



## Sibelius' Finlandia: Side-by-Side

February 19 | 7:30 PM

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### | Program

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Classics Series

**Side-by-Side:**

# Sibelius' Finlandia

February 19, 2026 | 7:30 PM

*Soldiers and Sailors Memorial Auditorium*

**Ilya Ram** | *conductor*

**Ismael Sandoval** | *conductor*

**Chattanooga Symphony & Opera**

**Chattanooga Youth Symphony**

**Flash photography and video/audio recording of this concert are strictly prohibited.**

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<b>Bedrich Smetana</b> (1824 - 1884)	<b><i>Die Moldau from Má vlast</i></b> (12") Ilya Ram   <i>conductor</i> Side-by-Side with CYS
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<b>Darius Milhaud</b> (1892 - 1974)	<b><i>Le bœuf sur le toit</i></b> (16") Ismael Sandoval   <i>conductor</i>
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<b>Tim Hinck</b> (b. 1980)	<b>Symphony No. 1 "Prairie Nightscape"</b> (12") <i>IV. Morning</i> Ilya Ram   <i>conductor</i>
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- INTERMISSION (20") -

**Robert Schumann**  
(1810 - 1856)

**Symphony No. 3 in E-flat Major, Op. 97 (*Rhenish*)**  
(32")

*I. Lebhaft*

*II. Scherzo: Sehr mässig*

*III. Nicht schnell*

*IV. Feierlich*

? *V. Lebhaft*

?Ilya Ram | conductor

**Jean Sibelius**  
(1865 - 1957)

***Finlandia, Op. 26*** (8")

*Ismael Sandoval* | conductor

?Side-by-Side with CYS

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A recording of this performance will be broadcast on Classical 90.5 WSMC on Sunday, March 22, 2026 at 4 PM.



This performance is funded in part by:



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## | Artist Biographies



**Ilya Ram**

Kayoko Dan Fund Music Director

“Although Ram [...] presents himself as deliberately casual in his shiny silver sneakers, his conducting is the opposite: energetic, spontaneous, yet clear, precise, and attentive to detail.” - Leipziger

Volkszeitung

Israeli-American conductor Ilya Ram, praised for his “charismatic and energetic performances” (Crescendo Magazine) and “expressive spontaneity” (Diapason), is internationally recognized for his creative and engaging approach to classical music.

A prizewinner of the 5th Evgeny Svetlanov Competition in Monte Carlo, Ram is the Music Director of the Chattanooga Symphony & Opera, where he has launched an ambitious three-year artistic arc that explores Reflection, Moments, and Destiny - a

journey connecting the past, present, and future of orchestral storytelling. His tenure is marked by innovative programming, cross-genre collaborations, and partnerships with local artists and community organizations that expand the orchestra's cultural reach.

Recent and upcoming highlights include performances with the Szczecin Filharmonia, Orquestra do Algarve, Orchestra Indiana, Deutsche Philharmonie Merck, Magdeburg Philharmoniker, Ensemble Tempus Konnex, Elbland Philharmonie Sachsen, Israel Chamber Orchestra, Ra'anana Sinfonietta, and the Robert-Schumann Philharmonic. He returns for the third time to the IMPULS Festival for Contemporary Music. Among the many soloists he has collaborated with are Pekka Kuusisto, Krist?ne Balanas, Amandine Savary, Ilian Garnetz, Ildikó Szabó, Liv Redpath, Ying Li, and Charlotte Thiele.

Equally at home in the pit and on the concert stage, Ram made his Semperoper Dresden debut with the world premiere of Zad Moulta's *Drei Miese, fiese Kerle* and previously served as Guest Resident Conductor at Theater Chemnitz, leading productions including Zimmermann's *Weißer Rose* and Tchaikovsky's *Swan Lake*. As a scholarship holder of the Akademie Musiktheater Heute (Deutsche Bank Stiftung), he premiered three new operas with Ensemble Modern during the 2024/25 season.

A strong believer that the highest artistic results are achieved through joy, curiosity, and creative rehearsal strategies, Ram has worked extensively with young ensembles, including the German National Youth Ballet, Youth North German Philharmonic, and the Dresden Special Music High School.

