

FALL PREVIEW

10 Months of Classical Concerts You Won't Want to Miss

Yes, many musicians are celebrating Beethoven's 250th birthday this season, but there's much more. (Even a viola festival!)



Anna Netrebko in Verdi's "Macbeth" at the Metropolitan Opera, opening Sept. 25. Hiroyuki Ito for The New York Times



By Zachary Woolfe

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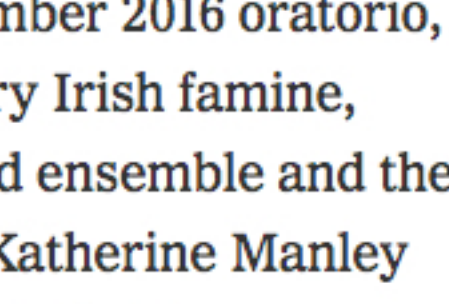
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FALL PREVIEW 2019

Savior or Charlatan? A Punk Maestro Jolts Classical Music

Sept. 11, 2019



September

ALARM WILL SOUND Donnacha Dennehy's somber 2016 oratorio, "The Hunger," about the devastating 19th-century Irish famine, returns for concert performances by this intrepid ensemble and the acclaimed original soloists, the British soprano Katherine Manley and the expressive Irish folk singer Iarla O Lionaird. After a performance at Princeton University on Sept. 17, the work will open the 10th season of the Ecstatic Music Festival at Merkin Concert Hall in New York on Sept. 19. [alarmwillsound.com](#).

PAUL JACOBS This stylish organist travels among several instruments in New York for a deep dive into the French organ tradition: Messiaen, Vierne, Widor and others. He plays the Church of St. Mary the Virgin in Midtown Manhattan on Sept. 17, then St. Ignatius Loyola on the Upper East Side on Sept. 24. [stmvirgin.org](#), [stignatiusloyola.org](#).

O19 A few years ago, facing financial pressures, Opera Philadelphia revamped, compressing most of its offerings into a start-of-season burst. Its 2019 festival, the third iteration of O, includes two new pieces — Philip Venables and Ted Huffman's "Denis & Katya," about Russian political violence, and Joseph Keckler's performance piece "Let Me Die" — along with productions of Prokofiev's "The Love for Three Oranges" and Handel's "Semele." ("Madama Butterfly" follows in the spring.) Sept. 18-29; [operaphila.org](#).



Jaap van Zweden, the music director of the New York Philharmonic. (Its season opens on Sept. 18.) Jeenah Moon for The New York Times

JAAP VAN ZWEDEN One of the surprises of this conductor's first season as music director of the New York Philharmonic was that he seemed more adept at contemporary music than at the standard repertory with which he's more closely associated. His embrace of the new continues: He opens the Philharmonic's season on Sept. 18 with the premiere of Philip Glass's "King Lear Overture," then turns on the 26th to staged performances of Schoenberg's "Erwartung" and Bartok's "Bluebeard's Castle." Oct. 7 brings Beethoven — whose 250th birthday will make him even more omnipresent than usual this season, around the world — and Lang Lang, who [also plays Carnegie Hall](#) on May 7. Another brilliant pianist, Daniil Trifonov, joins at the end of November for Scriabin's Romantic but unassuming concerto. (Mr. Trifonov plays arrangements of Bach and "The Art of Fugue" [at Alice Tully Hall](#) on March 3.) As part of the Philharmonic's Project 19 series of commissions from female composers, Mr. van Zweden also leads new works by Nina C. Young, Tania León and Ellen Reid, as well as lots of Mahler and the music of Steve Reich, Nico Muhly and John Adams (his luminous early choral work "Harmonium"). [nyphil.org](#).

EMPAC The experimental arts center at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute in Troy, N.Y., has recently hired a new curator of music, Anne Leilehua Lanzilotti, whose first program, on Sept. 20, will be a solo concert by the sound artist and vocalist Ken Ueno. (A concert by Sarah Hennies, a composer and percussionist whose works explore intimacy and transgender identity, [follows on Dec. 4](#); Ms. Hennies's work will also be featured as part of the Ferus Festival at National Sawdust in Brooklyn on Jan. 10-14.) [empac.rpi.edu](#).

