

• PRINCETON SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA  
ROSSEN MILANOV, MUSIC DIRECTOR

2024-2025



## Beethoven's Triple

Basia Danilow, violin   Alistair MacRae, cello   Steven Beck, piano  
October 19 & 20

# 2024-25

ROSSEN MILANOV, Edward T. Cone Music Director

Saturday October 19, 2024, 8pm

Sunday October 20, 2024, 4pm

Richardson Auditorium



## BEETHOVEN'S TRIPLE

**Rossen Milanov**, conductor

**Basia Danilow**, violin

**Alistair MacRae**, cello

**Steven Beck**, piano

**Michael Abels**

*More Seasons*

**Sergei Prokofiev**

Symphony No. 1 in D Major, Op. 25, "Classical"

- I. Allegro con brio
- II. Larghetto
- III. Gavotte: Non troppo allegro
- IV. Finale: Molto vivace

### INTERMISSION

**Ludwig van Beethoven**

Concerto for Violin, Cello, and Piano in C Major, Op. 56, "Triple Concerto"

- I. Allegro non troppo
- II. Largo
- III. Rondo alla polacca

Assistive listening devices and large print programs are available in the lobby.

No one will be admitted during the performance of a piece. No audio or video recording or photography permitted. Dates, times, artists, and programs subject to change.



Made possible by funds from the New Jersey State Council on the Arts, a partner agency of the National Endowment for the Arts.



# Princeton Symphony Orchestra



The **PRINCETON SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA** (PSO) is a cultural centerpiece of the Princeton community and one of New Jersey's finest music organizations, a position established through performances of beloved masterworks, innovative music by living composers, and an extensive network of educational programs offered to area students free of charge. Led by Edward T. Cone Music Director Rossen Milanov, the PSO presents orchestral, pops, and chamber music programs of the highest artistic quality, supported by lectures and related events that supplement the concert experience. Its flagship summer program **The Princeton Festival** brings an array of performing arts and artists to Princeton during multiple weeks in June. Through **PSO BRAVO!**, the orchestra produces wide-reaching and impactful education programs in partnership with local schools and arts organizations that culminate in students attending a live orchestral performance. The PSO receives considerable support from the Princeton community and the New Jersey State Council on the Arts (NJSCA), regularly garnering NJSCA's highest honor. Recognition of engaging residencies and concerts has come from the National Endowment for the Arts, and the PSO's commitment to new music has been acknowledged with an ASCAP Award for Adventurous Programming and a Copland Fund Award. The only independent, professional orchestra to make its home in Princeton, the PSO regularly performs at historic Richardson Auditorium on the campus of Princeton University.

# Music Director

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Edward T. Cone Music Director

**ROSSEN MILANOV** looks forward to collaborating in 2024-25 with established and emerging artists of the orchestral world and helping the PSO's popular June performing arts celebration – The Princeton Festival.

Respected and admired by audiences and musicians alike, he has established himself as a conductor with considerable national and international presence. In addition to leading the PSO, Mr. Milanov is the music director of the Columbus Symphony Orchestra and the Chautauqua Symphony Orchestra.

During his eleven-year tenure with The Philadelphia Orchestra, he conducted more than 200 performances. In 2015, he completed a 15-year tenure as music director of the nationally recognized training orchestra Symphony in C in New Jersey and in 2013, a 17-year tenure with the New Symphony Orchestra in his native city of Sofia, Bulgaria.

Mr. Milanov has collaborated with Komische Oper Berlin (Shostakovich's *Lady Macbeth of Mtzensk*), Opera Oviedo with the Spanish premiere of Tchaikovsky's *Mazepa* and Bartok's *Bluebeard's Castle* (awarded best Spanish production for 2015), and Opera Columbus (Verdi's *La Traviata* and *Rigoletto* and Tchaikovsky's *Eugene Onegin*). He has been seen at New York City Ballet and collaborated with some of the best-known choreographers of our time such as Mats Ek, Benjamin Millepied, and most recently Alexei Ratmansky in the critically acclaimed revival of *Swan Lake* in Zurich with Zurich Ballet and in Paris with La Scala Ballet.

Mr. Milanov is deeply committed to music education, presenting Link Up education projects with Carnegie Hall and the Orchestra of St. Luke's and leading the PSO's annual BRAVO! concerts for thousands of school children. He was named Bulgaria's Musician of the Year in 2005; he won a 2011 ASCAP award for adventurous programming of contemporary music at the PSO; and he was selected as one of the top 100 most influential people in New Jersey in 2014. In 2017, he was recipient of a Columbus Performing Arts Prize awarded by The Columbus Foundation. He is a graduate of the Curtis Institute of Music and The Juilliard School.

