TON THEORCHESTRANOW
Bard's Orchestral Masters



Concert Quick Guide®

Gershwin, Jazz, and the Music of Jewish Émigrés

Tue 11/17/26 at 7 pm

Performance #347 Season 12, Concert 11
Stern Auditorium / Perelman Stage at Carnegie Hall

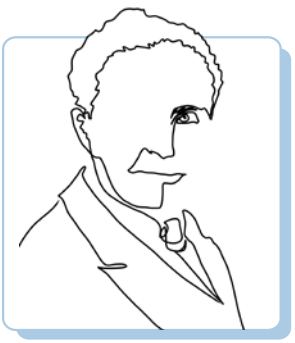
JOANN FALLETTA *conductor*

CONCERT TIMELINE

2 hours and 15 minutes

Gruenberg Jazz Suite	**Waghalter** Violin Concerto	**Intermission**	**Saminsky** *Vigiliae,* Triad of Poems	**Toch** Comedy for Orchestra	**Gershwin** *An American in Paris*
18 min	22 min	20 min	18 min	12 min	18 min

Brief remarks by **Carla Mendoza Trejo** *viola*



Louis Gruenberg

Born 8/3/1884 near Brest Litvosk, Russia (now Belarus)
Died 6/9/1964 at age 79 in Los Angeles

Jazz Suite

Foxtrot tempo (Allegretto ben ritmico)
Boston Waltz tempo (Valse lente e molto languido)
Blues tempo, Slow drag (Moderato, ma non troppo, sempre molto ritmico)
One-step tempo (Allegro assai)

Written 1925, at age 41
Premiered 3/22/1929 in Cincinnati, OH; Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra; Fritz Reiner *conductor*



Ignatz Waghalter

Born 3/15/1881 in Warsaw
Died 4/7/1949 at age 68 in New York City

Violin Concerto

Allegro moderato (moderately fast) *10 min*
Andante sostenuto (moderately slow and sustained) *8 min*
Allegro giocoso, con spirito (fast and happy, with spirit) *4 min*
no pause between movements

NYC PREMIERE

MIRA WANG *violin*

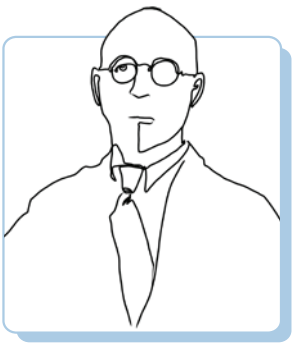
Written 1911, at age 30
Premiered 1911 in Berlin

Turn over for more info

Intermission

SHARE A PHOTO @TheOrchNow #TheOrchNow
REFRESHMENTS available at the café on the Parquet level
WIFI Carnegie Hall WiFi
RESTROOMS located on the Parquet, Blavatnik Family First Tier (outside of the Rose Museum), and Second Tier levels

Brief remarks by **Philip Drembus** *percussion*



Lazare Saminsky

Born 10/27/1882 in Vale-Gotzulovo (now Hatzulovo), Ukraine
Died 6/30/1959 at age 76 in Port Chester, NY

Vigiliae, Triad of Poems

Tranquillo (calm)
Lento mistico (slow and mystical)
Scintillante (sparkling)
no pause after second movement

NYC PREMIERE

Written 1910–12, in Saminsky's late 20s
Premiered 1913 at the Koussevitzky Concerts in Moscow; Saminsky *conductor*



Ernst Toch

Born 12/7/1887 in Vienna
Died 10/1/1964 at age 76 in Santa Monica, CA

Comedy for Orchestra in One Movement

Written 1927, at age 39
Premiered 11/10/1927 at the Gewandhaus in Leipzig, Germany; Wilhelm Furtwängler *conductor*



George Gershwin

Born 9/26/1898 in Brooklyn
Died 7/11/1937 at age 38 in Los Angeles

An American in Paris

Written 1928, at ages 29–30
Premiered 12/13/1928 at Carnegie Hall; New York Philharmonic; Walter Damrosch *conductor*
First TŌN Performance 2/3/2018 at the Fisher Center at Bard in Annandale-on-Hudson, NY; James Bagwell *conductor*

All timings are approximate.

