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YO-YO  
MA

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WEDNESDAY  
SEPTEMBER 6, 2023  
8PM

**James Lowe**, conductor  
**Yo-Yo Ma**, cello

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# REPERTOIRE

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**ANTONÍN DVOŘÁK** Slavonic Dances, Op.46  
I. Presto

**FRANZ SCHUBERT** Symphony No. 8 in B minor "Unfinished," D. 759  
I. Allegro moderato  
II. Andante con moto

## INTERMISSION

**ANTONÍN DVOŘÁK** Cello Concerto in B minor, Op.104  
I. Allegro  
II. Adagio, ma non troppo  
III. Finale, Allegro moderato – Andante – Allegro vivo

*Yo-Yo Ma, cello*

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# ANTONÍN DVOŘÁK

## Cello Concerto in B minor, Op. 104

**Composer:** Born September 8, 1841, Nelahozeves, near Kralupy (now the Czech Republic); died May 1, 1904, Prague

**Work composed:** 1894–5. Dedicated to Dvořák's friend, cellist Hanuš Wihan

**World premiere:** Dvořák conducted the London Philharmonic Society in London with cellist Leo Stern on March 19, 1896

**Instrumentation:** solo cello, 2 flutes (1 doubling piccolo), 2 oboes, 2 clarinets, 2 bassoons, 3 horns, 2 trumpets, 3 trombones, tuba, timpani, triangle, and strings

**Estimated duration:** 40 minutes

"I have ... written a cello-concerto, but am sorry to this day I did so, and I never intend to write another," said Antonín Dvořák to one of his composition students. "The cello is a beautiful instrument, but its place is in the orchestra and in chamber music. As a solo instrument it isn't much good." These are surprising, given that Dvořák's cello concerto is considered one of the finest works in the orchestral repertoire, and a standard by which all subsequent cello concertos have been measured.

After hearing composer/cellist Victor Herbert perform his own cello concerto in March 1894, Dvořák changed his opinion of the cello as a solo instrument. Dvořák, inspired by Herbert's brilliant playing, decided to write one of his own. Herbert recalled "After I had played my Cello-Concerto in one of the [New York Philharmonic] Concerts – Dr. Dvořák ... threw his arms around me, saying before many members of the orchestra: 'famos! [splendid] famos! ganz famos!'"



Dvořák wrote the Cello Concerto, along with the “New World” Symphony, during his three-year sojourn in America. Unlike the symphony, however, it contains no obvious American references. Instead of the “New World’s” extroverted American flavor, the Cello Concerto is a deeply personal, particularly Slavic work.

Many years before Dvořák began the Cello Concerto, he fell in love with a young woman, Josefína Čermáková. Josefína did not return his feelings, and Dvořák eventually married her younger sister Anna. Over time, Dvořák grew to love Anna deeply, but his youthful feelings for Josefína never fully dissipated. While Dvořák was writing the Cello Concerto in the fall and winter of 1894–95, he received word that Josefína had fallen gravely ill. His concern for her is reflected in the central Adagio, which quotes one of her favorite songs. Dvořák continued his tribute to Josefína in the finale, which he revised after hearing of her death in May 1895. The revised version includes the most prominent music in the concerto: its monumental coda.

Dvořák dedicated the Cello Concerto to cellist Hanuš Wihan, who had provided Dvořák technical knowledge regarding the cello’s capabilities. Wihan, however, apparently not content with his advisory role, suggested so many revisions that Dvořák rebelled. In a letter to his publisher, Fritz Simrock, Dvořák wrote: “... I will give you my work only if you promise not to allow anybody to make changes – friend Wihan not excepted.”

Critics and audiences warmed to the Cello Concerto; the *London Times* wrote, “In wealth and beauty of thematic material, as well as in the unusual interest of the development of its first movement, the new Concerto yields to none of the composer’s recent works; all three movements are richly melodious.” Johannes Brahms was also a fan; in a letter to Simrock, Brahms wrote, “Cellists can be grateful to your Dvořák for bestowing on them such a great and skillful work.” Two years later, from his deathbed, Brahms continued to praise Dvořák’s Cello Concerto: “Why on earth didn’t I know one could write a cello concerto like this? If I’d only known, I’d have written one long ago!”



