LEON BOTSTEIN conductor

CONCERT TIMELINE

2 hours and 15 minutes

Overture on Russian Themes In the Forest Sinfonietta Intermission March Symphony No. 3

12 min 16 min 15 min 20 min 5 min 45 min

Brief remarks by **Zachary Gassenheimer** clarinet



Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov

Born 3/18/1844 in Tikhvin, near Novgorod, Russia **Died** 6/21/1908 at age 64 in Lyubensk, Russia

Festival

Overture on Russian Themes

Written 1866, at age 22; revised in 1879–80 Premiered Originally in 1866, Mily Balakirev conductor; Revised version on 5/8/1880 in Moscow, Rimsky-Korsakov conductor



Mikalojus Konstantinas Čiurlionis

Born 9/22/1875 in Varéna, Lithuania Died 4/10/1911 at age 35 in Pustelnik, Marki, Poland

In the Forest (Miške)

Written 1901, at age 25



Vítězslava Kaprálová

Born Born 1/24/1915 in Brno, Moravia (now Czech Republic)

Died 6/16/1940 at age 25 in Montpellier, France

Military Sinfonietta

Written 1937, at age 22 **Premiered** 11/26/1937 at 1

Premiered 11/26/1937 at Lucerna Hall in Prague; Czech Philharmonic; Kaprálová conductor

Intermission

 ${\tt MEET\&GREET}\ some\ of\ the\ musicians\ in\ the\ lobby$

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REFRESHMENTS available in the lobby

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RESTROOMS located on either side of the lobby

Brief remarks by Tania Ladino Ramírez viola



Pyotr II'yich Tchaikovsky

Born 5/7/1840 in Votkinsk, Russia Died 11/6/1893 at age 53 in St. Petersburg

Festival Coronation March

Written 1883, at age 43

Premiered 6/4/1883 at Sokolniki Park in Moscow;

Sergei Taneyev conductor



Boris Lyatoshynsky

Born 1/3/1895 in Zhytomyr, Ukraine **Died** 4/15/1968 at age 73 in Kyiv

Symphony No. 3

Andante maestoso—Allegro impetuoso (moderately slow and majestic, then fast and vehement) *15 min*

Andante con moto (moderately slow, with motion) *13 min*

Allegro feroce (fast and fierce) 6 min
Allegro risoluto ma non troppo mosso (fast and bold, but not too agitated) 11 min

Written 1951, at age 56 (first edition)

Premiered 10/23/1951 in Kyiv; Kyiv Philharmonic;

Natan Rakhlin *conductor*

All timings are approximate.



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The Music

RIMSKY-KORSAKOV'S OVERTURE ON RUSSIAN THEMES

Notes by TŌN violinist Yuchen Zhao

Written in 1866 and revised in 1880, the Overture on Russian Themes offers an early showcase of Rimsky-Korsakov's vibrant orchestration and his commitment to a distinct Russian musical voice. He played a crucial role in "The Mighty Handful", a group of Russian composers that Mily Balakirev commanded. As Rimsky-Korsakov's mentor, Balakirev was helping him develop, critique, and rework his musical ideas. This overture was modeled after Balakirev's overtures and is based on three tunes from Balakirev's collection of Russian folksongs published the same year.

The first song is "Slava/Glory", which Mussorgsky soon after would famously use in the coronation scene of his opera *Boris Godunov*. Interestingly, 60 years before Rimsky-Korsakov and Mussorgsky, Beethoven also used this tune in his "Razumovsky" String Quartet No. 8. In Rimsky-Korsakov's overture, variations

on this solemn and dignified melody are followed by variations on two fast dance themes, emphasizing a festive nature. Traditional instruments are evoked by an imitative woodwind composition, while the use of orchestral color provides fresh insights into each tune as it emerges. Rimsky-Korsakov has an evident talent for turning straightforward, sincere subjects into something brilliant and intricate.

To me, this composition, which combines folk tradition, the impact of Balakirev's instruction, and Rimsky-Korsakov's creative orchestration, seems like a living musical time capsule. Here, "Slava/Glory" shines as a tribute to tradition and a personal expression by the young composer.

MIKALOJUS KONSTANTINAS ČIURLIONIS'S IN THE FOREST (MIŠKE)

Notes by TŌN violinist Lap Yin Lee

Mikalojus Konstantinas Čiurlionis was a Lithuanian national treasure, renowned as both a composer and a painter. His cultural

identity shed light on such intersections as an artist who stood at the crossroads of three worlds: he was born in Lithuania and died in Poland under the Russian Empire. Čiurlionis studied at the Warsaw and Leipzig Conservatories. The last three years of his short life he spent in St. Petersburg, where he became close to the Mir iskusstva artists. He was therefore both part of Russian imperial culture and outside of it. Although he could read and understand Lithuanian, he did not acquire proficiency in that language and needed assistance from his fiancée. However. his pride in Lithuanian heritage stood in tension with his life under the Russian Empire. His uncertain grasp of his own language left a gulf between him and his culture; but it became not a barrier, but a threshold to a more universal art. compelling Čiurlionis to imagine an art vast enough-cosmic and holistic-to transcend national boundaries.