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ILLUSTRATIONS BY KHOA DOAN

Presented at Carnegie Hall by

TŌN THEORCHESTRANOW. Bard's Orchestral Masters

Tuesday, November 17, 2026 at 7 PM
Isaac Stern Auditorium / Ronald O. Perelman Stage

The Orchestra Now (TŌN)

JoAnn Falletta, Conductor

LOUIS GRUENBERG (1884–1964)

Jazz Suite, Op. 28 (1925)
- Foxtrot tempo (Allegretto ben ritmico)
- Boston Waltz tempo (Valse lente e molto languido)
- Blues tempo, Slow drag (Moderato, ma non troppo, sempre molto ritmico)
- One-step tempo (Allegro assai)

IGNATZ WAGHALTER (1881–1949)

Violin Concerto (1911; NYC Premiere)
- Allegro moderato
- Andante sostenuto
- Allegro giocoso, con spirito

Mira Wang, Violin

INTERMISSION

LAZARE SAMINSKY (1882–1959)

Vigiliae (1910–1912; NYC Premiere)
- Tranquillo (calm)
- Lento mistico (slow and mystical)
- Scintillante (sparkling)

ERNST TOCH (1887–1964)

Komödie, Op. 42 (1927)

GEORGE GERSHWIN (1898–1937)

An American in Paris (1928)

The Program

LOUIS GRUENBERG (1884–1964)
Jazz Suite, Op. 28 (1925)

Louis Gruenberg was a Russian-born American composer and pianist. In his early career, Gruenberg dedicated himself to piano performance, beginning to study at age eight at the National Conservatory of Music in New York. In his 20s, Gruenberg befriended the Italian conductor Ferruccio Busoni, which greatly elevated his solo career, performing with the Berlin Philharmonic under Busoni's baton in 1912 and later touring both Europe and the US together. Gruenberg's focus later changed to composition with Busoni's encouragement. His first two works—*The Witch of Brocken* (1912) and *The Bride of the Gods* (1913)—had relative success, though it wasn't until 1920, when Gruenberg won the New York Philharmonic's Flagler Prize for *The Hill of Dreams* (1920), that he fully committed himself to writing music.

Gruenberg developed his style during the 1920s, when he began to see himself as a distinctly American composer. In the first volume of *Modern Music*, Gruenberg wrote about the "rich veins indigenous to America" of Black spiritual music and jazz, and how these influences should be used to create a musical style that was distinct from Europe, one that would "combine a knowledge of tradition and the modern experiment." His Jazz Suite for orchestra is among a series of compositions that set out to do exactly this, combining the rich history of American music with an orchestral sound. The piece has four movements, each with a tempo marking of a popular dance of the period: a foxtrot, a Boston waltz, a slow blues, and a one-step. The structure is built around the call-and-response habit of a dance band, which gives each section and soloist their turn. The piece was premiered by Fritz Reiner with the Cincinnati Symphony, was well received, and had many subsequent performances with a number of conductors, including Serge Koussevitzky.

Despite the success of the piece and his career, Gruenberg's work has largely fallen out of the repertoire, with composers like Gershwin undoubtedly being the regular touchstones for this period of American music. I find this to be a true loss as the piece clearly demonstrates the uniqueness of American orchestral writing and influence of the music of the period. When heard today, Gruenberg's Jazz Suite deserves to be reconsidered as more than just a novelty of its decade.

—Felix Johnson, TŌN horn player

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IGNATZ WAGHALTER (1881–1949)
Violin Concerto (1911; NYC Premiere)

In 1949, three years after the end of World War II, Theodor Adorno released his *Philosophy of New Music*. Adorno stated that truly modern music should express the conflicts and suffering of modern society rather than giving listeners easy pleasure. The same year, Polish-German composer and conductor Ignatz Waghalter died in New York, leaving behind a large body of undiscovered compositions and an uncompromising melodicism.