Committed to artistic innovation, Ram is among the few conductors to have completed the Music.Multimedia.Management project led by the Szczecin Philharmonic in collaboration with Fjord Cadenza Festival and TRAFÖ Center for Contemporary Art. He has participated in numerous international masterclasses, including the first-ever conducting masterclass at the Bayreuth Festival, and has studied with Christian Thielemann, Klaus Mäkelä, Jukka-Pekka Saraste, Sakari Oramo, Neeme Järvi, Marek Janowski, Hartmut Haenchen, Robert Treviño, Steven Sloane, Miguel Harth-Bedoya, Timothy Redmond, Nicolás Pasquet, Johannes Schlaefli, and Jorma Panula.

Ram graduated cum laude from the Buchmann-Mehta School of Music in Tel Aviv and earned his master's degree in orchestral conducting from the Hochschule für Musik "Carl Maria von Weber" Dresden, later completing the Advanced Professional Training for Conductors at the UdK Berlin. His studies were supported by scholarships from the Yotzrim Foundation, America-Israel Cultural Foundation, and the DAAD.

Before beginning his formal studies, Ram volunteered for a year in underprivileged communities in Israel, working with children both in and outside the education system. He later continued his social engagement through the Israeli branch of Physicians for Human Rights.

(October 2025)



## Ismael Sandoval

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CSO Associate Conductor & CYS Music Director

Ismael Sandoval is a Mexican-American conductor based in Chattanooga, TN. As a conductor, Ismael has directed several ensembles across the East Coast, all invested in the pursuit of bringing people together in the beauty and power of music. Ismael is currently the assistant conductor of the Chattanooga Symphony & Opera (CSO), the conductor of the CSO Youth Symphony, and music director at First Christian Church of Chattanooga.

Ismael is a collaborator and a bridge builder between various organizations and his efforts span across many disciplines and genres. In his efforts to give back to his community and promote the profound impact that music can have on people, Ismael frequently brings music to life in unorthodox performance venues such as homeless shelters, assisted living facilities, hospitals, parks, and anywhere else where music might be needed.

Ismael was the first Artistic Director/Conductor of the Women's Chorus, an ensemble in Boston that connects women experiencing poverty and homelessness with the healing power of music. In addition to his work with the Women's Chorus, he also served as the assistant conductor for both the Boston Philharmonic Orchestra and Eureka Ensemble. Ismael was also the conducting fellow with the Allentown Symphony Orchestra with Diane Wittry for the '17-'18 season. In 2017, Ismael won the College Orchestra Directors Association National Conference Conducting Competition and Workshop.

As a champion of new music, Ismael frequently premieres works by composers from all around the country in several different styles and genres. Ismael also believes in expanding the traditional canon of repertoire to include more representation from diverse composers of all walks of life and has programmed unique concerts that tastefully balance pieces from the classical canon with these new and exciting works.

Ismael is quite passionate about opera and has served as music director for several productions with various companies in Boston. Ismael's work as an arranger and orchestrator were showcased in the 2019 season with a highly acclaimed arrangement and interpretation of Bellini's *La Sonnambula* (Promenade Opera Project). Ismael also ventured into the digital music making medium during the COVID-19 lockdown by music directing an online performance of Beethoven's *Fidelio* (Promenade Opera Project), as well as producing several virtual choir projects.

Ismael has had recent engagements with Corsara Artists (Menotti's *The Medium*), Commonwealth Lyric Theater Opera (Bizet's *Carmen*), the Boston Philharmonic, Eureka Ensemble, MassOpera (Strauss' *Die Fledermaus*), the Gwinnett Symphony Orchestra (Lawrenceville, GA), the Saratoga Orchestra of Whidbey Island (Langley, WA), the Medomak Festival Orchestra (Washington, ME), the College Orchestra

Directors Association National Conference Orchestra, the Florida Keys Community Concert Band, the Berklee & Boston Conservatory Recording Orchestra, and the Boston Conservatory Composers' Recital Series.

Ismael received his Masters of Music degree in Orchestral Conducting from the Boston Conservatory at Berklee, under the tutelage of Bruce Hangen, and received his B.M. in Music Education and B.M. in Composition from the University of Florida.

## **| Program Notes**

### **Die Moldau from *Má vlast***

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Bedrich Smetana

### ***Die Moldau from *Má vlast****

Bedrich Smetana

*(b. March 2, 1824 in Litomyšl, Bohemia; d. May 12, 1884 in Prague)*

### **Vltava ("The Moldau"), from *Má vlast***

#### **A River's Journey**

Smetana's most beloved tone poem is a sonic travelogue of the Vltava river as it flows through the heart of the Bohemian countryside. Chosen for today's Side-by-Side performance, it serves as a powerful metaphor for the flow of musical tradition. Just as the river gathers strength from its tributaries, the professional musicians of the CSO are joined today by the students of the CYS, swelling the orchestral sound to majestic proportions.