With synesthesia, a fusion of the senses that Čiurlionis himself experienced, such tangled identity and sensations created the most unprecedented and kaleidoscopic arts. He explored correspondences between tones and hues, rhythms and forms. He sought a deeper unity, a vision of the cosmos where forests, stars, and harmonies merge. As he had written in his diary, "I see my paintings as if they were symphonies or fugues. Colors are like tones, and lines are like melodies—together they form harmony."

In the Forest (Miške) was his first major work and remained his largest orchestral piece. It can be heard as both a musical journey and a painted panorama. The opening string octaves draw us into a twilight landscape; voices of winds and brass create shadows, meadows, marshes, and, suddenly, light glancing on water. At times, the score feels like walking through one of his several paintings titled "Forest"—a world at once physical and mystical.

Čiurlionis's music is rooted in Lithuania but resonates beyond it, reflecting both national longing and the broader cultural currents of the Russian Empire. This concert places his vision in dialogue with his contemporaries, yet Čiurlionis remains distinct, an explorer of hidden correspondences. His art asks us not only to listen but also to see—to discover harmony in the meeting of sound and image, of memory and dream.

VITĚZSLAVA KAPRÁLOVÁ'S MILITARY SINFONIETTA

Notes by TŌN bassist Jud Mitchell

Vítězslava Kaprálová was a talented Czech composer and conductor of great ability whose life was cut short in her 25th year in a tragedy. She was a student of composers Vítězslav Novák and Bohuslav Martinů, and was an innovative female conductor who was the first woman to lead the Czech Philharmonic and the BBC Symphony Orchestra. As a woman it was very difficult for her to break into the Czech music scene, but her talent and ability on the podium drew attention from prominent composers such as Martinů, who influenced her to write music in a Czech idiom.

Her graduation piece from the Prague Conservatory, completed in 1937, was the Military Sinfonietta, Op. 11, which she dedicated to Edvard Beneš, president of the Czechoslovak Republic. The work was composed in a time of mounting apprehension and nationalism in interwar Europe, when war was hanging over the horizon. Kaprálová died in exile in France in 1940 soon after the German invasion, and so her life is shadowed by impending war. In this piece, I hear the marching of armies and the drums of war. Today's political climate contains troubling echoes of those years, making this piece all the more relevant in the face of rising nationalist sentiment in Europe and Russian expansionism. Kaprálová

herself described the work as not a "battle cry", but rather a musical expression of "the psychological need to defend that which is most sacred to the nation."

Amix of national pride and somber awareness of impending war permeates the work. In a time when Russia seems poised to invade the Baltic States and push through to Kyiv, a piece that galvanizes resistance against an aggressive power with imperial aspirations is so crucial. I am grateful that I play in an orchestra that programs pieces that are relevant to contemporary geopolitics. Classical musicians should always try to relate the art of the past to subjects that are relevant to modern audiences.

TCHAIKOVSKY'S FESTIVAL CORONATION MARCH

Notes by TŌN violinist Enoch Ng

Pyotr II'yich Tchaikovsky's Festival Coronation March was composed in the spring of 1883. It was commissioned by the Mayor of Moscow for the coronation of Tsar Alexander III of Russia. The piece was meant for a public performance in Sokolniky Park and intended to be a ceremonial work with fanfare in the brass portraying an atmosphere of grandeur and authority.

Although Tchaikovsky was initially inclined to turn down this commission, he accepted, not wanting to reject Alexander III, who was a great admirer of his music. To demonstrate the extent of this admiration, Alexander III and members of the imperial family often attended Tchaikovsky's operas and ballets; they even bought new editions of his music to enjoy at home. Recognition from the royal family further defined Tchaikovsky's career: he was awarded the Order of Saint Vladimir Fourth Class, granted a lifetime pension, and received a ring from the Emperor. Given these facts, it becomes easier to understand why Tchaikovsky ultimately

accepted the commission for the march despite his personal reservations.

The Festival Coronation March includes the Russian anthem "God Save the Tsar". as well as quotations from the Danish royal anthem "Kong Christian stod ved højen mast", acknowledging the Danish origins of Empress Maria Fyodorovna. Tchaikovsky's use of melodies in a similar manner could be seen in his 1812 Overture, composed the previous year (1882) to commemorate Russia's defeat of Napoleon. The 1812 Overture begins and ends with the Russian Orthodox prayer "Lord, Preserve Thy People", and includes the French anthem "La Marseillaise", Russian folksong, and "God Save the Tsar". Thus, Tchaikovsky represents the two warring sides through pre-existing tunes.