# FRANZ SCHUBERT

## Symphony No. 7 in B minor, D. 759, [formerly No. 8] “Unfinished”

**Composer:** Born January 31, 1797, Vienna; died November 19, 1828, Vienna

**Work composed:** 1822. Presumably completed on October 30 of that year, according to the date on the manuscript. It remained unpublished until 1867, and was virtually unknown for 37 years following Schubert’s death.

**World premiere:** December 17, 1865. Johann Herbeck conducted the Gesellschaft die Musikfreunde [Society of Friends of Music] in Vienna

**Instrumentation:** 2 flutes, 2 oboes, 2 clarinets, 2 bassoons, 2 horns, 2 trumpets, 3 trombones, timpani, and strings

**Estimated duration:** 22 minutes

Franz Schubert’s most popular symphony remained unfinished and did not receive its first performance until more than 35 years after his death. It is interesting that Schubert, who composed eight other symphonies, a number of additional orchestral works, dramatic music, more than 600 songs, and innumerable chamber pieces, should be so renowned for a piece he failed to complete.

Why did Schubert leave this symphony unfinished? There are no surviving documents to explain why Schubert began composing this symphony: no commission, no letters, no specific event or person for whom the work was intended. Some scholars have suggested that Schubert, whose personal standards for symphonic writing were very high, had reached a creative impasse with the B minor Symphony, based on the surviving sketches of an incomplete third movement scherzo, which do not match the quality of the first two movements. In addition, there are no extant sketches for a finale.



Rather than present an incomplete work, it has been suggested, Schubert put it aside, probably intending to finish it at a later time. But musicologist Richard Freed suggests that Schubert chose to let these two movements stand alone: "It is not too much to imagine that the genius who created this music might have recognized it at the time, as the world does now, as material so exalted that it could not be followed by anything without great risk of anticlimax."

Although there is no official dedication on the manuscript of the B minor Symphony, Schubert may have intended it as thank-you to the Styrian Music Society in Graz, which had elected him an honorary member. In the fall of 1822, Schubert was informed of the award through a friend, Anselm Hüttenbrenner, a member of the Society. This corresponds with the October 30, 1822 date on Schubert's manuscript of the B minor Symphony. Whether or not he wrote the B minor Symphony specifically for the Styrian Society, Schubert did intend to send them a score, as he indicated in his thank you letter. He wrote, "In order to give musical expression to my sincere gratitude as well, I shall take the liberty before long of presenting your honorable Society with one of my symphonies in full score." In 1823, Schubert gave the unfinished manuscript to Anselm's brother Josef, and asked Josef to pass it on to Anselm. Schubert probably expected Anselm to turn over the manuscript to the Styrian Society, perhaps in the hope they would perform it. However, for unknown reasons, Anselm kept the manuscript; it remained in his possession, and unknown to the rest of the world, for the next 40 years.

The two movements of the B minor Symphony are unique in Schubert's output. Both are larger and more complex than any others Schubert wrote, and they transcend the conventions of symphonic writing of Schubert's time. Viennese critic Eduard Hanslick described the *Allegro moderato* as "a melodic stream so crystal clear, despite its force and genius, that one can see every



pebble on the bottom.” It opens with a restless theme for oboe and clarinet, accompanied by dark murmurings in the low strings. Before this theme is fully developed, Schubert abruptly switches to a gentle cello melody, but this too is interrupted by fragments of the first theme. There is a sense of barely contained impatience, as if Schubert were so full of melodic ideas he couldn’t take the time to fully explore any of them. The fragmentary nature of this music is unusual in an early 19th-century symphony; there is no reconciliation or final statement in which all the musical ideas are developed and transformed. Instead, Schubert juxtaposes the brooding agitation of the first melody with the calm serenity of the cello theme without any grand summation. The result is stark, innovative and unsettling. As Schubert scholar Arnold Feil noted, “Here one can see for the first time that not everything is as lovely as is generally assumed ... these are in fact among the harshest and most implacable movements ever produced by Viennese Classicism in general and by Franz Schubert in particular.”

