

Our 2024—2025 Season

CONCERT DATES:

- 🎵 Sunday, October 20, 2024 at 4pm
- 🎵 Sunday, December 1, 2024 at 4pm
- 🎵 Sunday, March 9, 2025 at 4pm
- 🎵 Sunday, May 11, 2025 at 4pm

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the Pittsburgh Philharmonic



presents
“Nordic Masters”
With Guest Conductor
Jeffrey Klefstad
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Time: 4:00 pm
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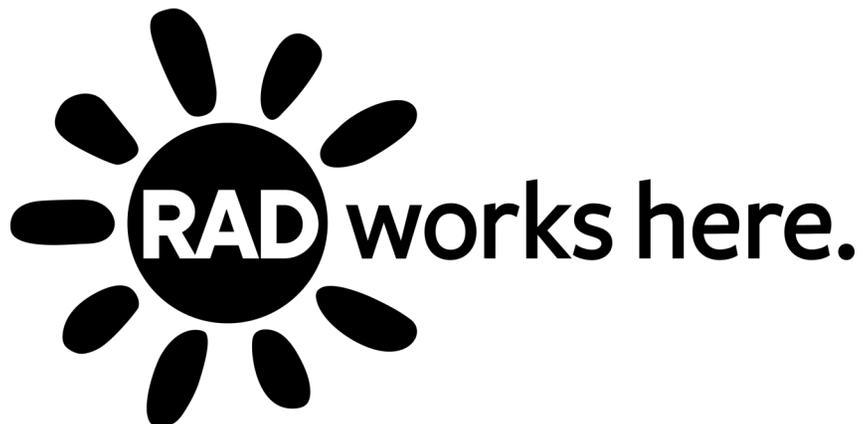
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Program

Maskarade Overture

Carl Nielsen
(1865—1931)

Peer Gynt Suite No. 1, Op.46

Edvard Grieg
(1843—1907)

I. Morning Mood
II. Aase's Death
III. Anitra's Dance
IV. In the Hall of the Mountain King

~intermission~

Symphony No. 2 in D major, Op.43

Jean Sibelius
(1865—1957)

I. Allegretto
II. Andante, ma rubato
III. Vivacissimo (attaca)
IV. Finale: Allegro moderato



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New members are accepted by audition. Auditions are held each January and August to fill open positions and maintain our sub-list.

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***** Immediate need *****

For details regarding audition appointments, open positions, and repertoire, please

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Guest Conductor



Jeffrey Klefstad is a dynamic conductor who has established himself through innovative programming and detailed musical interpretation. He serves as Music Director of Carnegie Mellon University's All University Orchestra and Assistant Conductor at Resonance Works Pittsburgh.

His career highlights include a notable European debut at Sweden's Aurora Music Festival, conducting engagements with the Bohuslav Martinů Philharmonic in the Czech Republic, and appearances with the Johnstown Symphony, Norfolk Symphony, and Resonance Works Chamber Orchestra. He was selected as a Conducting Fellow with the Allentown Symphony Orchestra and has served as guest conductor in residence for L'Orchestre symphonique conservatoire de musique de la Montérégie (Montréal) and cover conductor for prestigious ensembles that include the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra, Memphis Symphony Orchestra, and Akron Symphony Orchestra.

His accomplishments include third prize in the 2022-2023 American Prize for Orchestral Programming, multiple American Prize awards for conducting, and finalist placement in the Lanyi Conducting Competition. A dedicated advocate for new music, he has commissioned and premiered significant works including Michael Kim-Sheng's *Matriphagy*, Nancy Galbraith's *Photons* and Adam Hochstatter's *Nothing Left for Us*. His versatility also extends to opera, where he has served as music director for productions including Handel's *Giulio Cesare*, Puccini's *Madama Butterfly*, and Menotti's *Amahl & the Night Visitors*.

Throughout his career, Klefstad has collaborated with renowned conductors and composers including Manfred Honeck, Kurt Masur, Keith Lockhart, Steve Reich, and Jennifer Higdon. Originally from North Dakota, Klefstad holds a doctorate from the École de musique Schulich—Université McGill, where he studied conducting with Alexis Hauser and Guillaume Bourgogne. This performance marks his first concert with the Pittsburgh Philharmonic.

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The Pittsburgh Philharmonic is strongly committed to community outreach. In addition to our outdoor summer concerts, we also provide the following opportunities for young musicians and composers. Details regarding eligibility, applications, deadlines, and contact information can be found on our website: pghphil.org.