During the Soviet era, performances of the march notably omitted "God Save the Tsar", replacing it with alternate thematic material taken from other sections of the piece. Though intended for ceremonial use, Tchaikovsky's Festival Coronation March enjoys a status as a popular concert piece.

BORIS LYATOSHYNSKY'S SYMPHONY NO. 3

Notes by TŌN violinist Carlos Torres

Borys Lyatoshynsky, who became the most renowned Ukrainian composer of the mid-20th century, combined late Romantic expressiveness with modernist dissonance and Ukrainian folk color. A student of Reinhold Glière at the Kyiv Conservatory and later a pedagogue in the same institution, he taught a whole generation of composers. Yet like his contemporaries Shostakovich and Prokofiev, Lyatoshynsky's career unfolded under the scrutiny of Soviet authorities, who demanded optimism and "socialist realism" even in times of war and devastation.

2 / THE ORCHESTRA NOW TON.BARD.EDU / 3

His Third Symphony, originally subtitled "Peace Shall Defeat War", was conceived as a grim commentary on the devastation of World War II. Following its 1951 premiere it was branded "bourgeois" and "defectible" by the official Soviet critics, and Lyatoshynsky was forced to rewrite the final movement and remove the subtitle. The performance nonetheless revealed a work of uncompromising tragedy: a turbulent first movement driven by snarling brass, pounding timpani, and searing string lines; a mournful Andante where plaintive woodwinds and muted strings sing folklike melodies that swell into anguished climaxes; and a gruesome scherzo depicting violence and anarchy by shrill winds and snarling low brass, which transform a dance into a vision of chaos. Forced to revise the original finale, which concluded with the attainment of peace after the preceding conflict, Lyatoshynsky composed a new ending, which enabled the work's official premiere in 1955 by the Leningrad Philharmonic Orchestra under the baton of Yevgeny Mravinsky. The revision ensured the symphony's survival, and it was not until after the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991 that the first version could be performed again. Since then, as in today's performance, the original version has been favored.

Alongside Shostakovich's wartime symphonies, Lyatoshynsky's Third betrays family and opposition. Like Shostakovich's Eighth Symphony, Lyatoshynsky's score succumbs to despair, driven by heavy orchestration and expressionist harmonies. Both employ grotesque scherzos and protracted laments to express war's absurdity and tragedy. But while Shostakovich tended to return to irony and double meaning, Lyatoshynsky spoke in Romantic frankness and folk-infused lyricism. Shostakovich gradually diminishes tension and drama, guiding us into a hushed, transcendent world-not a public celebration but a private prayer—whereas Lyatoshynsky, in restraint, converted his tragedy into forced rejoicing.

And now the Third Symphony stands as witness to artistic survival: a deeply Ukrainian voice, tried and censored, but still ablaze with searing honesty regarding war, peace, and remembrance. Heard today, when Ukraine faces violence and aggression from its neighbor, Lyatoshynsky's music resonates not only as a historical document but as a living reminder of a nation's enduring struggle to affirm its cultural identity and its right to peace.

The Artists

LEON BOTSTEIN conductor



Leon Botstein is founder and music director of The Orchestra Now (TŌN). music director and principal conductor of the American Symphony Orchestra (ASO), artistic codirector of Bard SummerScape and the Bard Music Festival, and conductor laureate and principal guest conductor of the Jerusalem Symphony Orchestra (JSO), where he served as music director from 2003 to 2011. He has been guest conductor with the Los Angeles Philharmonic, Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, Aspen Music Festival, Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra, Mariinsky Theatre. Russian National Orchestra in Moscow. Hessisches Staatstheater Wiesbaden, Taipei Symphony, Simón Bolivar Symphony Orchestra, and Sinfónica Juvenil de Caracas in Venezuela, among others. In May 2025 he led two concerts with TON in Koblenz and Nuremberg, Germany marking 80 years since the surrender of Nazi Germany. With ASO he has revived numerous neglected operas and rare repertoire, such as Schoenberg's massive Gurre-Lieder, Richard Strauss's first opera, Guntram, and the U.S. premiere of Sergei Taneyev's final work, At the Reading of a Psalm.

