PRINCETON SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

ROSSEN MILANOV, MUSIC DIRECTOR

2026-2027



Mozart Violin Concerto No. 5

Simone Porter, violin

November 14 & 15

2026-27

ROSSEN MILANOV, Edward T. Cone Music Director

PRINCETON SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

Saturday November 14, 2026, 7:30pm
Saturday November 15, 2026, 4pm
Richardson Auditorium

MOZART VIOLIN CONCERTO NO. 5

Rossen Milanov, conductor
Simone Porter, violin

Fanny Mendelssohn Hensel — Overture in C Major

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart — Violin Concerto No. 5 in A Major, K. 219, "Turkish"

I. Allegro aperto
II. Adagio
III. Rondeau: Tempo di Menuetto

Simone Porter, violin

INTERMISSION

Joseph Haydn — Symphony No. 88 in G Major, Hob. I:88

I. Adagio — Allegro
II. Largo
III. Menuetto: Allegretto
IV. Allegro con spirito

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.

Made possible by funds from the New Jersey State Council on the Arts, a partner agency of the National Endowment for the Arts.

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 2026-27 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 Bartók'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



Violinist **SIMONE PORTER** is an emerging artist of impassioned energy, interpretive integrity, and vibrant communication. She has debuted with the New York Philharmonic, the Philadelphia Orchestra, the Los Angeles Philharmonic, Seattle and Pittsburgh Symphonies, and with renowned conductors including Stéphane Denève, Gustavo Dudamel, Yannick Nézet-Séguin, Donald Runnicles, and Esa-Pekka Salonen. Simone made her professional solo debut at age 10 with the Seattle Symphony and her international debut with the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra in London at age 13. In March 2015, Simone was named a recipient of an Avery Fisher Career Grant.

Simone's 2026-27 season features returns to the Virginia, Princeton, Eugene, Colorado, and Pasadena Symphonies and debuts with the Greensboro, Gonzaga, and Port Angeles Symphonies. She will also return to the Oregon Symphony, where she currently serves as Artist-in-Residence through the 2027-28 season. Internationally, Simone has performed with the Simón Bolívar Symphony Orchestra with Gustavo Dudamel, and with major orchestras in Brasil, Costa Rica, Hong Kong, Vietnam, Spain, and the United Kingdom.

2025 marked the release of Simone's highly acclaimed first solo album *ad tendo* on the Bright Shiny Things label. The album received a five-star review from *BBC Music Magazine* and a nomination for the magazine's 2026 Newcomer Award.

Simone made her Carnegie Zankel Hall debut in 2008 on the Emmy Award-winning TV show *From the Top at Carnegie Hall* and her debut at Carnegie's Stern Auditorium in 2016. She returned to Carnegie in December of 2024 with cellist Joshua Roman as a part of their Well-Being Concert. In June 2016, her featured performance of music from *Schindler's List* with Maestro Gustavo Dudamel was broadcast on the TNT Network in a tribute to John Williams.

Raised in Seattle, Washington, Simone studied with Margaret Pressley as a recipient of the Dorothy Richard Starling Scholarship, and then attended the Colburn Conservatory of Music in Los Angeles in the studio of Robert Lipsett. She performs on a 1740 Carlo Bergonzi violin made in Cremona Italy on generous loan from The Master's University, Santa Clarita, California.

simoneporterviolin.com

Photo by Alexandra Aksentieva

Program Notes



Fanny Mendelssohn Hensel
(1805-1847)

Overture in C Major

Composed between 1830 and 1832

Fanny Hensel, née Mendelssohn, was born in a time when it was exceedingly difficult for women to pursue careers in music, regardless of their talent. The oldest of four children, she was born into an influential German Jewish family. Despite her exceptional musical ability as a pianist and her brother Felix's claims that she was the better pianist, the Mendelssohn Bartholdy family often disapproved of her public performances. In 1820, her father wrote to her that "music will perhaps become a profession for your brother Felix, but for you it can and must be only an ornament." She was also discouraged from publishing her own works, of which numbered more than four hundred. For better or worse, Felix published some of her works under his name; during a visit with Queen Victoria, he had to confess that the queen's favorite song of his, "Italien," had actually been written by his sister Fanny.