Waghalter's musical talent started showing up at an early age; he was born in a poor, musical Jewish family in Warsaw. At the age of 17, he went to Berlin to pursue his musical dreams. There, he studied composition and conducting with Friedrich Gernsheim. He had a successful conducting career; it was he who conducted German premieres of Puccini's *Tosca* and *La bohème*. This fascination with Puccini likely explains the importance of melody in his own compositions.

Waghalter's Violin Concerto is particularly interesting because we can sense something between Brahmsian Romanticism and a more individual harmonic language of the early 20th century. In the first movement, the orchestra starts the glorious first theme before the soloist enters. The second theme is more lyrical and Romantic. Later on, the cadenza shows Waghalter's brilliant idea of combining the first and second themes with thicker sounds and flashy passages. With a sudden tempo change, the first movement ends in a pleasant mood.

Right after the ending of the first movement, the horns turn the atmosphere into a Brahmsian reminiscence. The second movement starts with a beautiful string cantilena with a touching solo violin melody—the core of the whole concerto. The second theme is pastoral and organic.

The third movement is relatively short and has more playful energy, highlighting the soloist's virtuosity and displaying the whole range of the violin's sound with rapid modulating arpeggios and lyrical melodies. The orchestra plays the same musical material, but Waghalter makes the violin appear as a sparkling spirit dancing among the orchestra.

In the development of musical history, there have been differing views about how music should express the world and life. Walghalter's Violin Concerto speaks directly to the listener, with the most sincerity and captivating melodic beauty.

—Mingyue Xia, TŌN violinist

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LAZARE SAMINSKY (1882–1959)
Vigiliae (1910–1912; NYC Premiere)

Lazare Saminsky was born in Vale-Gotzulovo, which is about 100 miles from Odessa in Ukraine. Saminsky was born into an upper-middle-class family; his mother was a singer and his father was a merchant. Saminsky dabbled in singing and composition throughout his childhood, but did not study music until he began piano lessons at the age of 15, which differs significantly from most composers we know who were either prodigies or well-accomplished and began studying music at a very early age. He then went to the St. Petersburg Conservatory, where he studied under Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov, Anatoly Liadov, and Nikolay Tcherepnin, and was classmates with Sergei Prokofiev. Saminsky was one of the founding members of the Society for Jewish Folk Music in St. Petersburg, where they sought to explore the relationship between classical music and Jewish folk and liturgical music. He also visited New York in 1920, but his composition *Vigiliae* was composed while he was in Russia.

Vigiliae, Triad of Poems was conducted by Saminsky himself in 1913 in Moscow. The piece is inspired by three Russian symbolist poems, one representing each movement, and is evident of Rimsky-Korsakov's influence on Saminsky. The first movement is represented by an 1897 poem by Konstantin Balmont titled "O waves of the ocean, akin to the blood in my veins ..." The second movement is centered around the line "At the crossroads of existence ..." from a 1903 poem by Fyodor Sologub. The third movement is centered around the line "Having completed the entire heavenly path through heights and valleys ..." from Valery Bryusov's 1903 poem "In This Valley of Tears."

I listened to the piece first before reading the poetry and knowing the titles, and I am glad I did because the music represents the poems very well. While I did not come up with the same titles as the poems, I did come up with a similar story line of seeing myself travel through an enchanted forest. The forest had a lot of beauty and defining features, turning to turmoil, and then concluding the long and eventful journey. Almost as if Walt Disney himself came up with the story line and music.

—Casey Lebkicker, TŌN violist

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ERNST TOCH (1887–1964)
Komödie (1927)

Ernst Toch's *Komödie* is a lively orchestral work. Through shifting rhythms, contrasting instrumental colors, and changing textures, Toch creates a musical world full of surprise, wit, and restless energy.

Toch was an Austrian composer who lived from 1887 to 1964. He attended Vienna Conservatory and then the Hoch Conservatory in Frankfurt. After winning the Mozart prize, he served in the Austrian army in World War I and taught at the Mannheim Hochschule für Musik. In 1933, he immigrated to the US. He composed operas and a wide range of concert music as well as film scores.

