PRINCETON SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA ROSSEN MILANOV, MUSIC DIRECTOR



# 2025-26

ROSSEN MILANOV, Edward T. Cone Music Director



Saturday January 10, 2026, 7:30pm Sunday January 11, 2026, 4pm Richardson Auditorium

#### PROKOFIEV'S FIRST VIOLIN CONCERTO

Rossen Milanov, conductor Bella Hristova, violin

**Andreia Pinto Correia** Ciprés

Sergei Prokofiev Violin Concerto No. 1 in D Major, Op. 19

I Andantino

II. Scherzo: Vivacissimo

III Moderato

INTERMISSION

**Dmitri Shostakovich** Symphony No. 1 in F Minor, Op. 10

I. Allegretto; Allegro non troppo

II. Allegro

III. Lento

IV. Allegro molto; Lento

Bella Hristova's appearances are made possible through the generosity of Yvonne Marcuse.

Assistive listening devices and large print programs are available in the lobby. No one will be admitted during the performance of a piece. No audio or video recording or photography permitted. Dates, times, artists, and programs subject to change.

















# Princeton Symphony Orchestra



The **PRINCETON SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA** (PSO) is a cultural centerpiece of the Princeton community and one of New Jersey's finest music organizations, a position established through performances of beloved masterworks, innovative music by living composers, and an extensive network of educational programs offered to area students free of charge. Led by Edward T. Cone Music Director Rossen Milanov, the PSO presents orchestral, pops, and chamber music programs of the highest artistic quality, supported by lectures and related events that supplement the concert experience. Its flagship summer program **The Princeton Festival** brings an array of performing arts and artists to Princeton during multiple weeks in June. Through **PSO BRAVO!**, the orchestra produces wide-reaching and impactful education programs in partnership with local schools and arts organizations that culminate in students attending a live orchestral performance.

The PSO receives considerable support from the Princeton community and the New Jersey State Council on the Arts (NJSCA), regularly garnering NJSCA's highest honor. Recognition of engaging residencies and concerts has come from the National Endowment for the Arts, and the PSO's commitment to new music has been acknowledged with an ASCAP Award for Adventurous Programming and a Copland Fund Award. The only independent, professional orchestra to make its home in Princeton, the PSO regularly performs at historic Richardson Auditorium on the campus of Princeton University.

## Music Director



Edward T. Cone Music Director **ROSSEN MILANOV** looks forward to collaborating in 2025-26 with established and emerging artists of the orchestral world and helming the PSO's popular June performing arts celebration – The Princeton Festival

Respected and admired by audiences and musicians alike, he has established himself as a conductor with considerable national and

international presence. In addition to leading the PSO, Mr. Milanov is the music director of the Columbus Symphony Orchestra and the Chautauqua Symphony Orchestra.

During his eleven-year tenure with The Philadelphia Orchestra, he conducted more than 200 performances. In 2015, he completed a 15-year tenure as music director of the nationally recognized training orchestra Symphony in C in New Jersey and in 2013, a 17-year tenure with the New Symphony Orchestra in his native city of Sofia, Bulgaria.

Mr. Milanov has collaborated with Komische Oper Berlin (Shostakovich's *Lady Macbeth of Mtzensk*), Opera Oviedo with the Spanish premiere of Tchaikovsky's *Mazzepa* and Bartok's *Bluebeard's Castle* (awarded best Spanish production for 2015), and Opera Columbus (Verdi's *La Traviata* and *Rigoletto* and Tchaikovsky's *Eugene Onegin*). He has been seen at New York City Ballet and collaborated with some of the best-known choreographers of our time such as Mats Ek, Benjamin Millepied, and most recently Alexei Ratmansky in the critically acclaimed revival of *Swan Lake* in Zurich with Zurich Ballet and in Paris with La Scala Ballet.

Mr. Milanov is deeply committed to music education, presenting Link Up education projects with Carnegie Hall and the Orchestra of St. Luke's and leading the PSO's annual BRAVO! concerts for thousands of school children. He was named Bulgaria's Musician of the Year in 2005; he won a 2011 ASCAP award for adventurous programming of contemporary music at the PSO; and he was selected as one of the top 100 most influential people in New Jersey in 2014. In 2017, he was recipient of a Columbus Performing Arts Prize awarded by The Columbus Foundation. He is a graduate of the Curtis Institute of Music and The Juilliard School.