#### **From Springs to Grandeur**

The work begins with the "two springs" of the river—one warm, one cold—represented by the intertwining lines of flutes and clarinets. As the streams merge and the river travels toward Prague, Smetana paints a vivid series of scenes: the sounds of a forest hunt with ringing horns, a rustic peasant wedding (a polka), and a shimmering, moonlight dance of water nymphs. The river eventually crashes through the St. John's Rapids before widening majestically as it flows past the Vyšehrad castle in Prague.

#### **The Cycle: *My Country***

*Vltava* is the second of six symphonic poems that make up the monumental cycle *Má vlast* ("My Country"). While *Vltava* is the most famous, the cycle also includes

*Vyšehrad* (The High Castle) and the dramatic, blood-soaked *Šárka* (No. 3), which tells the legend of the Maiden's War. Though the six poems are thematically linked, they were written and premiered individually over a span of five years.

## Triumph Over Silence

The composition of *Vltava* stands as a triumph of the human spirit. In the summer of 1874, Smetana began to notice a screeching in his ears; by October, he was completely deaf. Yet, he continued to compose, finishing *Vltava* in fewer than three weeks in late 1874. He never heard a note of the music that would become his nation's unofficial anthem. The work was premiered separately in Prague on April 4, 1875, seven years before the entire *Má vlast* cycle was finally performed as a complete set.

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## Le bœuf sur le toit

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Darius Milhaud

### Le bœuf sur le toit (*The Ox on the Roof*)

Darius Milhaud

(b. September 4, 1892 in Marseille, France; d. June 22, 1974 in Geneva, Switzerland)

In 1917, Darius Milhaud arrived in Rio de Janeiro to serve as embassy secretary under the poet-diplomat Paul Claudel. He was immediately struck by the "crazy gaiety" of the Brazilian Carnival and the syncopated rhythms of its urban street music. Years later, he would describe *Le Bœuf sur le toit* not just as a piece of music, but as a "musical collage"—an anthology of popular Brazilian tunes assembled with the spirit of a "ready-made" artwork.

Milhaud originally conceived the score as a continuous background for a silent Charlie Chaplin film. However, this concept took a surreal turn when it caught the ear of Jean Cocteau (1889–1963). The famed poet and filmmaker convinced Milhaud to stage it as a pantomime set in an American prohibition speakeasy—"The Nothing Doing Bar." To contrast with the music's frenzy, Cocteau had the actors (including a Boxer and a Red-Headed Lady) wear massive papier-mâché heads and perform in dream-like slow motion. The premiere in Paris on February 21, 1920, got a spirited reception, but the London audience demanded five encores, launching a touring company that took the surrealist spectacle on the road.

The work is anchored by a recurring "Theme of the Barman." According to musicologist Manoel Corrêa do Lago, this catchy, syncopated melody is likely the only original

material in the score—Milhaud's own imitation of a Brazilian *maxixe* (the fast, syncopated Brazilian tango that served as a precursor to the samba).

Between the 15 appearances of the Barman theme, Milhaud interleaves nearly 30 different tangos, maxixes, and sambas by Brazilian composers. He organizes these quotations into a rigorous harmonic journey, modulating through major keys in three cycles of ascending minor thirds until the triumphant climax arrives back at C Major.

### **The cycles in summary**

- Cycle I: C Major ? E-flat ? G-flat ? A

beginning with the Barman's theme, immediately followed by *São Paulo Futuro* by Marcelo Tupinambá. As the key rises, we hear the title track, *O Boi no Telhado* ("The Ox on the Roof"), a hit of the 1918 Carnival.

- Cycle II: G Major ? B-flat ? D-flat ? E

featuring *Gaúcho* by Chiquinha Gonzaga, a woman ahead of her time. It culminates in a display of contrapuntal mastery in E Major, where Milhaud plays two Ernesto Nazareth tunes (*Carioca* and *Escovado*) simultaneously.

- Cycle III: D Major ? F ? A-flat ? B

rising key centers, cycling through tunes in a breathless *moto perpetuo*.

In a reprise of A Major, he combines three melodies and comes home with a polytonal blaze atop Barman in C Major for the last time.