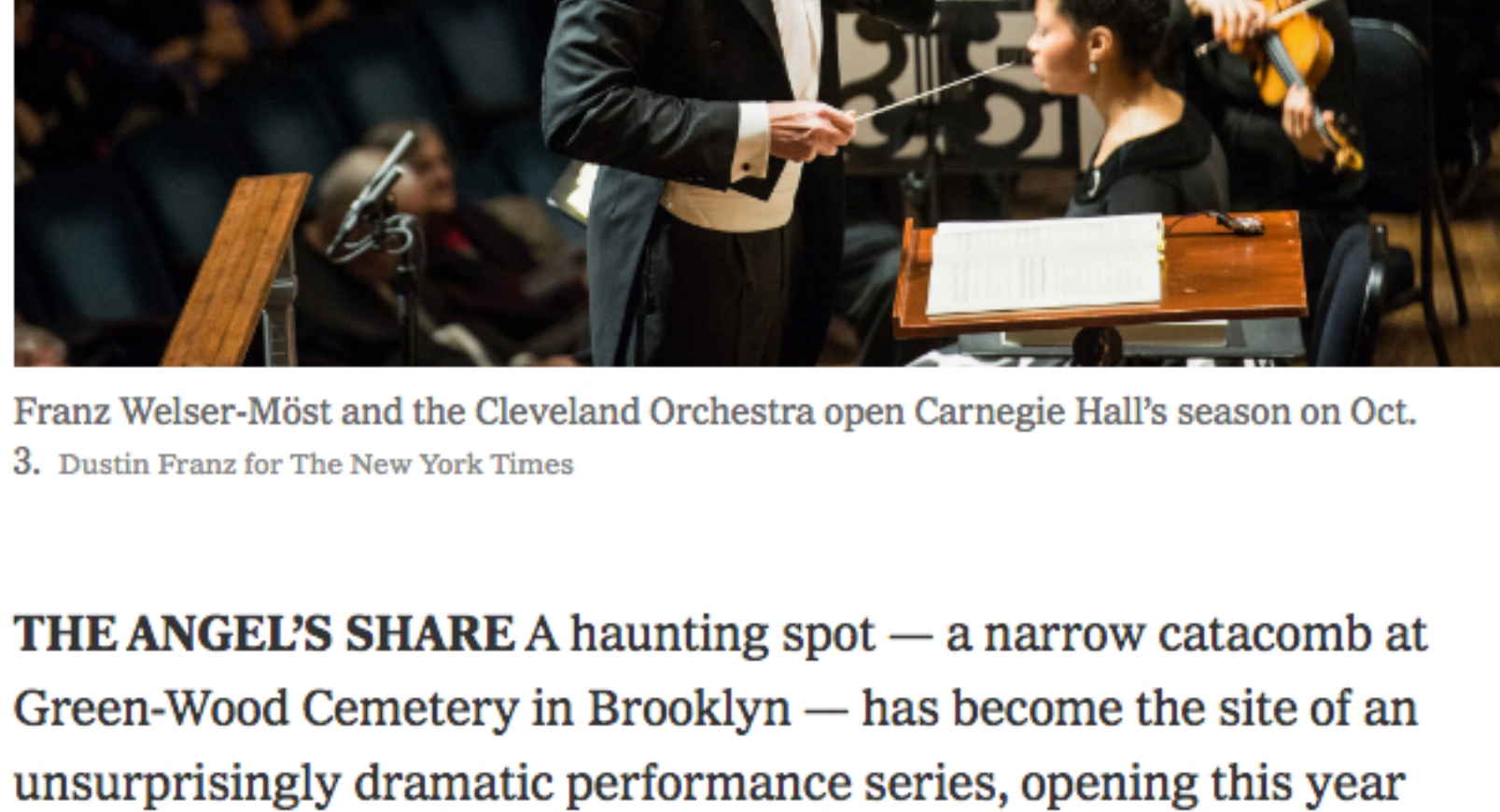
ODYSSEY OPERA One of the nation's most intriguing opera companies starts a season devoted to the Tudor dynasty — and repertory obscurities — on Sept. 21 with Saint-Saëns's "Henry VIII." Other offerings include Pacini's "Maria, Regina d'Inghilterra"; the premiere of Arnold Rosner's "The Chronicle of Nine," about Lady Jane Grey; Rossini's "Elisabetta, Regina d'Inghilterra"; Britten's "Gloriana," with Anna Caterina Antonacci making a rare American appearance as Elizabeth I; and Edward German's "Merrie England." [odysseyopera.org](#).