By contrast, the *Andante con moto* is gentleness personified ... or is it? It features a lyrical conversation between the strings and a chorus of horns. As in the first movement, Schubert contrasts this music with a melody of different character, heard first in the clarinet, which is amplified by a powerful statement by the full orchestra. In this movement, Schubert begins to explore and develop these two ideas, and in so doing he moves through a bewildering variety of harmonic key areas, with a restlessness bordering on irritation. The lyricism of the string/horn theme is tinged with a longing that remains unresolved as the movement ends.

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## YO-YO MA CELLIST

Yo-Yo Ma's multi-faceted career is testament to his enduring belief in culture's power to generate trust and understanding. Whether performing new or familiar works from the cello repertoire, collaborating with communities and institutions to explore culture's role in society, or engaging unexpected musical forms, Yo-Yo strives to foster connections that stimulate the imagination and reinforce our humanity.

In 2018, Yo-Yo set out to perform Johann Sebastian Bach's six suites for solo cello in one sitting in 36 locations around the world that encompass our cultural heritage, our current creativity, and the challenges of peace and understanding that will shape our future. And last year, he began a new journey to explore the many ways in which culture connects us to the natural world. Over the next several years, Yo-Yo will visit places that epitomize nature's potential to move the human soul, creating collaborative works of art and convening conversations that seek to strengthen our relationship to our planet and to each other.

Both endeavors continue Yo-Yo's lifelong commitment to stretching the boundaries of genre and tradition to explore how music not only expresses and creates meaning, but also helps us to imagine and build a stronger society and a better future.

It was this belief that inspired Yo-Yo to establish Silkroad, a collective of artists from around the world who create music that engages their many traditions. Through his work with Silkroad, as well as throughout his career, Yo-Yo Ma has sought to expand the classical cello repertoire, premiering works by composers including Osvaldo Golijov, Leon Kirchner, Zhao Lin, Christopher Rouse, Esa-Pekka Salonen, Giovanni Sollima, Bright Sheng, Tan Dun, and John Williams.





In addition to his work as a performing artist, Yo-Yo has partnered with communities and institutions from Chicago to Guangzhou to develop programs that advocate for a more human-centered world. Among his many roles, Yo-Yo is a UN Messenger of Peace, the first artist ever appointed to the World Economic Forum's board of trustees, and a member of the board of Nia Tero, the US-based nonprofit working in solidarity with Indigenous peoples and movements worldwide.

Yo-Yo's discography of more than 100 albums (including 19 Grammy Award winners) reflects his wide-ranging interests. In addition to his many iconic renditions of the Western classical canon, he has made recordings that defy categorization, among them "Appalachia Waltz" and "Appalachian Journey" with Mark O'Connor and Edgar Meyer and two Grammy-winning tributes to the music of Brazil. Yo-Yo's recent recordings include: "Sing Me Home," with the Silkroad Ensemble, which won the 2016 Grammy for Best World Music Album; "Six Evolutions — Bach: Cello Suites;" and "Songs of Comfort and Hope," created and recorded with pianist Kathryn Stott in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Yo-Yo's latest album is "Beethoven for Three: Symphonies Nos. 2 and 5," with pianist Emanuel Ax and violinist Leonidas Kavakos.

Yo-Yo was born in 1955 to Chinese parents living in Paris. He began to study the cello with his father at age four and three years later moved with his family to New York City, where he continued his cello studies at the Juilliard School before pursuing a liberal arts education at Harvard. He has received numerous awards, including the Avery Fisher Prize (1978), the National Medal of the Arts (2001), the Presidential Medal of Freedom (2010), Kennedy Center Honors (2011), the Polar Music Prize (2012), and the Birgit Nilsson Prize (2022). He has performed for nine American presidents, most recently on the occasion of President Biden's inauguration.

