

RPO BRAVO 18-19 SEASON SEPT 13-OCT 3



DVOŘÁK'S NEW WORLD | JENNIFER HIGDON: LIVE RECORDING
DISTANT WORLDS: MUSIC FROM FINAL FANTASY | CIRQUE DE LA SYMPHONIE
THIBAUDET PLAYS GERSHWIN

SEASON SPONSOR

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Dear RPO Patron,

With Ward's first downbeat, the RPO will begin its 96th season. If the ghosts of RPO musicians past could tell us stories, one thing would be certain – a theme of community would resurface again and again.

The RPO has always prided itself on being a vital part of the Rochester community. Through education and community engagement programs, the RPO brings music to all four quadrants of the City and beyond. The Orchestra performs in Kodak Hall at Eastman Theatre, but also in churches, temples, rec centers, and in outdoor spaces. The musicians and staff individually contribute within their communities as well, by volunteering for a variety of local non-profits, partnering with organizations to spread music and education, and championing worthwhile causes. Simply put: we love being Rochesterians.

This past season, and most notably this summer, our community stepped up to the Community Challenge. Initiated by our board as a 2:1 match, we saw new donors round up their ticket purchase, add on donations at the Patron Services Center, and respond to our emails or social media appeals for action. The number of people within our community who support the RPO financially increased this past season, as did the overall amount donated. For that, we are grateful.

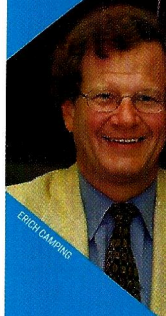
We also saw another year of record-setting ticket sales. Multiple sold-out performances, unbelievable musical memories, and generous financial support from our community all helped to make the 2017/18 season one to celebrate!

But we're not resting on our laurels. The musicians, staff, and board of the RPO are committed to making the 2018/19 season even better. Thank you for joining us as we begin another season long musical journey. Here's to a year of exciting music, beautiful memories, and making Rochester a great place to live, work and raise our families.

Sincerely,



Curtis S. Long
President & CEO



Welcome from the President and CEO

FROM THE MUSIC DIRECTOR

Welcome to 2018-19! We are excited to begin this new season with a new look—including a brand new logo. It's modern and energetic while containing sonic imagery to represent the world-class music you've come to expect from your RPO. We hope you like it.

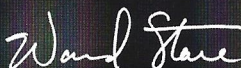
Speaking of fantastic music, our 2018-19 season is jam-packed with quality musical experiences. We'll welcome back celebrated guest artists like Jon Nakamatsu and Vadym Kholodenko; take on symphonic monoliths such as Beethoven's triumphant *Eroica* and Mahler's dramatic Symphony No. 7; and provide the score to cinematic favorites like *Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets* and *Star Wars: The Empire Strikes Back* - in Concert.

In addition to our time in the concert hall, we are excited to continue our work out in the community with free educational and community concerts. Our musicians will continue to extend their reach beyond the RPO and into small ensembles and outside concert venues. Like you, we live and work in Rochester--and we couldn't be happier to be part of this community.

Finally, we couldn't continue to do what we do without our most vital piece: you. Your support is what keeps the music playing, and we can't thank you enough. If you haven't already, please follow the RPO on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram. We'd love to connect with you and stay in touch.

Here's to a phenomenal 2018-19!

Sincerely,



WARD STARE
MUSIC DIRECTOR



VIOLIN 1

Juliana Athayde, *Concertmaster*
Wilfredo Deglans,
Associate Concertmaster
Shannon Nance,
Assistant Concertmaster
Perrin Yang
Tigran Vardanyan
Willa Finck
Thomas Rodgers
Aika Ito
Youngsun Kim
Kenneth Langley
Molly McDonald
Cynthia Burton
Jeremey Hill
An-Chi Lin

VIOLIN 2

Daryl Perlo, *Acting Principal*
Patricia Sunwoo
John Sullivan
Lara Sipols
Nancy Hunt
Boris Zapasochny
Liana Koteva Kirvan
Margaret Leenhouts
Heidi Brodwin
Catherine Arai
Ellen Sonnenberg