The *Komödie* was written in 1927, at a time when Germany was still trying to find its place following the First World War. All kinds of art and music entered Germany during this period, including jazz. Jazz took over the nightlife and cabarets while avant-garde music took over the concert halls.

The score reveals a rich orchestral palette, with instruments interacting in a conversation. The music develops through short motifs, rhythmic figures, and sudden changes in orchestral color. The result is a sense of motion and spontaneity, as though the orchestra itself were participating in an animated theatrical performance. One of the work's most striking characteristics is its rhythmic flexibility. Frequent changes of meter, including alternating groupings of beats, create an off-balance momentum that keeps listeners alert. The shifting patterns resist a predictable pulse, giving the music an agile, sometimes mischievous character. As a musician, I find this piece very fascinating. It feels like a jazzy version of a *Tom and Jerry* cartoon as there seems to be a lot of comedic, fast-paced action.

—Jaxson Padgett, TŌN horn player

GEORGE GERSHWIN (1898–1937)
An American in Paris (1928)

There is no better sound to capture the unfettered magic of the Roaring '20s, or the Années folles decade of Paris, than the glittering score of George Gershwin's *An American in Paris*. This tone poem is what became of Gershwin's visit to Paris in 1928, a part of his European trip during which he met the foremost Modernists of the time, including Sergei Prokofiev and Alban Berg.

The score ultimately took inspiration from the murky, blue harmony of Maurice Ravel and the French Impressionists, and Gershwin wrote, "My purpose is to portray the impressions of an American visitor in Paris as he strolls about the city, listens to the various street noises, and absorbs the French atmosphere." You will hear in the opening the bustle and chaos of

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Parisian street traffic, with bright orchestral colors and syncopated rhythms evoking the energy of a city in constant motion.

As the music unfolds, Gershwin's musical traveler wanders through the streets of Paris, encountering a series of contrasting scenes and characters. The score moves freely between jazz-inflected rhythms, blues harmonies, and sweeping lyrical melodies, as if we were strolling without a fixed destination. Gershwin's orchestration is especially vivid, including muted brass, shimmering percussion, and woodwind flourishes. Unexpected instrumental combinations paint the city in sound, while the famous Parisian taxi horns punctuate the texture like flashes of color in a crowded boulevard.

At the heart of the work is the celebrated blues episode, where the bustling exterior world gives way to something more inevitable. The solo trumpet introduces a languid melody that unfolds gradually through the orchestra—the memory of Harlem pulling the weary traveler back into their identity, a wave of homesickness that the composer felt could best be expressed by the blues. Yet even here, Paris remains present; fragments of earlier themes and restless rhythmic figures gradually pull the music back into the streets.

The final section gathers these contrasting impressions into an exuberant orchestral climax. Gershwin's Paris is neither entirely French nor entirely American; it is a place seen through the eyes of an American composer captivated by the sounds, colors, and possibilities of a foreign city. In *An American in Paris*, jazz and symphonic music meet not as opposites, but as two languages capable of telling the same story.

—Craig Swink, TŌN clarinetist

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The Artists

JoAnn Falletta


Heather Bellini

Multiple Grammy Award-winning conductor JoAnn Falletta is music director of the Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra (BPO), music director laureate of the Virginia Symphony, principal guest conductor and artistic advisor of the Omaha Symphony, principal guest conductor of the Brevard Music Center, and conductor laureate of the Hawaii Symphony. She is recognized by *Gramophone* magazine as one of the "Fifty Great Conductors" of all time, and by ASCAP as "a leading force for music of our time."

As music director of the BPO, Falletta became the first woman to lead a major American orchestra. She has overseen one of the orchestra's most productive recording and touring eras, bringing the Philharmonic to an unprecedented level of national and international prominence. The BPO is ranked as one of the top five orchestras of CD releases on international labels.