### **The cycles in detail**

Barman 1 (C Major): The work opens with the Barman's theme, immediately followed by *São Paulo Futuro* by Marcelo Tupinambá (the pseudonym of Fernando Lobo).

Barman 2 (E-flat Major): Features *Viola Cantadeira* by Tupinambá.

Barman 3 (G-flat Major): A rich section featuring *Amor Avacalhado* by João de Souza Lima and *O Matuto*. This section also introduces the title track, *O Boi no Telhado* ("The Ox on the Roof"), a hit of the 1918 Carnival by José Monteiro.

Barman 4 (A Major): Features *Ferramenta* by the genius of Brazilian piano, Ernesto Nazareth, and *Olh' Abacaxi!* by F. Soriano Robert.

Barman 5 (G Major): Features *Gaúcho* by Chiquinha Gonzaga.

Barman 6 (B-flat Major): Includes *Flor do Abacate* by Álvaro Sandim and *Tristeza de Caboclo* by Tupinambá.

Barman 7 (D-flat Major): Features *Maricota, Sai da Chuva* ("Maricota, Get out of the Rain") by Tupinambá.

Barman 8 (E Major) – The Double Superimposition: Here, Milhaud displays his contrapuntal mastery. He takes two different tunes by Ernesto Nazareth—*Carioca* and *Escovado*—and plays them simultaneously.

Barman 9 (D Major) & Barman 10 (F Major): The music continues its "moto perpetuo," with tunes like *Tango Brasileiro*.

Barman 11 (A-flat Major): The collage densifies as the key centers rise.

Barman 12 (B Major): The final stage of the harmonic ascent before the return to the beginning.

Barman 13 (A Major, reprise). Milhaud has saved his best for last. In the section leading up to the final A Major statement, Milhaud superimposes three distinct melodies at once: *Sertanejo* by Carlos Pagliuchi, *Para todos* by Eduardo Souto, and *Seu amaro quer* by Soriano Robert.

Barman 14 & 15 (C Major, reprise): The work returns to C Major where it began. A final feat of combination, Milhaud brings back *Galhofeira* by Alberto Nepomuceno played by flutes and violins, the trumpets joining in with Tupinambá's *São Paulo Futuro*.

### **Cocteau's madcap staging**

C Major - The Barman Theme. The curtain rises on a bar with brutal lighting. The Barman is alone, shaking cocktails. A torpedo-sized cigar burns on a table.

C Major - Enter the Negroes. A Boxer in a blue jersey enters, followed by a Pool Player. The Boxer orders a cocktail and sprawls in a chair. The Pool Player chalks his cue.

E-flat Major - The Boxer asks the Barman to cut his cigar. The Barman shoots the tip off with a revolver. The Pool Player falls over from the shock.

A Major - Enter the Women. The Décolleté Lady and the Redheaded Lady enter. The Redheaded Lady has paper hair and a masculine swagger.

D Major - Enter the Men. A Gentleman in evening dress and a Bookmaker (with gold teeth and a grey bowler hat) enter the bar.

B Major - The Dice Game. A mechanical tableau forms as the Gentleman and Bookmaker play dice, their giant papier-mâché heads moving in sync.

E Major - The Décolleté Lady powders her nose and carries the Pool Player off to the billiard room.

B-flat Major - The Redheaded Lady empties smoke rings around the Barman's neck and begins to flirt with the Boxer.

A Major - Bookmaker's Dance. The Bookmaker, jealous of the Boxer, hits the Pool Player on the head with a giant pearl. The Pool Player collapses.

A-flat Major - Tango of the Two Women. A brief dance interlude while the Pool Player revives the Boxer with a towel.

D Major - The Whistle. A police whistle cuts through the music! Panic ensues. The Barman hides the alcohol and hangs a sign: "Only Milk Served Here".

B Major - Enter the Policeman. A giant Policeman enters. He smells everyone's breath and tastes the milk to ensure compliance.

E Major - Policeman's Dance. Influenced by the "bucolic" atmosphere of the milk, the Policeman dances a graceful ballet.

G Major - Death of the Policeman. The ceiling fan descends and decapitates the Policeman. He tries to put his head back on but fails and falls dead.

F Major - Dance of the Pool Player. Unfazed by the death, the Pool Player sings a romance with his hand over his heart.

D-flat Major - The Barman presents the Policeman's severed head on a platter to the Redheaded Lady.