VIOLA

Melissa Matson, *Principal*
Marc Anderson,
Assistant Principal
Samantha Rodriguez*
Mary Ferrillo
Olita Povero
Olivia Chew
Neil Miller
David Hult
Aaron Mossburg*
Matthew Ross
Benjamin Magruder

CELLO

Ahrim Kim, *Principal*
Kathleen Murphy Kemp,
Assistant Principal
Lars Kirvan
Christopher Haritatos
Zexun Shen
Benjamin Krug
Ingrid Bock
Jennifer Carpenter

BASS

Cory Palmer, *Principal*
Michael Griffin,
Assistant Principal
Gaelen McCormick*
Edward Castilano
Fred Dole
Jeff Campbell+
Eric Polenik

FLUTE

Rebecca Gilbert, *Principal*
Joanna Bassott
Jessica Sindell
Diane Smith

PICCOLO

Joanna Bassott
Jessica Sindell

OBOE

Erik Behr, *Principal*
Anna Steltenpohl
Geoff Sanford

ENGLISH HORN

Anna Steltenpohl

CLARINET

Kenneth Grant, + *Principal*
Andrew Brown

BASS CLARINET

Andrew Brown

SAXOPHONE

Ramon Ricker

BASSOON

Matthew McDonald, *Principal*
Karl Vilcins
Martha Sholl

CONTRA-BASSOON

Karl Vilcins

HORN

W. Peter Kurau, + *Principal*
Nikolette Labonte,
Associate/Assistant/Utility
Maura McCune Corvington
David Angus
Stephen Laifer

TRUMPET

Douglas Prosser, + *Principal*
Wesley Nance
Herbert Smith
Paul Shewan

TROMBONE

David Bruestle, *Principal*
Lisa Albrecht
Jeffrey Gray

BASS TROMBONE

Jeffrey Gray

TUBA

W. Craig Sutherland, *Principal*

TIMPANI

Charles Ross, *Principal*
Jim Tiller, *Assistant Principal*

PERCUSSION

Jim Tiller, *Principal*
Brian Stotz
Bradley Loudis
Kyle Peters
Jillian Pritchard

HARP

Grace Browning, *Principal*
Rosanna Moore

KEYBOARD

Joseph Werner, *Principal*
Cary Ratcliff

PERSONNEL MANAGER

Fred Dole

PRINCIPAL LIBRARIAN

Kimberly Hartquist

STAGE MANAGERS

David Zaccaria
Deirdre Street

* On Leave

+ Full-time faculty at the
Eastman School of Music

MEET OUR NEW MUSICIANS

Please join us in welcoming two new full-time musicians to the RPO! Willa Finck and Zexun (Jason) Shen joined the RPO as part-time musicians in 2017 and 2016, respectively. This season you'll be seeing them onstage a lot more often!

WILLA FINCK, violin

Willa Finck, a native of Boone, North Carolina, joined the RPO in January of 2017. She is the fiddle instructor at the Eastman Community Music School, and a founding member of the Rochester-based folk band, Copper Hill. She received her Bachelor of Music degree with high distinction from the Eastman School of Music in May 2018. During her time at Eastman Willa was invited to perform with faculty members, Steven Doane, Rosemary Elliot, Masumi Per Rostad, and her own teacher, Mikhail Kopelman.

Willa served as a concertmaster in both the Eastman School Symphony Orchestra and the Eastman Philharmonia, starting both positions in her sophomore year. In 2016 she won Eastman's Violin Concerto Competition, which led to her performance as soloist with the Eastman School Symphony Orchestra. Willa has also been a soloist with the North Carolina Symphony and the Asheville Symphony.

In addition to her solo and orchestral endeavors, Willa is a dedicated chamber musician. While at Eastman she worked with the same quartet for three years and this group was selected four times to perform in the Honors Chamber Recital. In the summer of 2018 Willa performed with cellist Christopher Costanza of the St. Lawrence String Quartet at the Madeline Island Chamber Music Festival.