Yo-Yo and his wife have two children. He plays three instruments: a 2003 instrument made by Moes & Moes, a 1733 Montagnana cello from Venice, and the 1712 Davidoff Stradivarius.





## **JAMES LOWE, MUSIC DIRECTOR**

James Lowe assumed his role as the Music Director of the Spokane Symphony in 2019. His work as a conductor has ranged over five continents including collaboration with orchestras in the UK and Europe, Japan, Australia and the USA.

Born in Nottingham, England and currently residing in both Spokane and Scotland, he previously held the positions of Chief Conductor of the Vaasa City Orchestra in Finland, Associate Conductor of the Royal Scottish National Orchestra and Chief Conductor of the Prussian Chamber Orchestra in Germany, and worked as Orchestras Advisor to the National Youth Orchestras of Scotland.

Lowe began playing the viola as a child, and went on to graduate from the University of Edinburgh with First Class Honours in music. He was subsequently invited by Benjamin Zander to be the Zander Conducting Fellow with the Boston Philharmonic, and was a recipient of the Bernard Haitink Fund for Young Talent, working as Assistant Conductor to Bernard Haitink with the Concertgebouw Orchestra in Amsterdam.

Lowe has conducted orchestras all over the world, including engagements with the Osaka and Tokyo Philharmonic Orchestras, the Trondheim Symphony Orchestra, the Moscow Chamber Orchestra, the Indianapolis Symphony Orchestra, the Hallé Orchestra, the BBC Philharmonic, Scottish Ballet, the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic, plus numerous other ensembles in Europe, South Africa and the United States.

In addition to his conducting work, Lowe is active as an educator, teacher of conducting, and is researching ways in which orchestras can meaningfully engage with a wider public.



S P O K A N E  
**SYMPHONY**  
JAMES LOWE, MUSIC DIRECTOR

**VIOLIN I**

Mateusz Wolski  
Concertmaster  
*Florence Wasmer Chair*

Jason Moody+  
Associate Concertmaster  
*Carol L. Herak Chair*

Jeanne Bourgeois  
Assistant Concertmaster

Margaret Bowers  
*Ayer-Blegen Chair*

John Bennett  
Jeri Bentley  
April Martin  
Elizabeth Lund  
Kathleen Teal

Erica Uzcátegui Campíns\*  
Associate Concertmaster  
*Carol L. Herak Chair*

**VIOLIN II**

Amanda Howard-Phillips  
Principal  
*Washington Trust Chair*

David Armstrong  
Assistant Principal

Duo Xu  
Catherine Shipley  
Allion Salvador  
Sam Thackston  
Tiffany Wang+

**VIOLA**

Nick Carper  
Principal  
*The Coughlin Chair*

Jeannette Wee-Yang  
Assistant Principal

Angela Mitchell  
Sarah Bass  
Jessica Jasper  
Roxann Jacobson+  
James Marshall\*

**CELLO**

John Marshall  
Principal  
*Jerry R. & Francis L. Strafford Chair*

Helen Byrne  
Assistant Principal

Roberta Bottelli  
Louise Butler  
Sean Lamont  
Kevin Hekmatpanah  
Jared Carlson  
Johannes Kleinmann

