

**TORONTO SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA**

Gustavo Gimeno, Music Director

*Program 4*

Thursday,  
November 13, 2025  
7:30pm

Saturday,  
November 15, 2025  
7:30pm

# Joshua Bell Returns

**Dalia Stasevska**, conductor

**Joshua Bell**, violin (2025/26 TSO Spotlight Artist)

**Toronto Symphony Youth Orchestra**

(side by side with the TSO for *Finlandia*)

**Nicholas Sharma**, RBC Resident Conductor  
& TSYO Conductor

**Jean Sibelius**

*Finlandia*, Op. 26

**Thomas de Hartmann**

Violin Concerto, Op. 66

(Canadian Première)

I. Largo – Allegro

II. Andante

III. Menuet fantasque (Tempo do minuetto)

IV. Finale: Vivace

**Intermission**

**Antonín Dvořák**

Symphony No. 7 in D Minor, Op. 70

I. Allegro maestoso

II. Poco adagio

III. Scherzo: Vivace

IV. Finale: Allegro

*The TSO Spotlight Artists  
are generously supported by  
Zenovia Zmiyiwsky.*

*The November 15  
performance is generously  
supported by the Estate of  
Sylvia McPhee.*

Jean Sibelius (1865–1957)

## **Finlandia, Op. 26**

Composed 1899

8 min

**FINLANDIA ORIGINATED IN THE MUSIC** that Jean Sibelius composed in 1899 for a patriotic event in Helsinki called the Press Celebrations. On that occasion, he titled the work *Finland Awakes*. Revised as a separate piece and rechristened *Finlandia*, it was premièred at a concert in Helsinki on July 2, 1900, conducted by Robert Kajanus.

While Sibelius was a young man, Finland lay under oppressive Russian rule. In November 1899, with press censorship in full force, a group of artists in the capital, Helsinki, organized a series of Press Celebrations. Although the organizers of those events announced them as a gesture of support for those journalists who had taken a stand against the abuses of Russian rule, they also covertly intended them to promote the wider cause of Finland's right to a free society.

The centerpiece was a stage pageant that presented uplifting scenes from Finnish

history. Sibelius, the country's foremost composer as well as an ardent patriot, was the natural choice to provide incidental music. He had already composed similar scores to accompany theatrical productions, including a play, *King Christian II*.

For the 1899 Press Celebrations, he composed a prelude and six pieces, one to introduce each scene. The grand finale was a stirring work embodying both the Finns' spirit of resistance and their faith in their eventual return to democracy. Receiving extraordinary enthusiasm, it outlived its premièred and won enduring popularity, not only for its stirring musical values, but also as an internationally recognized anthem of freedom.

Snarling brass and thunderous timpani open *Finlandia* in arresting fashion. Woodwinds and strings introduce gentler, more spiritual but still defiant music. Tempo and activity accelerate into an exciting martial episode. A slow, hymn-like theme embodies aspiration, and a reprise of the martial theme is followed by a proudly radiant apotheosis of the hymn tune.

—Program note by Don Anderson

Thomas de Hartmann (1884–1956)

## **Violin Concerto, Op. 66**

Canadian Première

Composed 1943

29 min

**THE EARLY 21ST CENTURY** has been an exciting time of rethinking the classical music repertory and rediscovering lost and forgotten voices. Among the most recent and gratifying examples of these reclamations has been famed violinist Joshua Bell's 2024 recording and continued

performances of overlooked Ukrainian composer Thomas de Hartmann's Violin Concerto. "I had never really heard of this composer," Bell said in an interview with public-radio host Julie Amacher. "A man named Efrem Marder took it upon himself to rejuvenate interest in de Hartmann. He sent me a tape of a live performance from many decades ago, and I was just struck by this piece. I absolutely fell in love with it."

De Hartmann, who was born of German parents in Ukraine, which was then part of

the Russian Empire, studied with Russian composers Sergei Taneyev and Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov, collaborated with painter Wassily Kandinsky, and interacted with philosopher and mystic George Ivanovich Gurdjieff. His first big success was *La Fleurette Rouge*, a ballet that was staged in 1907 at the Mariinsky Theatre in St. Petersburg with Vaslav Nijinsky as one of the principals. De Hartmann later moved to France, spending much of his time arranging and writing music for films. In 1950, he and his wife moved to the US, but he struggled to gain a footing in his new country and was largely forgotten after his death in 1956.