With a discography of over 135 titles, Falletta has won two individual Grammy Awards for Richard Danielpour's *The Passion of Yeshua* with the BPO and the music of Kenneth Fuchs with the London Symphony, and was the conductor on the BPO's double Grammy Award-winning album of John Corigliano's *Mr. Tambourine Man*. She was also nominated for four additional Grammys, including two for Best Orchestral Performance.

Falletta's guest conducting career has taken her to the world's leading orchestras, including over 100 orchestras in North America across 48 states, Canada, and Mexico. Internationally, she has conducted many of the most prominent orchestras in Europe, Asia, and South America. She has conducted over 1,700 orchestral works by 650 composers with 200 premieres, including over 135 works by more than 70 women composers.

Falletta is a member of the esteemed American Academy of Arts and Sciences, has served by presidential appointment as a member of the National Council on the Arts, and is the recipient of many of the most prestigious conducting awards.

Falletta has held the positions of principal conductor of the Ulster Orchestra, principal guest conductor of the Phoenix Symphony, music director of the Long Beach Symphony Orchestra, associate conductor of the Milwaukee Symphony Orchestra, and music director of the Denver Chamber Orchestra and The Women's Philharmonic. After earning her

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bachelor's degree at Mannes, she received master's and doctoral degrees from The Juilliard School.

For more information, visit joannfalletta.com.


Felix Broede

Mira Wang

Mira Wang has built a remarkable career from her beginnings as a child prodigy in Beijing, China, to her acclaimed international career as a soloist, chamber musician, and artistic leader.

Wang has appeared as a soloist with many of the world's leading orchestras, including the Boston Symphony Orchestra, Staatskapelle Dresden, Royal Liverpool Philharmonic, Royal Scottish National Orchestra, Orchestre de la Suisse Romande, Saarbrücken Radio Orchestra, New Zealand Symphony Orchestra, Singapore Symphony Orchestra, Hong Kong Philharmonic, and NDR Philharmonic Hannover.

An avid chamber musician, Wang has collaborated with distinguished artists including Hélène Grimaud, Olli Mustonen, Alice Sara Ott, Louis Lortie, Jeremy Denk, Pamela Frank, Daniel Müller-Schott, Gautier Capuçon, Jan Vogler, and Lawrence Power.

A passionate advocate for contemporary music, Wang has premiered numerous major works. She gave the Dresden premiere of Chen Yi's violin concerto *Spring in Dresden* with Staatskapelle Dresden, conducted by Ivan Fischer, and performed the Boston premiere of John Harbison's Double Concerto for Violin and Cello with the Boston Symphony Orchestra under Carlos Kalmar. In 2015, she premiered Wolfgang Rihm's Double Concerto with Jan Vogler and the Orpheus Chamber Orchestra at Carnegie Hall. In 2018, she premiered William Blank's triple concerto *Alisma* with Jan Vogler, Daniel Ottensamer, and the Philharmonische Staatsorchester Hamburg, conducted by Kent Nagano at the Elbphilharmonie in Hamburg.

Wang has recorded extensively for labels including Sony Classical, Edel Classics, and Decca Gold. Her discography includes concertos by Prokofiev and Saint-Saëns, a duo album with cellist Jan Vogler, and chamber music recordings with artists of the Moritzburg Festival.

Wang has also toured internationally with actor Bill Murray, Jan Vogler, and pianist Vanessa Perez in *New Worlds*, an innovative exploration of literature and music. A live documentary of the project premiered in cinemas worldwide in 2022.

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Wang founded New York City's Model Room Musicales and has served as its artistic director since 2005. She became director of the Moritzburg Festival Academy in 2013 and joined the faculty of Bard College Conservatory in 2022.

Born in China, Wang studied at the Central Conservatory in Beijing before continuing at Boston University, where she graduated summa cum laude and received the Kahn Award. She has won first prizes at several international violin competitions, including the Geneva Competition.

The Orchestra Now (TŌN)

Founded in 2015 by Bard College, The Orchestra Now (TŌN) is a graduate program that is training the next generation of music professionals, offering a master's degree or an advanced certificate. 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 successful careers in orchestras around the world.