Much of Hensel's music is written for solo voice with keyboard and orchestra, including several concert arias and oratorios, but the Overture in C Major is her only purely orchestral work. Like many concert overtures of the Romantic period, it is music without a narrative or connection to a theatrical work – it is strictly "absolute" music. It begins with a lyrical andante call and response between winds and strings which grows in intensity towards the con fuoco main body of the work. Among the most striking features of the overture are its joyfully infectious melodies and sudden harmonic shifts.

We are able to hear the overture today, almost two hundred years after it was written, thanks to a resurrection of the unpublished work by the Women's Philharmonic of San Francisco led by JoAnn Falletta in 1992. Given all the challenges Hensel faced as a composer, it is particularly inspiring to hear the exuberant and relentless joy in her music.

Instrumentation – two flutes, two oboes, two clarinets, two bassoons, four horns, two trumpets, timpani, and strings

Duration – 9 minutes



Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart
(1756 – 1791)

Violin Concerto No. 5 in A Major, KV 219, "Turkish"

Composed 1775

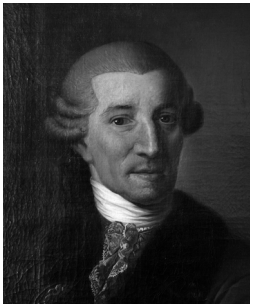
When one thinks of Mozart, one thinks of the gifted composer and keyboard player who gave us countless operas, symphonies, and piano works. But Mozart was also an accomplished violinist and, later, a violist. His father, Leopold, was his first violin teacher and the author of an influential treatise on violin playing. Early in his career, while serving at the Salzburg court, Mozart wrote all five of his violin concerti between 1773 and 1775. The last three were written within just a few weeks at the end of 1775, when Mozart was nineteen.

Mozart's concerti feature a constant dialogue between soloist and orchestra, with both sharing the presentation of new themes. Like the Rachmaninoff *Rhapsody on a Theme of Paganini* from our previous concerts, this concerto begins with similar misdirection. What seems like a rising arpeggio theme in the orchestra turns out to be the accompaniment to the soloist's new theme, after an unusual slow Adagio entrance by the soloist. This brisk movement is followed by a lyrical slow movement built around long, singing melodies in a three-part structure.

The rondo finale is where Mozart has his fun. Its recurring rondo theme is a graceful minuet, a French court dance, which returns throughout the movement in increasingly varied ornamentation. Near the middle of the movement the concerto earns its nickname, "Turkish." European composers of Mozart's time often evoked Ottoman and other "Oriental" music through loud percussion, reed instruments, and chromaticism. Here, Mozart uses a sudden shift to duple meter, minor tonality, chromatic scales, and low strings playing *coll'arco al rovescio* (with the bow in reverse), a percussive technique using the wooden part of the bow that would pervade many works of the 20th and 21st century. However, true to rondo form, the stately minuet inevitably returns to end the work with a gesture similar to that of the end of the first movement, as if the music evaporates off the page.

Instrumentation – two oboes, two horns, strings, and solo violin

Duration – 29 minutes



Joseph Haydn
(1732 – 1809)

Symphony No. 88 in G Major, Hob. I:88
Composed 1785

In 1761, the Viennese composer Joseph Haydn was hired by Prince Paul Anton Esterházy to serve as *Vice-Kapellmeister* (Assistant Chapel Master) of the Esterházy court. All of his compositions written henceforth were considered property of the court under the terms stated in his contract:

> The said *Vice-Kapellmeister* shall be under obligation to compose such music as his Serene Highness may command, and neither to communicate such compositions to any other person, nor to allow them to be copied, but he shall retain them for the absolute use of his Highness, and not compose for any other person without the knowledge and permission of his Highness.