The gripping 29-minute Violin Concerto is solidly rooted in Russian romanticism with a few nods to a more modern, slightly discordant aesthetic along the way. Written in 1943 during the Nazi occupation of France, where de Hartmann was living at the time, it was intended as a lament on the World War II devastation of his native country. The darkness and tragedy of that time suffuse this piece, with an elegiac, forlorn violin solo in the slow opening of the first movement, which later accelerates as the orchestra delivers thunderous, battle-like

effects—bass-drum booms, martial timpani, and angry brass.

Following the second movement, a searching, meditative section marked “Andante”, with a brief harp and violin exchange that is ethereal in its way, comes the third movement in which the composer breaks from conventional Italian tempo markings. Instead, he turns to French, labelling the very short section “Menuet fantasque” (“Whimsical Minuet”), an odd title choice considering there is little that is whimsical about what is essentially a cadenza with slight accompaniment. It is reported that de Hartmann described this work as “the klezmer concerto,” and it is here that Jewish influence emerges. But this is not the joyful klezmer music of a wedding party; it’s something more pensive, inward, and almost ghostly.

Elements of *Kamarinskaya*, a traditional Russian folk melody, can be heard in the swirling urgency of the dance-like “Finale”, with lightning, nimble runs from the solo violin, and sweeping orchestral gestures. As the piece comes to a close, the darkness parts, and hints of hopefulness emerge.

—Program note by Kyle MacMillan

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Antonín Dvořák (1841–1904)

## Symphony No. 7 in D Minor, Op. 70

Composed 1884–1885

38 min

**DVOŘÁK WAS ENJOYING HIS FIRST FLUSH** of international fame when, in 1883, the London Philharmonic Society invited him to conduct his own music for the first time outside his native Bohemia. His appearances in London in March of 1884 were triumphs; in June, the Philharmonic Society made him an honorary member, and commissioned

a symphony from him. He may have had a new one already in mind, for he had recently heard his friend Brahms’s Symphony No. 3 and had resolved to compose something of comparable beauty and power. Now impelled by a commission, he completed his Seventh Symphony in March of 1885, and conducted the première in London a month later.

The Seventh is a masterpiece of Romantic symphonic form, and though not as popular as the “New World” it is widely regarded as Dvořák’s greatest symphony.

It is teeming with ideas, developed with great imagination and sophistication, and organized as a coherent musical drama. It is also epic in scale, wide-ranging, and profound in expression. There is emotional torment and tragic power in the Seventh that may reflect Dvořák's personal troubles—around this time he was struggling to have his Czech operas accepted in Vienna, feeling pressure to write operas in German, and arguing with his publisher. His sketches show that the Seventh cost him much hard work and soul-searching. He was aiming quite consciously to write a masterpiece.

A mood of tragedy is established in the very first bars. The symphony opens with a low D and a quiet, foreboding drumroll, followed by a brooding first theme, hushed and fragmented at first, but coalescing into an extended outburst that is almost operatic in its anguish. The turbulence dissolves into a lyrical second theme, first played softly in the woodwinds in a gentle waltz-like rhythm, and then extended at length, growing more ardent until it bursts forth, fortissimo, in the full orchestra. The development section is unusually short but highly dramatic. It swells into a brassy, portentous recapitulation of the first theme, which immediately subsides into a full reprise of the second theme. The coda is long and impressive—the music reaches a furious climax but then dies away, as though resigned to some certain fate, and the final pages of the movement are as gloomy and mysterious as the opening bars.

The second movement is an almost unbroken flow of melody, structured as a great arch—opening with a gentle chorale-like theme, gathering intensity, recalling the tragedy of the first movement in a stormy middle section, then closing peacefully. One memorable theme follows another, all of them distinct in profile and character—tender, passionate, wistful, hesitant, and melancholy. Dvořák gives each theme its own special instrumental setting, often making striking use of solo wind instruments. And just when the sequence of new melodies

seems poised to go on forever, several themes from the first part of the movement return, dramatically, to effect a resolution.

The “Vivace”, though marked “Scherzo” and set in 6/4 time, has the character of a furiant—the boisterous Bohemian folk dance upon which Dvořák drew in many fast movements. But this furiant is not exuberant; the music is dark and grim, propulsive, and harshly accented, with only fleeting wisps of expressive melody to smooth its jagged textures. (Dvořák's model was clearly the scherzo from Beethoven's Ninth Symphony, which is in the same key, D minor.) The trio section is more ingratiating and pastoral, but the relief is short-lived. The “Vivace” returns, now shortened to make room for a substantial coda, which broods briefly before driving to a powerful, frenzied conclusion.