TŌN performs dozens of concerts a year at venues including Carnegie Hall, Lincoln Center, and the Fisher Center at Bard. In 2025, TŌN performed two concerts in Koblenz and Nuremberg, Germany. The orchestra has performed with numerous distinguished guest conductors and soloists, including Leonard Slatkin, Gil Shaham, Neeme Järvi, Stephanie Blythe, Fabio Luisi, Vadim Repin, Joseph Young, Peter Serkin, Naomi Woo, 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*. Recordings of TŌN's live concerts from the Fisher Center can be heard regularly on Classical WMHT-FM and WWFM The Classical Network, and the orchestra has appeared over 100 times on *Performance Today*, broadcast nationwide.

More info at ton.bard.edu.

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The Orchestra Now (TŌN)

First Violins
Shan (Serena) Bai
Concertmaster
Jolin Yi-Lin Lin
Luca Sakon
Yuchen Zhao
Hanyu Feng
Iasmim Bonfim de Carvalho
Mingyue Xia
Xiaomeng Ma
Lap Yin Lee
Haley Maurer Gillia
TŌN '26

Second Violins
Carlos Torres
Principal
Anna Wallace
Yuxuan Feng
Joas Erasmus
Anna Maria Cristina Popan
Sansa Wang
Sophie Chan-Sady
Angeles Hoyos TŌN '25

Violas
Yuxuan Zhang
Principal
Casey Lebkicker
Flavia Pájaro-van de Stadt
Benjamin Duke
Carla Mendoza Trejo
Enoch Ng
Chia-Mei (Lily) Li*

Cellos
Hannah Brown
Principal
Shawn Thoma
Kate Hwang
Maria Paula Casas
Alfred Western
Christiaan Stefanus van Zyl
Alex Engelhardt*
Nohyoon Kwak*
Stella Torkelson*

Basses
Nozomi Sugimoto
Principal
Luisa Torres
Moisés Chirinos
Zacherie Small
Jack Corcoran*
Shion Kim*

Flutes
Youbeen Cho
Principal 1, 2
Piccolo 4
Wen-Hsiu (Angela) Lai
Principal 3–5
Piccolo 1
Christian Midy

Oboes
Aaron Haettenschwiller
Principal 1, 2
English Horn 3–5
Nathalie Graciela Vela
Principal 3–5
Boris Baev
English Horn 1

Clarinets
Timothy Coffey
Principal 1, 2
Eric Huang
Principal 3–5
Craig Swink
Bass Clarinet 1, 3, 5
E-flat Clarinet 4
Dávid Kéringer IAP '24
TŌN '26
Alto Saxophone
Alex Lemma
Tenor Saxophone
Jonathan Hart
Baritone Saxophone

Bassoons
Alejandro Morillo
Principal 1, 2
Peter Houdalis
Principal 3–5
Philip McNaughton
TŌN '23
Contrabassoon
Shelby Capozzoli*

Horns
Jack Sindall
Principal 1, 2
Ashton Sady
Principal 3–5
Lee Cyphers
Assistant 3–5
Felix Johnson
Jaxson Padgett
Assistant 1, 2

Trumpets
Kassandra Miano
Principal 1, 2
Nathan Lyle
Principal 3–5
Isaac Morton

Trombones
Ethan Pound
Principal 1
Yuki Mori
Principal 3–5
Charlie Hall
Bass Trombone

Tuba
Joel Horton

Timpani
Pei Hsien (Ariel) Lu

Percussion
Philip Drembus
Jonathan Monk
Kelsey Choi
Nathaniel Valsania
IAP '27

Harp
Zibin Zhou

Keyboard
Francis Chung-Yang Huang

1 Gruenberg
2 Waghalter
3 Saminsky
4 Toch
5 Gershwin
* not performing in this concert

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Arleen Auerbach
Catherine M. Baiardi
John Cubba and John Cirincion
Curtis DeVito and Dennis Wedlick
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