# Guest Artists

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Violinist **BASIA DANILOW** enjoys a diverse musical life encompassing chamber music, recording, orchestral and solo performances in the U.S. and abroad. A winner of the Artists International Competition, she has appeared in recital at Lincoln Center, Weill Recital Hall at Carnegie Hall, Merkin Hall, the Kosciuszko Foundation, and in Russia and former Yugoslavia. As a member of the acclaimed Lark Quartet, she performed at prestigious venues in NYC, Washington DC, and London, and on recordings in collaboration with top classical artists. She is concertmaster of the Princeton Symphony Orchestra, a member of the Orchestra of St. Luke's, and, since 1996, an associate member of the Metropolitan Opera Orchestra.



Princeton Symphony Orchestra principal cellist **ALISTAIR MACRAE** has appeared as a soloist, chamber musician, and orchestral principal throughout North America and in Europe, Asia, South America, and the Middle East. He is the Cordelia Wikarski-Miedel Artist in Residence at the University of Puget Sound, cellist of the Puget Sound Piano Trio and the voice and cello duo Soprello, Principal Cello of Symphony Tacoma, and a member of the Artist Faculty at the Brevard Music Center. As a chamber musician and recitalist, he has performed in Carnegie Hall, Palm Beach's Kravis Center for the Performing Arts, and Seattle's Benaroya Hall. His 2024-2025 season includes concerto performances with Princeton Symphony Orchestra, Symphony Tacoma, the Northwest Sinfonietta, and the Rainier Symphony.



A recent New York concert by pianist **STEVEN BECK** was described as "exemplary" and "deeply satisfying" by Anthony Tommasini in the *New York Times*. Mr. Beck made his concerto debut with the National Symphony Orchestra. His annual Christmas Eve performance of Bach's *Goldberg Variations* at Bargemusic has become a New York institution. As an orchestral musician he has appeared frequently with the New York Philharmonic. His discography includes George Walker's piano sonatas, on Bridge Records. A Steinway Artist, he is on the faculty of the University of Massachusetts, Amherst, and teaches orchestral piano at The Juilliard School.

# Princeton Symphony Orchestra

**Rossen Milanov, Edward T. Cone Music Director**

ENDOWED IN PERPETUITY

**Kenneth Bean, Georg and Joyce Albers-Schonberg Assistant Conductor**

ENDOWED IN PERPETUITY

**October 19-20, 2024**

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## **VIOLIN I**

Claire Bourg\*\*

Concertmaster

***The George W. Pitcher Chair,***

ENDOWED IN PERPETUITY

Emma Richman

***The Yvonne Marcuse Chair,***

In Memory of Mark M. Rutzky

Cameron Chase

Cheng-Chih Kevin Tsai

Erica Tursi

Margaret Banks

Sam Parrini

Abigail Hong

Linda Howard

Yuyu Ikeda

## **VIOLIN II**

Jeremiah Blacklow\*\*

***The B. Sue Howard Chair***

Giancarlo Latta

Coco Ziyao Sun

Cheng-Hsun David Tsai

Justus Ross

Rachel Da Young Lim

Rita Wang

Tiffany Chang

## **VIOLA**

Chieh-Fan Yiu\*\*

***The Harriet & Jay Vawter Chair***

Cameren Anai Williams

Beth Meyers

Jacqueline Watson

Torrón Pfeffer

Mikel Rollet

## **CELLO**

Frankie Carr\*\*

***The Julian Grant & Peter Lighte  
Family Chair***

Elizabeth Loughran

Jasmine Pai

Iona Batchelder

Nagyeom Jang

Brian Gadbow

## **BASS**

John Grillo\*

***The Stephanie & Robert Wedeking  
Chair***

Dan Hudson

Stephen Groat

Devin Howell



## **FLUTE**

Ji Young Kim\*\*

*The Lunder/Ezekowitz Family Chair*

Hilary Jones

## **OBOE**

Gilles Cheng\*\*

*The Cynthia & Robert Hillas Chair*

Erin Gustafson

## **CLARINET**

Pascal Archer\*

*The Richard J. & Neil Ann S. Levine  
Chair*

Gi Lee

## **BASSOON**

Brad Balliett\*

*The Cynthia & Robert Hillas Chair*

Zach Feingold

## **HORN**

Steven Harmon\*

*The Dr. Michael L. Barnett Chair*

Colin Weyman

## **TRUMPET**

Jerry Bryant\*

*The Donna & Donald Deieso Chair*

Thomas Cook

## **TIMPANI**

Jeremy Levine\*

*The Anne VanLent Chair*

## **HARPSICHORD**

Hanbyeol Lee\*\*

\*Principal player

\*\* Guest principal player



# Program Notes

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## Michael Abels (b. 1962)