The “Finale” taps back into the tragic vein of the first movement, and its overall form is similar. It comprises a first theme that grows from melancholy to an outburst of fearsome power; a leisurely, lyrical second theme, which is quiet at first but builds to a triumphant full-orchestra setting; a concise but eventful development; a truncated recapitulation of the first theme and a full reprise of the second; and a turbulent coda. Now, however, there is no despairing conclusion. In ten solemn bars, Dvořák finally grants this stormy work—at the very last minute—its long-deferred, hard-won resolution in D major.

—Program note by Kevin Bazzana

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*I am now busy with this symphony for London, and wherever I go I can think of nothing else. God grant that this Czech music will move the world!!*

—DVOŘÁK ON HIS SYMPHONY NO. 7 IN A LETTER TO A FRIEND



## Dalia Stasevska, conductor

Dalia Stasevska made her TSO début in November 2022.

Dalia Stasevska is one of the most stratospherically ascendant musicians in classical music today. She has established herself as a commanding musical voice, a boundary-pushing innovator, and a fearless activist and advocate for change. She holds the post of Principal Guest Conductor of the BBC Symphony Orchestra.

The 2025/26 season features concerts with the New York, Rotterdam, and Munich Philharmonics; Toronto and Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestras; Cleveland Orchestra; Mozarteum Orchestra Salzburg; and Vienna Symphony at the Bregenz Festival. She will also lead The Philadelphia Orchestra for two weeks with soloists Augustin Hadelich, Yo-Yo Ma, and Carol Jantsch. Further highlights include appearances with the Deutsches Symphonie-Orchester Berlin; Frankfurt Radio Symphony; Orchestre National de France; Czech, Helsinki, and Oslo Philharmonics; and Netherlands Radio Philharmonic Orchestra.

Her recent orchestral engagements have spanned a distinguished array of ensembles, including the Boston Symphony Orchestra at the Tanglewood Festival, Los Angeles Philharmonic, San Francisco Symphony, Orchestre symphonique de Montréal, Royal Stockholm Philharmonic, Finnish Radio Symphony Orchestra, Dresdner Philharmonie, and Orchestre de Paris. She has also made notable débuts with the Berlin Philharmonic, Accademia Nazionale di Santa Cecilia, and New World Symphony, among others. In the summer of 2025, Stasevska conducted twice at the BBC Proms—leading both the National Youth Orchestra of Great Britain and the BBC Symphony Orchestra.

A passionate opera conductor, Stasevska débuts this season at the Los Angeles Opera with Philip Glass's *Akhmaten* directed by Phelim McDermott, and at Deutsche Oper Berlin with Britten's *A Midsummer Night's Dream* directed by Ted Huffman. In 2023, Stasevska made her highly successful début at Glyndebourne Festival Opera with a revival of the iconic Peter Hall production of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*.

Stasevska's acclaimed recordings include her solo début album with the BBC Symphony Orchestra, *Dalia's Mixtape*, on Platoon, which features the work of ten contemporary composers, including Judith Weir, Anna Meredith, and Caroline Shaw, and was nominated for a Gramophone Award. She was also featured on *Thomas de Hartmann Rediscovered*, a collaborative album with Joshua Bell, INSO-Lviv Symphony Orchestra, Matt Haimovitz, MDR Leipzig Radio Symphony Orchestra, and Dennis Russell Davies, released on Pentatone, which combines the glowing, cinematic Violin and Cello Concertos of the Ukrainian composer.

Stasevska studied violin and composition at the Tampere Conservatoire, and violin, viola, and conducting at the Sibelius Academy. In December of 2023, she was named one of *The New York Times*' "Breakout Stars of 2023". She was also granted the 2023 *BBC Music Magazine* Personality of the Year Award, the 2022 Alfred Kordelin Prize, and the 2020 Royal Philharmonic Society Conductor Award, and had the honour of conducting the Royal Stockholm Philharmonic Orchestra at the 2018 Nobel Prize ceremony in Stockholm.

In October 2021, President Volodymyr Zelenskyy bestowed on Stasevska the Order of Princess Olga, Third Class, for her significant personal contribution to the development of international cooperation, strengthening the prestige of Ukraine internationally and promoting its historical and cultural heritage. Since February 2022, Stasevska has been publicly outspoken in her support for Ukraine while also personally delivering aid to the front lines and conducting concerts there.



**Joshua Bell**, violin (2025/26 TSO Spotlight Artist)

Joshua Bell made his TSO début in May 1988.