## **Guest Artist**



Bulgarian-American violinist **BELLA HRISTOVA** has won international acclaim for her "expressive nuance and rich tone" (New York Times) and "impressive power and control" (Washington Post). An Avery Fisher Career Grant recipient, she has also won First Prize in the Michael Hill International Violin Competition, and is a Laureate of the International Violin Competition of Indianapolis.

Hristova has performed extensively as a soloist with orchestras across the United States, Asia, Europe, Latin America, and New Zealand. Highlights of the 2025-26 season include a return to Carnegie Hall performing Dvořák's Violin Concerto with the New York String Orchestra, conducted by Jaime Laredo, debuts with the Shenzhen and Wuxi Symphony Orchestras, and the completion of her *Lineage* commissioning project.

A champion of music by living composers, her commissioning project *Lineage* showcases six new solo violin works by Dai Wei, Gloria Kravchenko, Nokuthula Ngwenyama, Eunike Tanzil, Joan Tower, and Ellen Taaffe Zwilich. In 2015, Hristova was the featured soloist for a consortium of eight major orchestras for a new concerto commissioned for her by her husband, acclaimed composer David Serkin Ludwig.

As a recording artist, Hristova has released a variety of albums, including *Bella Unaccompanied*, featuring works by John Corigliano, Kevin Puts, Astor Piazzolla, Nathan Milstein, and J.S. Bach, and the complete Beethoven and Brahms sonatas with pianist Michael Houstoun. Most recently, Hristova recorded Ludwig's violin concerto with JoAnn Falletta and the Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra.

Hristova began violin studies at the age of six in her native Bulgaria. She later studied with Ida Kavafian at the Curtis Institute of Music, and received her Artist Diploma studying with Jaime Laredo at Indiana University. Hristova started her career with Young Concert Artists, and plays on a 1655 Nicolo Amati violin. She lives in New York City with her husband David and their four beloved cats.

bellahristova.com

## Program Notes



### Andreia Pinto Correia (b. 1971) Ciprés

Composed 2018

Composer's Note:

Being from the Iberian Peninsula, I encountered as a young child the writings of the great Spanish poet Federico García Lorca (1898-1936). Over the years Lorca's powerful texts became a major influence in

my work; their unique magical atmospheres, dark settings, profound themes, and rich symbolism have been a continuous presence in my life, both from an artistic and humanist perspective.

As a foundation for this orchestral work, I chose "Ciprés," one of Lorca's lesser-known poems, whose unique rhythmic aura sparked my imagination. The text pairs each type of tree with a corresponding form of water. An unexpected transition in the last two lines closes the poem with a dramatic, surreal gesture.

Regarding the structure of my musical composition, the work is divided into four major sections that are performed continuously, each directly related to a paired image in the poem. While the vertical structures of the piece correspond to the different species of trees depicted by Lorca (cypress, poplar, willow), the horizontal textures — mostly present in the string section — refer to the various forms of water depicted in the poem (static, crystalline, profound).

Ciprés was commissioned by the League of American Orchestras and the Columbus Symphony with the generous support of the Virginia B. Toulmin Foundation. The work is dedicated to Maestro Rossen Milanov and the Columbus Symphony Orchestra with gratitude and admiration.

~ Andreia Pinto Correia

Instrumentation – two flutes, two oboes, two clarinets, two bassoons, four horns, three trumpets, three trombones, tuba, timpani, percussion, two harps, and strings

Duration - 13 minutes

Photo of the composer by Tiago Miranda



# Sergei Prokofiev (1891-1953) Violin Concerto No. 1 in D Major, Op. 19 Composed 1917

Composed in 1917, the year of the Russian Revolution, Prokofiev's Violin Concerto No. 1 emerged during a time of political upheaval but remarkable creative energy for the composer. While much of Russia was plunged into chaos, Prokofiev spent time in the Caucasus and focused intensely on

composition. That year alone, he completed several landmark works, including the "Classical" symphony, Visions fugitives, and this concerto.