ST. LOUIS SYMPHONY Welcoming its new music director, Stéphane Denève, with a program called "Bienvenue Stéphane" (Sept. 21-22), it's clear what this superb orchestra is highlighting: Mr. Denève's French background (Debussy, Chennstra, Ravel); his curiosity about contemporary music (Jennifer Higdon, Kevin Puts); and his considerable energy ("An American in Paris"). March brings a concert version of Berlioz's "La Damnation de Faust" — a work that the Metropolitan Opera has demoted from full production to concert performances [at the end of January](#). [slso.org](#).

SILENCE Christopher Rountree, of the ensemble Wild Up, and Anna Bulbrook, of the festival Girlschool, have teamed up to organize this series of meditative performances outdoors at Descanso Gardens in Los Angeles. It includes works by Anna Thorvaldsdottir, Julia Holter, Pauline Oliveros, Lisa E. Harris and others. Sept. 21 and 28; [descansogardens.org](#).

JULIUS EASTMAN Mr. Rountree's Wild Up begins a four-year exploration of the pulsating music of this long-neglected composer, who's found a posthumous renaissance; "Joy Boy" and the gleaming "Femenine" are on the bill at the National Gallery in Washington on Sept. 22. (On Oct. 27, the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum in Boston hosts a program including Eastman's seething 10-cello "[The Holy Presence of Joan d'Arc](#)," with new choreography by Kyle Marshall, and in April, the Talea Ensemble plays "Femenine" with the Harlem Chamber Players [at Harlem Stage](#).) [wildup.la](#).

'PORGY AND BESS' Last performed at the Metropolitan Opera in 1990, this sprawling drama by the Gershwins and DuBose Heyward, set in early-20th-century coastal South Carolina, arrives to open the company's 2019-20 season at a very different moment for racial representation. Eric Owens and Angel Blue lead the cast; David Robertson conducts, and James Robinson directs. Opens Sept. 23; [metopera.org](#).



Franz Welser-Möst and the Cleveland Orchestra open Carnegie Hall's season on Oct. 3. Dustin Franz for The New York Times

THE ANGEL'S SHARE A haunting spot — a narrow catacomb at Green-Wood Cemetery in Brooklyn — has become the site of an unsurprisingly dramatic performance series, opening this year with the pianists Adam Tendler and Jenny Lin in Liszt's cycle "Harmonies Poétiques et Religieuses." (Pergolesi's "Stabat Mater" follows in October.) Sept. 24-27; [deathofclassical.com](#).

LISETTE OROPESA Fresh off two prestigious prizes — the Richard Tucker Award and the Met's Beverly Sills Artist Award — this lucid soprano stars at the Met in Massenet's "Manon," beginning on Sept. 24. (She also sings at [the Richard Tucker Gala](#) on Oct. 27 and takes on "[La Traviata](#)" [at the Met](#) in February and March.) [metopera.org](#).

COMPOSER PORTRAITS The Miller Theater at Columbia University hosts its signature series of deep dives into a single composer at a time, starting on Sept. 25 with Anthony Braxton, and continuing on to Vijay Iyer, Annea Lockwood, Bright Sheng, Caroline Shaw, Oscar Bettison and Dai Fujikura. [millertheatre.com](#).

'MACBETH' As of this writing, Plácido Domingo was still scheduled to sing the title role in Verdi's chilling opera, as the Met awaited the results of Los Angeles Opera's [investigation into accusations of sexual harassment against this superstar singer](#). As Lady Macbeth, Anna Netrebko reprises perhaps her most electrifying role; Marco Armiliato conducts. Opens Sept. 25; [metopera.org](#).

CLAIRE CHASE This magnetic flutist and tireless advocate of new music performs near the start of National Sawdust's fifth season in Brooklyn. The program includes five works from the Sydney Conservatorium of Music's Composing Women project. Sept. 29; [nationalsawdust.org](#).

October

CLEVELAND ORCHESTRA Carnegie Hall's season opens on Oct. 3 and 4 with a visit by this ensemble, America's most poised and pearlescent. It will play Beethoven, Strauss, Jörg Widmann and Mahler under its music director, Franz Welser-Möst. (In February, Mr. Welser-Möst [returns, after 20 years](#), to the New York Philharmonic; in Cleveland in May, he leads [concert performances of Berg's "Lulu"](#), starring Barbara Hannigan, as part of a festival featuring roughly contemporaneous works that were deemed "degenerate art" under Nazi rule.) [carnegiehall.org](#).

BOSTON MODERN ORCHESTRA PROJECT Always delving into corners of the repertory, this ensemble opens its season with "Sirens," a new theremin concerto by Dalit Warshaw, alongside Jazz Age works that complement that eerily whistling instrument. Oct. 4; [bmop.org](#).