Summer Student Side-by-Side Program

High school instrumental students entering grades 8 – 12 are invited to audition for an opportunity to play side by side with the members of the Philharmonic for the entire summer season. Pittsburgh Philharmonic summer students work and play in a mentoring environment with experienced adult musicians.

Lorraine C. Lippert Young Artist Concerto Competition

We invite musicians 19 years old or younger performing on strings, brass, percussion, woodwinds, or harp to participate. The winner receives a \$300 scholarship and is invited to perform with the Philharmonic during its May concert. **Applications are due November 1.**

Young Composers Contest

The Pittsburgh Philharmonic invites submissions of compositions from residents of the Greater Pittsburgh area. This is an opportunity for local composers aged 35 and under to have their work performed by an orchestra. The winner will have their piece performed at the Pittsburgh Philharmonic's May concert and will receive a \$300.00 prize.

About us

Our organization was founded in 1975 as the North Pittsburgh Civic Symphony by Gordon Neuenschwander, Elizabeth Pettenger, and Frank Farina to give local musicians the opportunity to play great works of classical music.

We are committed to artistic development and quality programming, with a goal of providing convenient and affordable access to orchestral music to the greater Pittsburgh community. The name change to the Pittsburgh Philharmonic reflects both the diversity of our membership as well as our audiences, both of which come from all over the greater Pittsburgh area.

The Pittsburgh Philharmonic is dedicated to performing masterworks of the repertoire, exploring popular classics, and supporting the composition of new works through accessible performances. We have matured both as an organization and as an orchestra. It is recognized as an orchestra with strength and depth and has achieved a successful track record providing more than just concerts. Our musicians continue to develop their craft through on-stage performances while bringing the love of music to ever wider audiences.



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Program Notes

Carl Nielsen: *Maskarade Overture*

Despite initial challenges in gaining international recognition during his lifetime, Carl Nielsen (1865-1931) emerged as Denmark's most significant composer. His unique musical voice was shaped by the duality of his upbringing: his rural childhood in Funen, where he was immersed in folk traditions and developed a deep connection to the Danish landscape, and his later life in cosmopolitan Copenhagen, where he encountered European musical traditions. Unlike his teacher Niels Gade, who achieved international fame through the Leipzig school system, Nielsen developed his musical education entirely within Denmark, which contributed to his perception as an "authentic" Danish voice.

Nielsen's music became deeply intertwined with Danish cultural identity, particularly during a period when Denmark was asserting itself against German cultural imperialism. His work with organist Thomas Laub to preserve Danish folk music, stripped of romantic embellishments, and his popular compositions, including the opera *Maskarade* and his six symphonies, became powerful symbols of Danish cultural resistance. While Nielsen himself didn't necessarily seek to be a national composer, his unique approach to composition—combining traditional forms with modernist innovations, folk elements with sophisticated orchestral writing, and a distinctive approach to tonality inspired by Mozart and Bach—created a musical language that came to define Danish musical aesthetics. His ability to bridge the gap between traditional and modern, rural and urban, and national and international elements made him an enduring symbol of Danish artistic achievement. Nielsen's opera *Maskarade* has been called an "anti-romantic" reaction to the Italian operatic style en vogue in the nineteenth-century, as well as a reaction to the dominance of German arts culture over Denmark. The overture's energy, rhythmic complexity, whimsical melodies, and bold dynamic contrasts creates a sense of excitement and anticipation that is perfect in evoking a festive and joyful atmosphere.

Edvard Grieg: *Peer Gynt Suite Nr. 1, Op. 46*

In 1874, Edvard Grieg (1843-1907) was invited by playwright Henrik Ibsen to compose incidental music to his play *Peer Gynt*,

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inspired by a real-life folk legend Per Gynt from the Gudbrandsdalen valley of Norway. The story tells of the adventures of an unashamedly boastful, selfish, and irresponsible Peer Gynt, who travels the world and learns nothing from his experiences. When he returns home, he is only redeemed by the love of Solveig, who remained faithful to him while he was away. This project would take Grieg two years to complete and would become one of his most popular works. Grieg composed twenty-six pieces in all for the play, of which eight pieces were selected and divided into two orchestral suites, which won him international fame.

Suite No. 1 begins with *Morning Mood*, which opens with one of the most iconic melodies depicting a sunrise. Rather than representing the Norwegian landscape of fjords, lakes, and mountain pastures, the melody depicts a sunrise on the shores of Morocco, as Peer finds himself as a displaced wanderer far from home.

The second movement, *Åse's Death*, serves as a prelude to the moment when Peer hears a voice telling him to return home. He arrives just in time to witness his mother's final moments. Grieg employs muted strings with long lyrical lines to depict Åse's approaching death, while Peer tells another one of his fantasies at her bedside. She passes away still praying for his good fortune.