### ***More Seasons***

*Composed 1999*

Michael Abels, 2023 Pulitzer Prize winner and Emmy and Grammy-nominated composer, is celebrated for his innovative scores for Jordan Peele's films *Get Out*, *Us*, and *Nope*. Both *Us* and *Nope* were shortlisted for the Oscar for Best Original Score. In 2022, his work was honored by the Vancouver International Film Festival, the Middleburg Film Festival, and the Museum of the Moving Image. Additionally, *Nope* won Best Score for a Studio Film from the Society of Composers & Lyricists.

Abels is often praised for his unique ability to blend diverse elements, creating vibrant orchestral colors. His work is noted for its "keen ear and deft ability to adapt structural elements from popular music into the symphonic idiom" (Houston Chronicle). As a composer primarily focused on large forms, Abels has crafted over 20 orchestral pieces, performed by prestigious ensembles such as the New York Philharmonic, the Chicago Symphony, and the Los Angeles Master Chorale.

Among his works is *More Seasons*, which he describes as his "own spin" on early Baroque music. In this piece, Abels subjects Vivaldi's themes from *Spring* and *Summer* to "maniacal, minimalist abuses," dubbing it "Vivaldi in a Mixmaster."

Born in Phoenix, AZ, and raised in rural South Dakota, Abels began piano lessons at a young age. He pursued his musical education at the University of Southern California, studying under James Hopkins and Robert Linn. He further expanded his musical horizons by studying West African music with Alfred Ladzekpo at the California Institute for the Arts in 1985-86. Currently, Abels serves as the director of music for New Roads School in Santa Monica, where he oversees a program that integrates hands-on instruction with contemporary music technologies. Besides his composing and teaching, Abels is also an amateur triathlete, demonstrating his diverse interests and dedication to excellence in various fields.

*Instrumentation – two flutes and piccolo, two oboes, two bassoons, two horns, two trumpets, timpani, and strings*

*Duration – 12 minutes*

Michael Abels - Photo by Eric Schwabel  
Costacommunicationsinc - CC BY-SA 4.0





## Sergei Prokofiev (1891-1953)

### **Symphony No. 1 in D Major, Op. 25, "Classical"**

*Composed 1917*

Sergei Prokofiev's *Classical Symphony* is a playful yet sophisticated work that blends the formal elegance of 18th-century symphonic style with the modern, inventive spirit of the early 20th century. Composed in 1917, during a period of immense personal and political upheaval in Russia, the symphony reflects Prokofiev's ambition to create something both nostalgic and forward-looking. Prokofiev believed that the future of music lay in creating works that were both simple and melodic, yet distinctively new.

Prokofiev described his *Classical Symphony* as a piece that Mozart or Haydn might have written had they been alive in his era. He envisioned it as a bridge between the classical traditions he admired and the innovative musical language he was developing. The symphony's title, chosen partly in jest, reflects Prokofiev's mischievous desire to "tease the geese," or provoke his critics, while secretly hoping that the work would indeed become a classic. The *Classical Symphony* succeeds in both respects—it is lighthearted and witty yet enduringly influential, seamlessly integrating the past with the present.

Prokofiev composed the *Classical Symphony* without the aid of a piano, believing that this approach would lend the orchestration a more natural and direct quality. The symphony is compact, with each movement brimming with humor, elegance, and unexpected twists. Prokofiev employed traditional forms but filled them with his signature modern flair: spiky rhythms, surprising harmonies, and clever musical jokes that often upend classical conventions.

The symphony opens with a brisk Allegro, characterized by sharp, non-lyrical themes that twist and turn in unexpected ways. Prokofiev begins with a brief two-measure introduction, immediately launching into contrasting themes that evoke a distinctly modern version of Haydn's spirited style. A nod to the Mannheim school, a fast-rising melodic line known as the "Mannheim rocket" propels the music forward. Prokofiev's development section is filled with witty surprises, such as a grand pause that abruptly halts the music before launching into the recapitulation, which intentionally starts in the "wrong key" before resolving itself.

The second movement, Larghetto, showcases Prokofiev's gift for lyrical writing with a long, flowing melody first presented by the violins and then echoed

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by the flute in a high register, a placement that humorously subverts classical expectations. A contrasting section features lively, delicate sixteenth notes in the winds, brass, and timpani, before the movement ends with a brief, charming coda.