Growing increasingly frustrated by his music being pirated and published outside of the court while seeing none of the revenue, Haydn renegotiated his contract in 1779 to allow outside commissions. Thus, the six Paris Symphonies (Nos. 82-87) were among the first successful commissions he received outside of his court employment.

Symphony No. 88, though perhaps first performed for the court as part of his official duties, was written for Haydn's second principal violin Johann Tost. After the end of his service, Tost traveled to Paris and, taking advantage of Haydn's recent commercial successes there, sold several of Haydn's new compositions to the publisher Jean-Georges Sieber, including this symphony. Tost had even offered Sieber works by Haydn without his permission, and including pieces that did not even exist, to Haydn's great annoyance.

The work begins with a slow introduction, followed by a sonata-form first movement that presents only one theme (monothematic), which Haydn uses motivically in the development to maintain interest. Listen to how he cleverly uses chromaticism in the woodwinds to emphasize cadences.

This work achieved fame in particular for its slow movement. Johannes Brahms is reported to have said he wanted his "ninth symphony" to be like this. Trumpets and timpani enter for the first time, defying the expectation that they would appear in the first movement rather than the second. A delicately orchestrated theme is first intoned by a single oboe, violas, and cellos. In Haydn's time, it was unusual for the viola and violoncello to carry the main theme.

The third movement, as was common, juxtaposes a courtly minuet with a rustic trio featuring open fifth harmonies, accents on the "wrong" parts of the beat, and sudden dynamic contrasts. A trademark of Haydn, the sonata-rondo theme of the fourth movement places the emphasis on beat two of the measure, creating an off-kilter sensation. As if that were not enough, near the middle of the movement he writes a canon between the lower and higher strings one beat apart. A fermata brings the energy to a halt before a rousing finale ends the work.

I first encountered this symphony, as many have, in a video clip of Leonard Bernstein conducting the Vienna Philharmonic using only his eyes. It is a testament not only to the expressive capabilities of a conductor, but also to the ability of musicians to play together without centralized leadership, like chamber music.

Instrumentation – one flute, two oboes, two bassoons, two horns, two trumpets, timpani, and strings

Duration – 20 minutes

~ Tomás García
Georg and Joyce Albers-Schonberg Assistant Conductor
Princeton Symphony Orchestra

Princeton Symphony Orchestra

Rossen Milanov, Edward T. Cone Music Director
ENDOWED IN PERPETUITY

Tomás García, Georg and Joyce Albers-Schonberg Assistant Conductor
ENDOWED IN PERPETUITY

November 14-15, 2026

VIOLIN I

Basia Danilow*
Concertmaster
The George W. Pitcher Chair,
ENDOWED IN PERPETUITY
Krzystof Kuznik
The Yvonne Marcuse Chair,
In Memory of Mark M. Rutzky
Qianru Elaine He
Ruotao Mao
Cheng-Chih Kevin Tsai
Margaret Banks
Cameron Chase
Coco Ziyao Sun

VIOLIN II

Emma Richman**
The B. Sue Howard Chair
Sam Parrini
Tara A. Pagano-Toub
Linda Howard
Cheng-Hsun David Tsai
Josephine Kim

VIOLA

Stephanie Griffin*
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Beth Meyers
Sofia Gilchenok
Jacqueline Watson

CELLO

Alistair MacRae*
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Elizabeth Loughran
Robin Park
Elizabeth Thompson

BASS

John Grillo*
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Stephen Groat



FLUTE

Denis Savelyev**
The Lunder/Ezekowitz Family Chair
Hilary Jones

OBOE

Lillian Copeland*
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Erin Gustafson

CLARINET

Pascal Archer*
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Gi Lee

BASSOON

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HORN

Steven Harmon*
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Jonathan Clark
Colin Weyman
Colby Kleven

TRUMPET

Jerry Bryant*
The Donna & Donald Deieso Chair
Thomas Cook

TIMPANI

Jeremy Levine*
The Anne VanLent Chair

*Principal player
**Guest principal player

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