1873–1943)

**Composed:** 1909

**Orchestration:** 2 flutes, 2 oboes, 2 clarinets, 2 bassoons, 4 horns, 2 trumpets, 3 trombones, tuba, timpani, percussion (bass drum, cymbals, snare drum, triangle), strings, and solo piano

**First Los Angeles Philharmonic performance:** January 2, 1930, Artur Rodzinski conducting, with Vladimir Horowitz, soloist

Right around the time Stravinsky was emerging as Russia's great avant-gardiste, his fellow countryman Sergei Rachmaninoff was embarking on the second phase of his stellar career as a concert pianist in the Romantic tradition. Rachmaninoff had

been a student of Arensky, who had been a student of Rimsky-Korsakov, and of Taneyev, who had studied with Tchaikovsky. Thus, Rachmaninoff straddled two Russias—both chronologically, between the composers of “old Russia” and the Soviets, and aesthetically, between the Nationalism of Rimsky-Korsakov and the academic Romanticism of Tchaikovsky.

1909 marked the beginning of Rachmaninoff’s last years in Russia leading up to the Bolshevik Revolution. He was now performing more as a pianist and conductor than composing, but he began the Third Piano Concerto in the summer of 1909 at his home at Ivanovka, in southern Russia, for a planned American concert tour that fall.

Premiered by the composer with the New York Symphony under Walter Damrosch on November 28, 1909, the piece was recognized as characteristic Rachmaninoff: excruciatingly difficult piano writing with sprawling chords and magnificent lines, lush orchestral textures, and moody, bittersweet melodies. And although today it is considered a pinnacle of Romantic concerto writing, the Third Concerto was performed by few besides Rachmaninoff himself until Horowitz introduced it to the mainstream.

The themes of the entire work are presented in the first movement. First, a dotted rhythmic motive serves as the motor of the whole concerto. The opening Allegro begins in the orchestra, and the piano overlays the melancholic but dignified first theme. Fragments of the second theme are introduced by the horn, clarinet, trumpet, oboe, and piano, then it is fully stated in the strings, a staccato-figure variation on the rhythmic motive that evolves into a sweet, singing tune. The

development is a long crescendo/accelerando in which the two themes seem to morph together, and the orchestral accompaniment is in a constant taffy-pull with the piano’s elaborate phrases.

The wintry Intermezzo is introduced by the orchestra, and after 32 measures, the piano storms in and dissolves into stillness. The theme is developed in the remote key of D-flat, alternately brooding and calm. In the middle section, the mood brightens considerably with a waltz in 3/8, outlining the tune in the context of fluttering triplets. The sullen mood returns, and one last grand gesture explodes into the *alla breve* Finale. Here again are variations on those initial two themes; it’s the velocity, the rhythmic ferocity, and hammering staccato that create variety and interest. A middle *scherzando* section presents decorative piano variations on the second theme over a calm orchestra scene. The return of tempo brings the concerto to a close with furious drive, the piano playing thick chords in a percussive staccato. —Meg Ryan

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### SUITE FROM ROMEO AND JULIET

Sergei Prokofiev (1891–1953)

**Composed:** 1935

**Orchestration:** piccolo, 2 flutes, 2 oboes, English horn, 2 clarinets, bass clarinet, tenor saxophone, 2 bassoons, contrabassoon, 4 horns, 3 trumpets, 3 trombones, tuba, timpani, percussion (bass drum, bells, cymbals, maracas, snare drum, tambourine, triangle, xylophone), harp, celesta, piano, and strings

**First Los Angeles Philharmonic performance:** May 19, 1959, Yuri Faier, conducting the complete ballet

After moving back to the Soviet Union in 1933 following a self-imposed exile of fifteen years, Sergei Prokofiev suddenly found a new sense of purpose as a composer. Composed in a burst of frenzied activity during the summer of 1935, *Romeo and Juliet* nevertheless proved to be controversial even before a note of the music was heard in public. After the directors of the Bolshoi Ballet in Moscow read through the score and pronounced it “impossible to dance to,” Prokofiev, in a cold rage, extracted two suites from the ballet in 1936. Guessing—correctly—that the suites would create a demand to hear the work in its entirety, Prokofiev soon had the pleasure of seeing the Bolshoi and its bitter rival, the Kirov Ballet of Leningrad, vie for the right of the first production. The honor of the first Soviet performance fell to the Kirov on January 11, 1940, some two years after *Romeo and Juliet* had been given its world premiere in Brno, Czechoslovakia, in December of 1938.