Prokofiev first sketched the piece in 1915 as a short "concertino," later expanding it into a full three-movement concerto. A premiere in Petrograd was initially planned, but the Revolution and Prokofiev's eventual departure from Russia in 1918 delayed its debut. The concerto was finally premiered in Paris on October 18, 1923, with Marcel Darrieux as soloist and Serge Koussevitzky conducting. The reception was restrained—some critics found the music too lyrical and dreamlike for the modernist tastes of the time. Yet violinist Joseph Szigeti soon became one of the work's earliest champions, performing it widely and helping secure its reputation.

Unusual in form, the concerto opens with a delicate solo violin melody marked *sognando* (dreaming), floating above muted strings and gentle orchestral shimmer. There is no traditional cadenza; instead, the music unfolds as a continuous tapestry of airy, expressive phrases. The movement ends as it began, with the return of the opening theme, now enhanced by ethereal trills.

The second movement, a vivacissimo scherzo, provides sharp contrast: virtuosic, biting, and rhythmically electric. Filled with rapid bowing, harmonics, left-hand pizzicati, and acerbic wit, it showcases Prokofiev's flair for brilliance and irony.

The finale returns to a more measured and lyrical tone. A bassoon introduces the main theme, which the violin then transforms into flowing, song-like lines. As the movement progresses, the music rises in intensity before gently recalling the first movement's theme, now accompanied by a haunting flute line.

Balancing modern edge with fairy-tale lyricism, Prokofiev's first violin concerto stands as one of his most poetic and imaginative contributions to 20th-century music.

Instrumentation – two flutes and piccolo, two oboes, two clarinets, two bassoons, four horns, two trumpets, tuba, timpani, percussion, harp, strings, and solo violin

Duration – 22 minutes



## Dmitri Shostakovich (1906-1975) Symphony No. 1 in F Minor, Op. 10

Composed 1924-1925

Dmitri Shostakovich's first symphony stands as one of the most remarkable debuts in classical music. Written when the composer was just 18, the symphony served as his graduation project at the Leningrad Conservatory. Though initially composed to meet an academic requirement, it quickly drew

wider attention and announced the emergence of a striking new voice in 20th-century music.

Shostakovich's early years were shaped by intense personal and societal upheaval. Born in 1906 in St. Petersburg, he lived through the 1917 Russian Revolution and its aftermath, witnessing the instability that followed the collapse of the Romanov dynasty. By the time he entered the conservatory at 13, his family faced financial difficulties: his father had died, his mother worked long hours, and young Dmitri played piano in silent movie theaters to help support the household. He later described the job as exhausting and artistically stifling, but it honed his instincts for irony, dramatic timing, and abrupt shifts—traits that would permeate his music.

At the conservatory, Shostakovich studied with Maximilian Steinberg, a traditionalist who discouraged modernist experimentation. Nevertheless, he absorbed contemporary influences—particularly from Stravinsky, Prokofiev, Mahler, and Russian late-romantics—blending them with his own sharp wit and sense of theatre. The first symphony channels these influences into a work of striking originality, notable for its orchestral color, structural confidence, and emotional range.

The symphony begins with a whimsical dialogue between muted trumpet and bassoon, setting a tone of unpredictability and dry humor. The first movement contrasts angular gestures with lyrical passages, and moments of satire with sincere expression. The second movement, a scherzo, is propelled in part by piano—rare in a symphony—and filled with frenetic rhythms, grotesque waltzes, and flashes of near-cinematic brilliance. Beneath its brilliance lies an undercurrent of unease

The third movement introduces a darker, more introspective world. It opens with a haunting oboe solo answered by cello, evoking a sense of solitude and quiet sorrow. As fragments of themes drift through the orchestra, muted trumpet calls and soft dissonances create a feeling of suspended time. Without pause, the finale begins with a hushed snare drum roll—an ominous gesture that launches a movement of mounting tension and drama. Earlier themes return in altered, shadowed forms. A stark timpani passage marks the symphony's emotional peak, leading to a coda that combines resolve with lingering ambiguity.