Willa grew up playing Irish and Old-Time music with her family and has made more recent forays into Bluegrass and song-writing. She plays a 2013 violin made by her father, David Finck, luthier.

ZEXUN (JASON) SHEN, cello

Born in Shanghai, China, Zexun (Jason) Shen studied at the Shanghai Conservatory of Music with Professor Da-Hai Liu and graduated with honors in 2009. In the same year, he began his studies with Timothy Eddy at the Mannes College of Music (BM 2013, MM 2015), where he was presented with a full scholarship and the Goldsmith Foundation Award. Shen has served as the principal cellist of the Mannes Orchestra since 2011.

Shen has performed extensively in the U.S. and abroad (including China, Australia, and Poland) as a soloist and chamber musician, playing at venues such as the Alice Tully Hall, Carnegie Hall, the Steinway Hall, Merkin Concert Hall, Metropolitan Museum, Morgan Library Museum, and has taken part in music festivals such as the Sarasota Music Festival, Heifetz International Music Institute (String Quartet Seminar), and the Taos Chamber Music Festival, working with the members of the Borromeo String Quartet, Brentano String Quartet, the Moscow Rachmaninoff Piano Trio, the Guarneri String Quartet, and the Orion String Quartet, amongst others. He has also performed in solo and chamber master classes given by world-renowned musicians such as Shmuel Ashkenazi, Colin Carr, Christoph Henkel, Andres Diaz, Paul Katz, Ralph Kirshbaum, Laurence Lesser, Robert McDonald, Joseph Silverstein, and Michael Tree.

Shen is currently studying with Philippe Muller at the Manhattan School of Music. He plays on an 1889 Giovanni Dollenz cello made in Triesta, Italy, with an 1860 Charles Peccatte bow made available to him as a gift from a private sponsor.



WARD STARE**Music Director**

Appointed the 12th music director of the Rochester Philharmonic Orchestra in July 2014, Rochester native Ward Stare has been described as “inspiring musicians to impressive heights” by *The New York Times*, and “a dynamic music director” by Rochester *CITY Newspaper*.

Stare’s recent seasons have seen a number of highly anticipated debuts with orchestras around the world, including performances with the Baltimore Symphony, Sydney Symphony, Pittsburgh Symphony, Toronto Symphony, and the Calgary Philharmonic. Last season he made his debut with the Hawaii Symphony Orchestra followed by his return to the St. Louis Symphony in December.

Stare’s frequent collaboration with the Lyric Opera of Chicago began with his debut in 2012 conducting performances of *Hansel and Gretel*; he returned in 2013 to lead *Die Fledermaus*, and again in November 2014 to lead *Porgy and Bess* to rave reviews. He made his debut with the Washington National Opera conducting Donizetti’s comic opera *L’Elisir d’amore* in 2014.

Stare served as resident conductor of the Saint Louis Symphony Orchestra from 2008 to 2012. In 2009, he made his highly successful Carnegie Hall debut with the orchestra, stepping in at the last minute to lead H. K. Gruber’s *Frankenstein!* The 2013–14 season saw his return to the Atlanta and Detroit symphony orchestras, as well as his debuts with the Syracuse Symphoria, the Jacksonville Symphony, and the Naples Philharmonic with Lang Lang as soloist.

Stare was trained as a trombonist at The Juilliard School in Manhattan. At 18, he was appointed principal trombonist of the Lyric Opera of Chicago and has performed as an orchestral musician with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra and the New York Philharmonic, among others. As a soloist, he has concertized in both the U.S. and Europe. wardstare.com

JEFF TYZIK**Principal Pops Conductor**

Grammy Award winner Jeff Tyzik is one of America’s most innovative and sought after pops conductors, recognized for his brilliant arrangements, original programming and engaging rapport with audiences of all ages. This season Tyzik celebrates 25 years as principal pops conductor of the RPO, a title he also holds at the Detroit Symphony, the Oregon Symphony, and The Florida Orchestra. This is also the sixth season that Tyzik has held The Dot and Paul Mason Principal Pops Conductor’s Podium at the Dallas Symphony Orchestra.