In spite of its considerable length—at nearly two and a half hours, it is the most ambitious of Prokofiev’s non-operatic scores—*Romeo and Juliet* is a carefully molded musical and emotional structure in which the music is not only intimately related to the stage action but is also a self-referential dramatic construct that can readily stand on its own.

“Montagues and Capulets” is made up of two widely spaced moments from the ballet: the slow, threatening music which accompanies the Duke’s order that the warring families must cease fighting on pain of death, and, from the ballroom scene, the menacing and slightly oafish Dance of the Knights, which hints that the gentleman may have forgotten to take off their armor.

“The Young Juliet” brilliantly captures the rapidly changing

moods of the character's adolescent personality.

"Madrigal" is the deceptively simple title for the music accompanying Romeo's first awakenings of passion for the lovely young maiden he spies at the Capulets' ball.

The guests who arrive at the ball do so dancing a slightly pompous "Minuet" (they will leave to the Gavotte that Prokofiev initially used as the third movement of his "Classical" Symphony).

"Masks," which immediately follows the Minuet in the ballet, describes—with the aid of tense percussion and nose-thumbing winds—the stealthy arrival of Romeo, Mercutio, and Benvolio in the enemy stronghold.

"Romeo and Juliet" is the most sensitive musical treatment the celebrated "balcony scene" has yet received. The harp and muted violins suggest the expectant stillness; Romeo

enters gently in the strings, answered by Juliet's graceful flute. Following two ecstatic outbursts, the music gives itself back to the silence of the evening.

The cleric "Friar Laurence" is represented by a pair of themes, one in bassoons, tuba and harp, the other in divided cellos.

The "Death of Tybalt" forms the shattering conclusion of Act II. The music first describes the savage yet strangely high-spirited fight in which Mercutio is slain by Tybalt—neither fully aware of the seriousness of the situation until it is too late—and then the furious duel, underscored by sharp, percussive jabs and brutal dissonances, in which Romeo avenges Mercutio's death. Heavy, measured thuds of the timpani herald Tybalt's funeral procession, bringing the scene to a close.

"Romeo and Juliet Before Parting" is an impassioned, highly developed section built

on the theme of Romeo's love. The soaring music is shot through with intimations of impending misfortune.

In "Romeo at Juliet's Tomb," the love theme points up his grief with overwhelming poignance. At the very end, a contrabassoon speaks as from the depths of the tomb but is silenced by soft shimmering strings above, which a piccolo intones a single high note while cellos and bass clarinet throb as in deep sorrow.

"Death of Juliet" is the Adagio that ends the ballet when Juliet awakens to find Romeo dead beside her and decides to follow him. Prokofiev depicts the full measure of the tragedy here with a swelling summation of vast poignancy, including an emotionally intense reference to the music of "The Young Juliet." It ends quietly, ebbing away like Juliet's life. — *compiled from notes by Orrin Howard and Jim Svejda*

## ABOUT THE ARTISTS



### PHILIPPE JORDAN

Coming from an artistic Swiss family, Philippe Jordan is regarded as one of the most established and important conductors of our time, with a

career that has taken him to all the world's major opera houses, festivals, and orchestras.

He has been Music Director of the Wiener Staatsoper since September 2020 and opened his first season with new productions of *Madama Butterfly*, *Parsifal*, and *Macbeth* along with revivals of *Der Rosenkavalier* and *Le nozze di Figaro*. This season, he will conduct new productions of *Don Giovanni*, *Wozzek*, and *Tristan und Isolde*, as well as revivals of *Parsifal*, *Rosenkavalier*, and *Capriccio*.

Philippe Jordan's career on the podium began as Kapellmeister at Germany's Stadttheater Ulm and at the Staatsoper Unter den Linden in Berlin. From 2001 to 2004, he was principal conductor

of Graz Opera and the Graz Philharmonic Orchestra. During that period, he also debuted at several of the world's leading opera houses and festivals, such as the Metropolitan Opera, Royal Opera House, Covent Garden, Teatro alla Scala, Bavarian State Opera, the Vienna State Opera, and Festspielhaus Baden-Baden, and the festivals of Aix-en-Provence, Glyndebourne, and Salzburg. From 2006 to 2010, he returned to the Berlin State Opera as principal guest conductor. In the summer of 2012, he debuted at the Bayreuth Festival with *Parsifal*, and followed this up in 2017 with Bayreuth's new production of *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg*, which he continued to conduct in subsequent years.