With a career spanning almost four decades, GRAMMY® Award-winning violinist Joshua Bell is one of the most celebrated artists of our time. He has performed with virtually every major orchestra in the world, and regularly appears as a soloist, recitalist, chamber musician, and conductor, and as the Music Director of London's Academy of St Martin in the Fields (ASMF).

Bell continues to champion the rediscovered Violin Concerto by Thomas de Hartmann in the 2025/26 season, following his world-première recording of the work. He gives its UK première at London's BBC Proms, its North American première with the New York Philharmonic, and its Canadian première during his season-long tenure as a Toronto Symphony Orchestra Spotlight Artist. With ASMF, he leads extensive tours, including returns to the Vienna Konzerthaus and Carnegie Hall. Other highlights include his first appearances as Principal Guest Conductor of the New Jersey Symphony, an Asian tour with Hamburg's NDR Elbphilharmonie Orchestra, trio programs with Steven Isserlis and Evgeny Kissin in the US and Europe, and duo recitals with Jeremy Denk at Walt Disney Concert Hall and the Ravinia Festival.

In 2011, Bell succeeded founder Sir Neville Marriner as Music Director of ASMF. He is also the Founder and Music Director of Chamber Orchestra of America (COA), which aims to empower the next generation of artists.

Bell has commissioned and premiered works by John Corigliano, Edgar Meyer, and Nicholas Maw. His recording of Maw's Violin Concerto won a GRAMMY® Award, and his work on the film soundtrack for *The Red Violin* helped secure Corigliano's Academy Award.

Bell's collaborators include Emanuel Ax, Chris Botti, Chick Corea, Renée Fleming, Josh Groban, Lang Lang, Dave Matthews, Anoushka Shankar, Regina Spektor, Sting, and Daniil Trifonov. He made three guest-star appearances on *The Tonight Show Starring Johnny Carson* and numerous appearances on the Amazon series *Mozart in the Jungle*. His extensive discography has been recognized with GRAMMY®, Mercury, Gramophone, and OPUS KLASSIK Awards.

Born in Bloomington, Indiana, Bell began playing the violin at age 4, starting studies with his mentor, Josef Gingold, eight years later. At 14, Bell debuted with Riccardo Muti and The Philadelphia Orchestra, and at 17 he made his Carnegie Hall début with the St. Louis Symphony. He signed with his first label, London Decca, at 18, when he also received the Avery Fisher Career Grant. Since then, Bell has been nominated for six GRAMMY® Awards, named Instrumentalist of the Year by *Musical America*, selected as a Young Global Leader by the World Economic Forum, and recognized with the Avery Fisher Prize. He received the 2003 Indiana Governor's Arts Award, and in 2000 was honoured as an Indiana "Living Legend". Bell has performed for three American presidents and the justices of the Supreme Court of the United States. After participating in former President Barack Obama's Committee on the Arts and Humanities' first cultural mission to Cuba, he headlined the subsequent Emmy-nominated PBS *Live from Lincoln Center* special.

Bell performs on the 1713 Huberman Stradivarius violin.



**Nicholas Sharma, RBC Resident Conductor & TSYO Conductor**

In the 2025/26 season, Nicholas Sharma joins the Toronto Symphony Orchestra as RBC Resident Conductor and Toronto Symphony Youth Orchestra Conductor. He has led performances with orchestras across North America, earning recognition for his versatility and musical artistry.

Recent conducting highlights include debut performances with the Rochester Philharmonic Orchestra and the Eugene Symphony, as well as serving as Assistant Conductor of the South Dakota Symphony Orchestra and Music Director of the South Dakota Symphony Youth Orchestra for the 2024/25 season.

He has participated in master classes and summer festivals with the Winnipeg Symphony Orchestra, the New World Symphony, the National Academy Orchestra of Canada, the Aspen Music Festival, and the Colorado College Summer Music Festival, working with such distinguished conductors as Michael Tilson Thomas, Stéphane Denève, Neeme Järvi, Robert Spano, Nicholas McGegan, Mark Stringer, and Boris Brott.

A native of the Toronto area, Sharma began his musical studies as a violinist. He holds a degree in violin performance from the Eastman School of Music, where he studied with Oleh Krysa, and a master's degree in orchestral conducting from the University of Oregon under David Jacobs. In 2024, he completed a Doctor of Musical Arts (DMA) degree in orchestral conducting at Eastman, studying with Neil Varon. His return to Toronto marks both a personal and professional homecoming as he takes on these new artistic leadership roles.