Frequently invited as a guest conductor, Tyzik has appeared with the Boston Pops, Cincinnati Pops, Milwaukee Symphony, Pittsburgh Symphony, Toronto Symphony, Indianapolis Symphony, Philadelphia Orchestra, Los Angeles Philharmonic, and the Royal Scottish National Orchestra.

Tyzik has written more than 200 arrangements, orchestrations, and compositions for orchestra. A consummate musician, Tyzik regularly appears as a guest conductor in the RPO’s subscription series. In the 2015–16 season, Tyzik premiered a new violin concerto written for RPO Concertmaster Juliana Athayde.

Tyzik has collaborated with such diverse artists as Megan Hilty, Chris Botti, Matthew Morrison, Wynonna Judd, Tony Bennett, Art Garfunkel, Dawn Upshaw, Marilyn Horne, Arturo Sandoval, The Chieftains, Mark O’Connor, Doc Severinsen, and John Pizzarelli. He has created numerous original programs that include the greatest music from jazz and classical to Motown, Broadway, film, dance, Latin, and swing.

Tyzik holds both his bachelor and master’s degree from the Eastman School of Music. jefftyzik.com.

CHRISTOPHER SEAMAN**Conductor Laureate**

The Christopher Seaman Chair, Supported by Barbara and Patrick Fulford and The Conductor Laureate Society

Christopher Seaman was music director of the RPO from 1998–2011, and was subsequently named conductor laureate. During his 13-year tenure, the longest in RPO history, he raised the Orchestra’s artistic level, broadened its audience base, and created a new concert series. This contribution was recognized with an award from the American Society of Composers, Authors, and Publishers. In May 2009, the University of Rochester made him an honorary doctor of music.

Previous positions include music director of the Naples Philharmonic Orchestra (Florida) for 10 years, conductor-in-residence with the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra, and artistic advisor of the San Antonio Symphony.

He is recognized for his wealth of repertoire, which ranges from baroque to contemporary, and in particular the works of Bruckner, Brahms, and Sibelius. Seaman also is highly regarded for his work with younger musicians, and he served as course director for the Symphony Services International Conductor Development Program (Australia) for many years.

Recent conducting engagements include the Aspen Music Festival, Detroit, Houston, St. Louis, Cincinnati, Milwaukee, and Seattle symphony orchestras; the Warsaw Philharmonic Orchestra, Kristiansand Symphony Orchestra, Orchestra of Opera North, and Orquestra Filarmônica de Minas Gerais in Brazil. He frequently visits Australia and Asia where he has conducted the Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra and the National Taiwan, Sydney, Melbourne, Adelaide, and Singapore symphony orchestras, among others.



RPO
AN EVENING OF
CERSHWIN & CLAM
18-19 SEASON
OPENING GALA
CELEBRATION
October 3, 2018
5:30 PM | THE WILDER ROOM
Join us for an evening filled with 1920s glitz and glamour featuring your Rochester Philharmonic Orchestra with special guest, Jean-Yves Thibaudet.
TICKETS ON SALE NOW
585.454.2100 OR VISIT RPO.ORG/GALA
RSVP BY SEPTEMBER 21
CONCERT SPONSORED BY **M&T Bank**
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WED
OCT 3
8 PM

KODAK HALL
AT EASTMAN
THEATRE

Ward Stare, conductor
Jean-Yves Thibaudet, piano

GERSHWIN	<i>Girl Crazy Overture</i>	7:00
GERSHWIN	Selections for Orchestra from <i>Porgy and Bess</i>	11:00
GERSHWIN	<i>An American in Paris</i>	17:00
GERSHWIN	Concerto in F	29:00
	Allegro	
	Adagio – Andante con moto	
	Allegro agitato	

Thibaudet Plays Gershwin



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We kindly ask you to please silence all cellphones and electronic devices.
Also, please note that photography and video recordings are prohibited during the performance.

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PROGRAM NOTES

MUSIC OF GEORGE GERSHWIN

Gershwin's parents emigrated separately from Russia to America in the 1890s. They married in 1895 and settled in New York's tough Lower East Side neighborhood. They had four children: sons Ira, George and Arthur, and a daughter, Frances.