Albums include The Lost Generation and Exodus, two 2024 releases with TON; Hindemith's The Long Christmas Dinner with the ASO; a Grammy-nominated recording of Popov's First Symphony with the London Symphony Orchestra; and other recordings with TON, ASO, the London Philharmonic, NDR Orchestra Hamburg, and JSO, among others. Fall 2025 releases include Premieres with violinist Gil Shaham and Transcription as Translation, both with TON. He is editor of The Musical Quarterly and author of numerous articles and books, including The Compleat Brahms (Norton), Jefferson's Children (Doubleday), Judentum und Modernität (Böhlau), and Von Beethoven zu Berg (Zsolnay). Honors include Harvard University's prestigious Centennial Award; the American Academy of Arts and Letters award; and Cross of Honor, First Class, from the government of Austria, for his contributions to music. Other distinctions include the Bruckner Society's Julio Kilenyi Medal of Honor for his interpretations of that composer's music, the Leonard Bernstein Award for the Elevation of Music in Society, and Carnegie Foundation's Academic Leadership Award. In 2011, he was inducted into the American Philosophical Society.

4 / THE ORCHESTRA NOW TON.BARD.EDU / 5



THE ORCHESTRA NOW (TŌN)

Founded in 2015 by Bard College, TŌN is a graduate program that is training the next generation of music professionals to become creative ambassadors of classical music. Led by conductor and educator Leon Botstein, TŌN offers accomplished young musicians a full-tuition fellowship toward a master's degree in curatorial, critical, and performance studies or an advanced certificate in orchestra studies. TŌN's innovative curriculum combines rehearsal, performance, recording, and touring with seminars, masterclasses, professional development workshops, teaching, and more. The members of the orchestra are graduates of the world's leading conservatories, and hail from countries across North and South America, Europe, and Asia. Many have gone on to have careers in the Philadelphia, San Francisco, Boston, Vancouver, and National symphony orchestras; Orquesta Sinfónica Nacional de Colombia; the United States military bands; and many others.

TŌN performs dozens of concerts a year at venues including Carnegie Hall, Lincoln Center, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, and the Fisher Center at Bard. Specializing in both familiar and rarely heard repertoire, the orchestra has given numerous New York, U.S., and world premieres, and has performed the work of living composers, including Joan Tower, Jessie Montgomery, Jonny Greenwood, and Tania León. In

May 2025, TŌN performed two concerts in Koblenz and Nuremberg, Germany marking 80 years since the surrender of Nazi Germany. In 2023, TŌN appeared with Bradley Cooper in the Academy Award-nominated film *Maestro*, and was featured on the Grammy-winning Deutsche Grammophon soundtrack, conducted by Yannick Nézet-Séguin. The orchestra has performed with many other distinguished guest conductors and soloists, including Leonard Slatkin, Gil Shaham, Neeme Järvi, Stephanie Blythe, Fabio Luisi, Vadim Repin, Joseph Young, Peter Serkin, Naomi Woo, Peter Moore, Tan Dun, and JoAnn Falletta.

TŌN has released several albums on the Hyperion, Sorel Classics, and AVIE labels. Fall 2025 releases include *Premieres* with violinist Gil Shaham and *Transcription* as *Translation*. Other highlights include 2024's *The Lost Generation* and *Exodus*, and rare recordings of Othmar Schoeck's *Lebendig begraben* and Bristow's *Arcadian* Symphony. Recordings of TŌN's live concerts from the Fisher Center can be heard regularly on Classical WMHT-FM and WWFMThe Classical Network, and the orchestra has appeared over 100 times on *Performance Today*, broadcast nationwide.

Visit ton.bard.edu to find out more about TŌN's academic program, concerts, musicians, albums, and broadcasts; sign up for the email list; and support the orchestra with a donation.



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Marian Antonette V. Mayuga
Yuxuan Feng
Heather Lambert
Yaewon Choi
Lap Yin Lee
Yuchen Zhao
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Yuki Mori *Principal* ¹⁻³ Zachary Johnson *Principal* ^{4,5} Charlie Hall *Bass Trombone*

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- ² Čiurlionis
- ³ Kaprálová
- ⁴ Tchaikovsky
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10 / THE ORCHESTRA NOW TON.BARD.EDU / 11

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AN ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION WITH BARD CONSERVATORY ORCHESTRA

Conducted by Leon Botstein and Tan Dun

PROGRAM

Tan Dun Choral Concerto: Nine **Ludwig van Beethoven** Symphony No. 9 in D Minor, Op. 125 ("Choral")

October 25 at 7 pm October 26 at 2 pm

Sosnoff Theater Fisher Center at Bard College

October 29 at 7:30 pm

Alice Tully Hall, Lincoln Center Tickets start at \$20 lincolncenter.org

BARD CONSERVATORY ORCHESTRA WITH VIOLINIST GIL SHAHAM

Conducted by Leon Botstein

PROGRAM

Gil Shaham plays Brahms's Violin Concerto in D Major, Op. 77 **Aaron Copland** Symphony No. 3

December 13 at 7:00 pm

Sosnoff Theater Fisher Center at Bard College

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