## ABOUT THE ARTISTS

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Between 2009 and 2021, Jordan was musical director of the Opéra National de Paris, where he conducted numerous premieres and revivals, including *Moses und Aron*, *La damnation de Faust*, *Der Rosenkavalier*, *Samson et Dalila*, *Lohengrin*, *Don Carlos* (original French version), *Les Troyens*, *Don Giovanni*, a new production of Borodin's *Prince Igor*, and Wagner's "Ring" cycle in a concert version.

From 2014 to 2020, Jordan has also been principal conductor of the Wiener Symphoniker. Together with the orchestra he has developed complete cycles of Schubert's symphonies, Beethoven's symphonies and piano concertos, a cycle of Bach's masses and oratorios, and contrast-filled programs of Bruckner's last three symphonies coupled with modern classics by Kurtág, Ligeti, and Scelsi.

In the symphonic field, Jordan has conducted the world's most famous orchestras, including the Berliner and Wiener Philharmoniker, Münchner Philharmoniker, Wiener Symphoniker, London Symphony Orchestra, Orchestra Dell'Accademia Nazionale di Santa Cecilia in Rome, Tonhalle Orchester Zürich, Chamber Orchestra of Europe, Mahler Chamber Orchestra, Gustav Mahler Jugendorchester, and the symphony orchestras of Seattle, St. Louis, Dallas, Detroit, Chicago, Cleveland, Philadelphia, Washington, DC, Minnesota, Montreal, Los Angeles, New York, and San Francisco.

His upcoming orchestra engagements include the Symphonieorchester des Bayerischen Rundfunks, the Berliner Philharmoniker, the Israel Philharmonic Orchestra,

the Boston Symphony Orchestra, the Teatro del Maggio Musicale Fiorentino, and the Webern Symphonie Orchester.



### YEFIM BRONFMAN

Internationally recognized as one of today's most acclaimed and admired pianists, Yefim Bronfman stands among a handful of artists regularly sought by festivals, orchestras, conductors, and recital series. His commanding technique, power, and exceptional lyrical gifts are consistently acknowledged by the press and audiences alike.

In the wake of worldwide cancellations beginning in spring 2020, his 2020/21 season began in January 2021 with the Concertgebouwworkest, followed by Bayerischer Rundfunk Orchestra, Berlin Philharmonic, and London's Philharmonia in special programs recorded for streaming. Concerts in North America continued with Dallas, Philadelphia, New York, Atlanta, Houston, and Pittsburgh orchestras despite restrictions imposed by COVID-19, followed by summer in Vail (Philadelphia Orchestra), Aspen, Tanglewood

(Boston Symphony), and Grand Tetons. As 2021/22 Artist-in-Residence with the Amsterdam Concertgebouw, the season began on tour with the orchestra in Europe and will conclude with the world premiere of a concerto commissioned for him from Elena Firsova. The fall continued with the Enescu Festival, Bucharest, and return visits to the New York and Los Angeles philharmonic orchestras and the symphony orchestras of Boston, Houston, St. Louis, San Francisco, Montreal, San Diego, Pittsburgh, Oregon, San Antonio, Cincinnati, and Palm Beach. In recital, he can be heard in California, Arizona, New Mexico, Chicago, and at Carnegie Hall, as well as internationally in Italy, Russia, Spain, and Germany. With the Munich Philharmonic, he will visit Vienna and Frankfurt; Luxembourg and Paris with the Concertgebouw; London with the Philharmonia, and Israel with the Israel Philharmonic.

Born in Tashkent in the Soviet Union, Yefim Bronfman immigrated to Israel with his family in 1973; there he studied with pianist Arie Vardi, head of the Rubin Academy of Music at Tel Aviv University. In the United States, he studied at the Juilliard School, Marlboro School of Music, and the Curtis Institute of Music, under Rudolf Firkusny, Leon Fleisher, and Rudolf Serkin. A recipient of the prestigious Avery Fisher Prize, one of the highest honors given to American instrumentalists; in 2010, he was further honored as the recipient of the Jean Gimbel Lane prize in piano performance from Northwestern University and, in 2015, with an honorary doctorate from the Manhattan School of Music.

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The Los Angeles Philharmonic string  
section utilizes revolving seating on a  
systematic basis. Players listed  
alphabetically change seats periodically.

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