Premiered in 1926 by the Leningrad Philharmonic under Nikolai Malko, the symphony was a resounding success. It quickly attracted attention beyond Russia, with leading conductors such as Bruno Walter, Leopold Stokowski, and Arturo Toscanini performing it abroad. By his early twenties, Shostakovich had achieved international recognition.

Today, Symphony No. 1 endures as both a dazzling achievement of youth and a revealing introduction to one of the 20th century's most important composers. Its blend of satire, vulnerability, inventive orchestration, and emotional depth foreshadows the qualities that would define Shostakovich's mature voice—music that reflects not only personal struggle but also the turbulence of its time. It is a symphony born of hardship, intelligence, and restless imagination: fragile yet defiant, humorous yet deeply human—a portrait of Shostakovich already fully himself from the very beginning.

Instrumentation – three flutes and two piccolos, two oboes, two clarinets, two bassoons, four horns, three trumpets, three trombones, tuba, timpani, percussion, piano, and strings

Duration - 35 minutes

~ Kenneth Bean Georg and Joyce Albers-Schonberg Assistant Conductor Princeton Symphony Orchestra

# Princeton Symphony Orchestra\_

#### Rossen Milanov, Edward T. Cone Music Director

**ENDOWED IN PERPETUITY** 

## **Kenneth Bean, Georg and Joyce Albers-Schonberg Assistant Conductor**ENDOWED IN PERPETUITY

#### January 10-11, 2026

#### **VIOLINI**

Basia Danilow\*

#### Concertmaster

The George W. Pitcher Chair,

ENDOWED IN PERPETUITY

Krzyztof Kuznik

#### The Yvonne Marcuse Chair,

In Memory of Mark M. Rutzky

Ruotao Mao

Cheng-Chih Kevin Tsai

Margaret Banks

Cameron Chase

Jennifer Ahn

Tara A. Pagano-Toub

Coco Ziyao Sun

Yuyu Ikeda

#### **VIOLIN II**

Emma Richman\*\*

The B. Sue Howard Chair

Tiffany Chang

Arthur Moeller

Linda Howard

Cheng-Hsun David Tsai

Ezra Shkolnick

Hiro Yoshimura

#### **VIOLA**

Stephanie Griffin\*

The Harriet & Jay Vawter Chair

Chieh-Fan Yiu

Beth Meyers

Jacqueline Watson

Abby Smith

Cameren Anai Williams

#### **CELLO**

Alistair MacRae\*

The Julian Grant & Peter Lighte

Family Chair

Elizabeth Loughran

Iona Batchelder

Elizabeth Thompson

Jasmine Pai

#### **BASS**

John Grillo\*

The Stephanie & Robert Wedeking

Chair

Dan Hudson

Stephen Groat

Devin Howell

#### **FLUTE**

KaiChen Cheng\*\*

The Lunder/Ezekowitz Family Chair

Hilary Jones

Frances Tate

#### **OBOE**

Lillian Copeland\*

The Cynthia & Rob Hillas Chair

Erin Gustafson

#### **CLARINET**

Pascal Archer\*

The Richard J. & Neil Ann S. Levine

Chair

Gi Lee



#### **BASSOON**

Brad Balliett\* *The Cynthia & Rob Hillas Chair*Zach Feingold

#### **HORN**

Steven Harmon\*

The Dr. Michael L. Barnett Chair

Colin Weyman

Jonathan Clark

Colby Kleven

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Jerry Bryant\* *The Donna & Donald Deieso Chair*Thomas Cook
Eric Schweingruber

#### **TROMBONE**

Connor Rowe\*

The David A. Tierno Chair

Lars Wendt

The Lor & Michael Gehret Chair

Felix Padilla

#### **TUBA**

Jonathan Fowler\*

#### **TIMPANI**

Jeremy Levine\*

The Anne VanLent Chair

#### **PERCUSSION**

Phyllis Bitow\*

The Lunder/Ezekowitz Family Chair
Greg Giannascoli
Matt Smallcomb
Eric Borghi

#### **HARP**

André Tarantiles\*

Anonymous Chair, given by a PSO friend in honor of all parents

Margery Fitts

#### **PIANO**

Ruoting Li\*\*

\*Principal player
\*\*Guest principal player

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