There was hardly any music in the household until a piano arrived in 1910. Intended primarily for Ira, it was George who was drawn to it most strongly. One of his piano teachers gave him Chopin, Liszt and Debussy to play, inspiring an early ambition to become a concert pianist, but the family's need for money led him to drop out of high school at 15.

He got a job as a song "plugger" at Remick & Co., one of several major popular music publishers located in Tin Pan Alley. He gradually broke into the pop song market he had come to know so well from the inside. By the early '20s, he was earning a healthy income from his own material. Sooner or later, his popular side and his classical side were bound to merge.

Girl Crazy Overture

This charming musical opened on Broadway in October 1930. The cast included Ginger Rogers, comedians Willie and Eugene Howard, and in her Broadway debut, Ethel Merman. The typically slight comic plot is about Danny Churchill, a New York playboy. He is sent by his father to a small town in Arizona to live the quiet life on the family ranch. Instead, he brings in a group of chorus girls and turns the place into a hotbed of fun and frolic. The tunes heard in the overture, several of which have become Gershwin classics, are Embraceable You; I Got Rhythm; Land of the Gay Caballero; But Not for Me; and Bronco Busters.

Selections for Orchestra from *Porgy and Bess*

Gershwin's opera *Porgy and Bess* met a mixed response when it premiered in 1935. It wasn't until it was revived in its full, original form during the 1970s that it won the lofty recognition it has always deserved. "When I chose *Porgy and Bess*...for a subject," he wrote, "I made sure that it would enable me to write light as well as serious music and that it would enable me to include humor as well as tragedy – in fact, all of the elements of entertainment for the eye as well as the ear."

The action takes place among impoverished African-American fishers in the community known as Catfish Row in Charleston, South Carolina. Porgy is a physically handicapped beggar who falls in love with the beautiful but irresponsible Bess. Believing Porgy dead, Bess departs for New York. The opera ends with Porgy heading off to find her. Tonight you will hear some of the best-known selections from the opera, as arranged for orchestra by Robert Russell Bennett, an expert arranger of Broadway shows.

An American in Paris

The New York Symphony Society, which had commissioned and premiered Gershwin's Piano Concerto in 1925, asked him to compose a work for orchestra alone. Three years later, with the early sketches for the new piece in tow, Gershwin travelled to Paris for an extended working holiday. The composition took shape there. Back in New York, he completed *An American in Paris* just in time for its scheduled premiere that December.

Here is his own introduction:

B. BROOKLYN, NEW YORK, USA
September 26, 1898

D. HOLLYWOOD, CALIFORNIA, USA
July 11, 1937

FIRST PERFORMED BY THE RPO: June 3, 1978;
Isaiah Jackson, conductor

LAST PERFORMED BY THE RPO: February 6, 2010;
Ward Stare, conductor

FIRST PERFORMED BY THE RPO: October 22, 1977;
Marvin Hamlisch, conductor

LAST PERFORMED BY THE RPO: June 7, 2015;
Paul Shewan, conductor

FIRST PERFORMED BY THE RPO: January 24, 1930;
Guy Fraser Harrison, conductor

LAST PERFORMED BY THE RPO: October 11, 2014;
Jeffrey Kahane, conductor

PROGRAM NOTES

My purpose is to portray the impression of an American visitor in Paris, as he strolls about the city, and listens to various street noises and absorbs the French atmosphere. The opening gay section is followed by a rich blues with a strong rhythmic undercurrent. Our American friend perhaps after strolling into a café and having a couple of drinks, has succumbed to a spasm of homesickness. This blues rises to a climax followed by a coda in which the spirit of the music return to the vivacity and bubbling exuberance of the opening part with its impressions of Paris. Apparently the homesick American, having left the café and reached the open air, has disowned his spell of the blues and once again is an alert spectator of Parisian life. At the conclusion, the street noises and French atmosphere are triumphant.