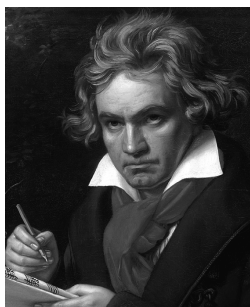
Instead of the customary minuet, Prokofiev presents a Gavotte, an old French dance characterized by its playful leaps and foot-stamping rhythms. The Gavotte's heavy, exaggerated style is a parody of the classical elegance typically associated with this form, further enriched by a contrasting drone trio section that adds a rustic touch.

The finale, *Molto vivace*, is exuberant and full of rhythmic vitality, continuing the symphony's witty dialogue between old and new. Prokofiev's brisk patterns, rapid modulations, and whimsical turns lead the listener through an energetic musical landscape before dashing toward an exhilarating conclusion.

Premiered in Petrograd on April 21, 1918, just months after the Bolshevik Revolution, the *Classical Symphony* emerged during a time of great upheaval in Russia. Despite the tumult, Prokofiev's work transcends its historical context, offering a timeless and joyful escape. Its fusion of classical form with modern sensibilities has ensured its place as a beloved staple of the orchestral repertoire, showcasing Prokofiev's ability to honor tradition while boldly breaking new ground.

*Instrumentation – two flutes, two oboes, two clarinets, two bassoons, two horns, two trumpets, timpani, and strings*

*Duration – 16 minutes*



## Ludwig van Beethoven (1770-1827)

### **Concerto for Violin, Cello, and Piano in C Major, Op. 56, "Triple Concerto"**

*Composed 1803-04*

By the early 1800s, Ludwig van Beethoven had become a prominent figure in Vienna's musical world, known as both a brilliant pianist and a composer of great promise. However, his rising success was soon overshadowed by a devastating personal crisis: the onset of deafness. At not yet 30 years old, Beethoven began to realize his hearing was deteriorating, a cruel fate for a musician whose craft depended on his auditory perception. This painful realization led to deep despair, which he expressed in the poignant "Heiligenstadt Testament,"

*cont'd...*

a letter written to his brothers in 1802. In it, Beethoven revealed how his worsening condition drove him to contemplate ending his life, with only his commitment to his art preventing him from doing so.

Despite this profound struggle, Beethoven channeled his anguish into a period of remarkable creativity. The early 19th century saw the creation of some of his greatest works, including his second through sixth symphonies, the “Razumovsky” string quartets, and his only opera, *Fidelio*. Among these was the *Triple Concerto* for piano, violin, cello, and orchestra, composed between 1803 and 1804. Written during a time of personal turmoil, the work stands out for its lightheartedness, lyricism, and the intricate interplay among the solo instruments.

The *Triple Concerto* is unique in Beethoven’s oeuvre as his only concerto for multiple soloists. Combining the classic piano trio—piano, violin, and cello—with a full orchestra, the work creates a dynamic conversation between the soloists and the ensemble. Beethoven skillfully maintains a balance, often allowing the trio to take center stage with minimal orchestral accompaniment, preserving the distinct voices of each soloist while blending them harmoniously with the orchestra.

Structured in three movements, the *Triple Concerto* begins with an expansive Allegro, where Beethoven contrasts classical themes with his inventive style. The serene Largo follows, seamlessly transitioning into the final movement, a spirited Rondo based on the lively polonaise, a Polish dance. This concluding section highlights the concerto’s lighthearted and courtly nature, showcasing Beethoven’s mastery in merging classical forms with engaging, rhythmic elements.

Premiered in Vienna’s Augarten in 1808, the *Triple Concerto* exemplifies Beethoven’s ability to rise above adversity. Its grace, humor, and technical brilliance have solidified its place as a cherished work in the concerto repertoire, reflecting the composer’s enduring spirit.

*Instrumentation – flute, two oboes, two clarinets, two bassoons, two horns, two trumpets, timpani, strings, solo violin, solo cello, and solo piano*

*Duration – 45 minutes*

~ Kenneth Bean  
Georg and Joyce Albers-Schonberg Assistant Conductor  
Princeton Symphony Orchestra



# Help Us Celebrate Rossen's 60th Birthday!

**Make a gift in his honor today to benefit the  
Princeton Symphony Orchestra, the Princeton Festival, or PSO BRAVO!**

Multiple giving levels are available. Let's join together to present our music director with the best birthday present ever—your exceptional support of the PSO!

For additional information, please contact any member of our  
Development Team at (609) 497-0020.

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