↑  
Members of the TSYO string section perform *Shostakovich's Fifth* at Roy Thomson Hall on April 26, 2025.

## Toronto Symphony Youth Orchestra

Nicholas Sharma, conductor

**FOR 52 SEASONS**, since its founding under the direction of Victor Feldbrill in 1974, the Toronto Symphony Youth Orchestra (TSYO) has been dedicated to providing a high-level orchestral experience for talented young musicians aged 22 and under. The tuition-free TSYO program delivers a unique, powerful, and life-enriching opportunity that encourages significant achievement, regardless of participants' chosen career paths. The TSYO is closely affiliated with the Toronto Symphony Orchestra: TSO musicians serve as coaches through the season, TSO guest artists lead TSYO master classes, and the TSYO performs annually with the TSO in a side-by-side concert.

### VIOLINS

Aida Chegini  
Anamaria Khingava  
Annika Kho  
Ariel Loboda  
Chelsea Gu  
Chelsea Wan  
Chloe Ng  
Edward Wu  
Emily Wang  
Joy Cha-Kang  
Lucas Ju  
Marion Cha-Kang  
Oliver (Zihuan) Xu  
Richard Xiong  
Roland Ding  
Salma Khakimov  
Sophia Zhang  
Sophie Cheung  
Tina Sievers  
Victoria Gilerovitch  
Xinru Lai  
Yusuf Tajbakhsh  
Zhuoyi Yang  
Zoe Lai-Yi Clarke

### VIOLAS

Celine Aricibasi  
Emily Liao  
Gabiella Liu  
Isla Ertl  
Larry Zheng  
Lauren Liang  
Nathan Wu  
Noah Haro Jang  
Peggy Zhu  
Sam Talebi  
Solomon Cheung

### CELLOS

Austin Dong  
Claire Wang  
Eunice Choe

George Gernega  
Maggie Marshman  
Matthew Ng  
Rebecca Lima  
Ruichen Wang  
Ryan Yin  
Stella Chang  
Yuheng (Hassel) Chen

### DOUBLE BASSES

Alice Quach  
Danylo Tkaczyk  
Emma Chen  
Jikai (Nick) Zhang  
Julia Li  
Richard Nemeth  
Wang Hin (Marcus) Chan  
Xiaoyi (Ashley) Ruan

### FLUTES

Eleanor Song  
Karri Li  
Rowan Froh

### OBOES

Clara Aristanto  
Hingyi Cui  
Jason Fan

### CLARINETS

Farimah Khorrami  
Marco Ding  
Michelle Jin

### BASSOONS

Kendal Morrison  
Spencer Mendez  
Taran Massey-Singh

### HORNS

Avery Hubert  
Ethan Chialtas  
Jingyao (Victor) Hu  
Sophia Choi  
Qiwei Liu

### TRUMPETS

Andre Zi-an Jin  
Kevin Zhao  
Tamsin Spiller  
Teresa Osko

### TROMBONES

Abellia Chan  
Alina Dai  
Amy Jordaana

### TUBA

Jack Shiels

### PERCUSSION

Bowen Wang  
Elyssa Arde  
Jon Bilek

### HARPS

Luc Hung  
WeiQi (Vicky) Chen

### PIANO

Jonathan Alter

### STAFF

**Matthew Robertson**  
TSYO Manager &  
Community Assistant  
**Nicole Balm**  
Senior Director of  
Education & Community  
Engagement  
**Pierre Rivard**  
Family & School  
Programs Manager  
**Angela Maria Sanchez**  
Education & Community  
Engagement Coordinator

### FACULTY

**Nicholas Sharma**  
RBC Resident Conductor  
& TSYO Conductor  
*generously supported by  
the Toronto Symphony  
Volunteer Committee*  
**Ilan Mendel**  
TSYO Assistant Conductor  
**Shane Kim**  
Violin Coach  
TSO Violin  
**Peter Semionovs**  
Violin Coach  
TSO Violin  
**Ivan Ivanovich**  
Viola Coach  
TSO Viola  
**Emmanuelle Beaulieu  
Bergeron**  
Cello Coach  
TSO Associate Principal  
Cello  
**Christopher Laven**  
Double Bass Coach  
TSO Double Bass  
**Miles Haskins**  
Woodwind Coach  
TSO Clarinet & Bass  
Clarinet  
**Renata Cardoso**  
Brass Coach  
TSO Trumpet  
**Joseph Kelly**  
Percussion Coach  
TSO Percussion/Assistant  
Principal Timpani