Anitra's Dance was composed as background music. In the play, Peer, dressed in Bedouin clothing, is mistaken for a prophet and welcomed by a chieftain's daughter, Anitra. Enchanted, Peer tries to seduce her. His plans are thwarted, however, as she convinces him to give her all his gold. Grieg's score for strings and triangle is rhythmically seductive and creates an exotic atmosphere, evocative of the dance Anitra performs to seduce Peer.

The suite concludes with *In the Hall of the Mountain King*. Peer is taken to the dwelling of King Dovre after the king's daughter falls in love with him. Grieg employs a simple recurring melody that, through subtle changes in orchestration and texture, crescendos dramatically in dynamics and tempo to the end of the scene.

Jean Sibelius: *Symphony No. 2 in D-Major, Op. 43*

Jean Sibelius' (1865-1957) approach to the genre of the symphony evolved throughout his career. Near the end of the nineteenth-century, the symphony was thought to be dead, and nothing new or innovative could be gained from it. Sibelius rejected this idea, believing that the symphony was, in fact, constrained by its formal

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structure (e.g., sonata, rondo, etc.), and that one should allow the themes or motives to dictate how the form will unfold. In turn, this would allow a more ‘organic’ flow of the music.

The Second Symphony’s (1902) opening three ascending notes bring our attention to this ‘organic’ idea. Throughout the first section of the movement, Sibelius introduces a variety of smaller motives independent of one another. In the middle section, he begins to intertwine the motives together. At first, they are resistant, but eventually the motives are brought together, ultimately leading to a mighty brass climax that signals the arrival of the final section of the movement. Following the same form as the opening, Sibelius slowly extracts the motives from each other until the material is back in its primary form.

The second movement was described by Sibelius as a spiritual development, juxtaposing two powerful forces: ‘life’ and ‘death.’ These two factions create a dialogue that react to one another throughout the movement, as if they were proclaiming their purpose. The dialogues are repeated with subtle additions or alterations. Ultimately, no matter how many times ‘life’ seems that it will emerge triumphant, ‘death’ delivers a blow to its momentum with a halting climax from the brass choir. Perhaps this is a subtle way for Sibelius to tell us that in the end, death is inevitable.

The third movement follows a normal ternary pattern (scherzo – trio – scherzo) in which the much slower middle section provides stark contrast to the lively scherzo sections. Rather than ending with a repeat of the scherzo, Sibelius adds an additional reprise of the trio, only this time to serve as a transition into the finale. He incorporates the symphony’s opening three-note motive as the bridge that leads into the final movement. The symphony’s opening three-note motive now serves as the thematic pillar of the movement, driving the music towards its goal. After a series of competing presentations of the opening theme and a minor key second theme, the three-note motive ascends to a fourth note, finally giving us a sense of triumphant resolution.

Concertmaster



Kathleen Andrews holds degrees in violin performance from Eastern Michigan University and The Hartt School. Her teachers included Daniel Foster, Yehonatan Berick and Anton Miller. She has played in masterclasses for mem-

bers of the Emerson, Daedalus, Brentano and Vermeer string quartets and performed with members of the JACK quartet. Since moving to Pittsburgh in 2012, Kathleen has performed with many local orchestras and chamber ensembles, including the Chamber Orchestra of Pittsburgh, Alia Musica, Ovre Arts, the West End Trio, the Butler County Symphony, and others. In addition to an active performing schedule, Ms. Andrews teaches violin and viola at Lincoln Park Performing Arts Charter School, Pittsburgh Music Academy and Hope Academy of Music and the Arts, where she takes joy in bringing music into the daily lives of her students. Ms. Andrews lives in Pittsburgh with her husband, composer and bassist Ryan McMasters, and their daughter, Betty.

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Principal 'Cellist



Rachel Smith, principal cellist of the Pittsburgh Philharmonic, holds a bachelor's in music performance from Duquesne University. She is a passionate performer and teacher who believes that variety is the key to musical happiness. Performing genres from baroque to pop throughout her career, she found a deep love for contemporary chamber music and collaboration with living composers. She appears frequently with the Pittsburgh Festival Orchestra and also subs with other local orchestras from time to time. She has maintained a private studio with students of all ages for several years, and has expanded her knowledge of pedagogy by becoming registered in Book 1 of the Suzuki Method. She recently started a Strings program at Campus Laboratory School at Carlow University where she teaches violin, viola, and cello group classes. She has studied with Andrew Rammon, Anne Martindale-Williams, and Adam Liu.

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