**BASS**

Patrick McNally  
Principal

Kim Plewniak  
Assistant Principal

Stephen Swanson  
Jack Koncel  
Brian Bonnell  
Greg Youmans

**FLUTE**

Julia Pyke  
Principal  
*Frances L. Risdon Chair*

Colleen McElroy  
Jennifer Slaughter

**PICCOLO**

Colleen McElroy

**OBOE**

Keith Thomas  
Principal

Sheila Armstrong

**ENGLISH HORN**

Sheila Armstrong

**CLARINET**

Chip Phillips  
Principal

Daniel Cotter

**E♭ CLARINET**

Daniel Cotter

**SAXOPHONE**

Greg Yasinitzky  
Principal

**BASSOON**

Lynne Feller-Marshall  
Principal  
*Paul and Susan Kennedy Chair*

Luke Bakken  
Paul Plowman

**HORN**

Clinton Webb  
Principal  
*Johnston-Fix Chair*

Henry Nordhorn  
Assistant Principal

Charles Karschney  
Andrew Angelos  
Kristin Joham

**TRUMPET**

Larry Jess  
Principal  
*Johnston-Fix Chair*

Chris Cook  
Nicholas Slaggert  
Eric Moe\*  
Andrew Plamondon

**TROMBONE**

John Church  
Principal

Richard Strauch

**BASS TROMBONE**

Skyler Johnson

**TUBA**

Leonard Byrne

**TIMPANI**

Meagan Gillis  
Principal  
*Sherry Knott Endowed Chair*

**PERCUSSION**

Paul Raymond  
Principal

Rick Westrick

Bryan Bogue

**HARP**

Earecka Tregenza Moody  
Principal

**James Lowe**

Music Director

**Shira Samuels-Shragg**

Assistant Conductor

**Meg Stohlmann**

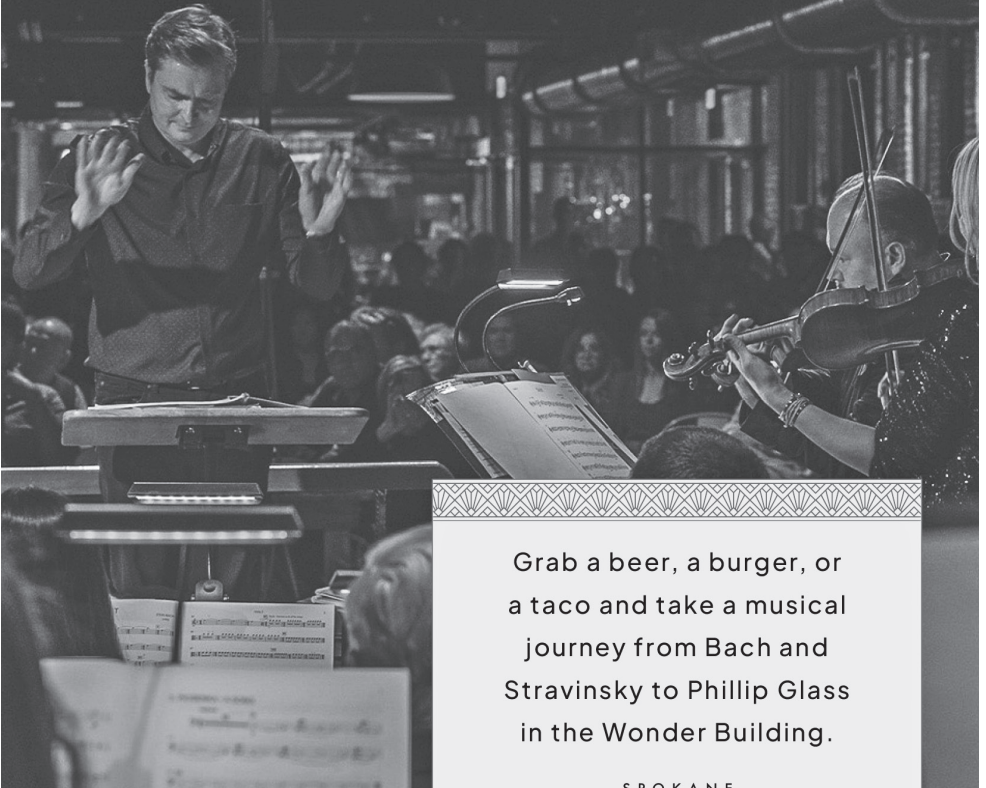
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