Concerto in F

Walter Damrosch, conductor of the New York Symphony Orchestra, was in the audience when Gershwin's *Rhapsody in Blue* made its debut in 1924. Impressed by its unprecedented amalgamation of popular and classical styles, he commissioned Gershwin to compose a full-scale piano concerto.

FIRST PERFORMED BY THE RPO: December 2, 1948;
Erich Leinsdorf, conductor

LAST PERFORMED BY THE RPO: October 1, 2016;
Jeff Tyzik, conductor

"Many persons had thought that my rhapsody was only a happy accident," Gershwin wrote. "Well I went out, for one thing, to show them that there was plenty more where that came from. I made up my mind to do a piece of 'absolute' music. The rhapsody, as its title implied, was a blues impression. The concerto would be unrelated to any program."

The first performance took place in Carnegie Hall on December 3, 1925. The audience acclaimed the concerto and its composer/performer, but the critics were more reserved in their judgment. Listeners have always loved it, making it the most frequently performed concerto by any American composer.

For the première, Gershwin wrote the following description: "The first movement employs the Charleston rhythm. It is quick and pulsating, representing the young, enthusiastic spirit of American life. It begins with a rhythmic motive given out by the kettledrums, supported by the other percussion instruments, and with a Charleston motive introduced by bassoons, horns, clarinets and violas. The principal theme is announced by the bassoon. Later, a second theme is introduced by the piano. The second movement has a poetic, nocturnal atmosphere which has come to be referred to as the American blues, but in a purer form than that in which they are usually treated. The final movement reverts to the style of the first. It is an orgy of rhythms, starting violently and keeping the same pace throughout."

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ARTISTS

JEAN-YVES THIBAUDET, piano

For more than three decades, Jean-Yves Thibaudet has performed worldwide, recorded more than 50 albums, and built a reputation as one of today's finest pianists. He plays a range of solo, chamber, and orchestral repertoire – from Beethoven through Liszt, Grieg, and Saint-Saëns; to Khachaturian and Gershwin, and to contemporary composers Qigang Chen and James MacMillan. From the very start of his career, he delighted in music beyond the standard repertoire, from jazz to opera, which he transcribed himself to play on the piano. His profound professional friendships crisscross the globe and have led to spontaneous and fruitful collaborations in film, fashion, and visual art.



JEAN-YVES THIBAUDET

This season takes Thibaudet to 14 countries, including extensive concerts in Asia with the Singapore, NHK, and Guangzhou symphony orchestras and the Malaysian, Hong Kong, and China philharmonics. As Artist-in-Residence at the Boston Symphony Orchestra, he plays the Bach Triple Concerto with Thomas Adès and Kirill Gerstein, Ravel's Piano Concerto for the Left Hand, chamber music with symphony musicians, and Bernstein's *Age of Anxiety* both in Boston and at Carnegie Hall. Thibaudet is considered one of the premiere interpreters of the solo part for this symphony, which he will also perform with the Atlanta and National symphony orchestras; the San Francisco and Houston symphonies; the China Philharmonic, and the Philadelphia Orchestra at home and on tour in Germany, Austria, and Israel, throughout Bernstein's centennial season.

In 2017-18 the Colburn School extends Thibaudet's Artist-in-Residency an additional three years and has announced the Jean-Yves Thibaudet Scholarships to provide aid for Music Academy students, whom Thibaudet will select for the merit-based awards, regardless of their instrument.

Thibaudet's recording catalogue of more than 50 albums has received two Grammy nominations, the Preis der Deutschen Schallplattenkritik, the Diapason d'Or, the Choc du Monde de la Musique, the Edison Prize, and Gramophone awards. He was the soloist on the Oscar-winning and critically acclaimed film *Atonement*, as well as *Pride and Prejudice*, *Extremely Loud & Incredibly Close*, and *Wakefield*. His concert wardrobe is designed by Vivienne Westwood. In 2010 the Hollywood Bowl honored Thibaudet for his musical achievements by inducting him into its Hall of Fame. Previously a Chevalier of the Ordre des Arts et des Lettres, Thibaudet was awarded the title Officier by the French Ministry of Culture in 2012.