

Vail Daily column

Musically Speaking on New York Philharmonic's Thirteenth Residency at Bravo! Vail

by Sandra Pearson, Assistant Principal Librarian, New York Philharmonic

An orchestra's season has a certain flow to it. When we finish our winter season, the shirt sleeves get shorter, and our summer festival wardrobe is donned. Our thoughts also turn towards a change of scenery that takes us from the concrete confines of New York to the pine-scented fresh mountain air of Colorado. Along with the other orchestras who get to enjoy a summer season such as Blossom or Tanglewood, we too get to enjoy our summer residency hiking and making music in the beautiful surroundings of the Rocky Mountains. We are happy to once again be sharing music by some of our greatest composers with our enthusiastic audiences in the Vail Valley.

We enjoy our collaboration with the amicable and witty Bramwell Tovey, and judging from past audience reactions, so do our fans in Vail. The first program on July 24th showcases the pianist Jon Kimura Parker playing Edvard Grieg's classic Piano Concerto in A minor. This concert will also showcase the subliminal overture to Fingal's Cave by Felix Mendelssohn and Edward Elgar's Enigma Variations. Maestro Tovey's second program on July 26th features Bravo! Vail's artistic director and talented pianist Anne-Marie McDermott playing Rachmaninoff's romantic Rhapsody on a Theme of Paganini. Balancing out the rest of the program are Le Corsair Overture by Berlioz, The Emperor Waltzes by Johann Strauss, Jr., and the prismatic Suite from Der Rosenkavalier by Richard Strauss.

Taking the podium for the first time with us at the Bravo! Vail Music Festival will be former assistant conductor of the New York Philharmonic, Joshua Weilerstein. His program on Saturday July 25th will feature the passionate talents of his sister, and former Avery Fisher Career Grant Award winner Alisa Weilerstein in Tchaikovsky's flashy Rococo Variations. The program will include Verdi's La Forza del Destino overture and Tchaikovsky's emotionally-charged Symphony No. 6.

On July 29th, Music Director Alan Gilbert and celebrated violinist Midori present the exemplary concerto of Felix Mendelssohn followed up with the powerful Symphony No. 5 by Gustav Mahler. Thursday, July 30th will be a program of American classics which include the spirited overture to The School for Scandal by Samuel Barber, Copland's Appalachian Spring, and a concert suite from Bernstein's West Side Story featuring the soprano Julia Bullock and tenor Ben Bliss. Friday, July 31 will present two of our world-class musicians, Acting Concertmaster Sheryl Staples and Principal Viola Cynthia Phelps in the timeless masterpiece of Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, the Sinfonie Concertante. Shostakovich's landmark Tenth Symphony will bring our thirteenth season at the Bravo! Vail festival to a close.

These programs feature music that we are excited to present to our audiences and patrons not only because you are our tireless, amazingly weather-resistant supporters, but because many of you have become friends with us over the years and made this residency something that transcends the typical orchestra-audience relationship. On behalf of Maestro Gilbert and the rest of my colleagues, here's to many more years of music making with our friends in the Vail Valley.

About the New York Philharmonic:

*Since its first concert in 1894 the New York Philharmonic has played a leading role in American musical life. Founded in 1842 by a group of local musicians led by American-born Ureli Corelli Hill, the Philharmonic is by far the oldest symphony orchestra in the United States, and one of the oldest in the world. It currently plays some 180 concerts a year, and on May 5, 2010, gave its 15,000th concert — a milestone unmatched by any other symphony orchestra. Long a leader in American musical life, the Philharmonic has become renowned around the globe, having appeared in 431 cities in 63 countries on 5 continents.*

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