E-flat Major - Salome's Dance. The Redheaded Lady performs a parody of the Dance of the Seven Veils, using the Policeman's head. She ends by walking on her hands.

A Major - The Exits. The characters leave one by one. The Gentleman pays; the Pool Player refuses to pay.

G Major - Resurrection. The Barman is left alone with the body. He picks up the head, jams it back onto the Policeman's shoulders, and tickles him. The Policeman wakes up.

C Major - The Return. The music returns to the home key of C Major as order is restored.

C Major - The Bill. In the final chords, the Barman unfurls a three-meter-long bill for the resurrected Policeman.

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## **Symphony No. 1, "Prairie Nightscape", IV. Morning**

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Tim Hinck

# Symphony No. 1, "Prairie Nightscape", IV. Morning

Tim Hinck

(b. July 8, 1980 in Jellico, Tennessee)

## The Local Maximalist

Tim Hinck is a composer of Brazilian and Japanese heritage whose work defies easy categorization. In his own bio, he adopts the label "maximalist"—an artist who dives deep into past musical styles, often simultaneously, to create something "both familiar to audiences' ears and completely new." A Chattanooga favorite, former Fulbright scholar, and now a composer with a burgeoning international reputation, Hinck writes music that seeks to bring clarity to the tumultuous human experience, whether performed in an abandoned warehouse or a concert hall.

## A Commission from the Crowd

The journey to this symphony began with a passionate music aficionado who had heard Hinck's *Fanfare for Rosa* (CSO world premiere in 2018) and was moved to commission a larger work. Hinck took the commission seriously, immersing himself in the landscape of Wichita, Kansas, where the piece would premiere. He even democratized the creative process: the subtitle "Prairie Nightscape" was the winner of an audience poll that garnered over a hundred suggestions.

## Joy in the Details

Hinck believes that writing down music is only notes on paper. Musicians who play the notes must "sell" the music to the audience. To that end, he engaged in extensive conversations with orchestral players during the composition process, asking what would make the music more enjoyable to play. If a violinist suggested that a section would feel more satisfying with double-stops, Hinck obliged. "It may make only a minor difference in the sound," he notes, "but the joy added for the player is priceless."

## A Sunrise "Mashup"

Tonight's selection, *Morning*, is the symphony's radiant finale. True to his maximalist ethos, Hinck uses about a dozen different musical styles within this single movement—Baroque, Bluegrass, Jazz, Broadway, and Bavaria—all swirling together to capture the chaotic beauty of a sunrise. The movement is unified by a recurring melodic shape: a rising fourth (sing two words to yourself—"O Come [all ye faithful]"—to hear a fourth) and a stepwise descent. The closing theme reuses the rising fourth, but quickly and forcefully with an extended descent, as Hinck describes it, to "capturing the sensation of flying." This is an explicit nod to the city of Wichita—the "Air Capital of the World" and home of the Cessna Aircraft Company—where his symphony premiered.

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## **Symphony No. 3 in E-flat Major, Op. 97 (Rhenish)**

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Robert Schumann

### **Symphony No. 3 in E-flat Major, Op. 97 (*Rhenish*)**

Robert Schumann

*(b. June 8, 1810 in Zwickau, Saxony; d. July 29, 1856 in Endenich, near Bonn, Prussia)*

There is an arc to Robert Schumann's life that could be the stuff of grand opera. Had he not been a composer, he would still be remembered for his writing about music and aesthetics. Had he not injured his right hand—perhaps trying to achieve greater independence of his fingers—he might have been remembered as a piano virtuoso. After long legal wrangling with her father, he finally married Clara Wieck, the love of his life, in 1840. After marrying, there was a brilliant creative outpouring that lasted a decade, but in his last six years he spiraled downward into mental and physical decline—now widely attributed to the effects of tertiary syphilis. He died in an asylum at only forty-six years old.

Schumann composed the work in a five-week burst of inspiration in late 1850. The music was fueled by a happy trip he took with Clara to Cologne that September. It was part pilgrimage—to see Archbishop Johannes von Geissel installed as Cardinal—and part holiday to witness the Cologne Cathedral reflected in the Rhine River. Though Schumann didn't name the symphony "Rhenish" himself, he unguardedly confided to his publisher Simrock that his work "mirrors here and there something of Rhenish life" and immediately Simrock attached the sobriquet.

The first notes of the first movement begin the primary theme, an unforgettable audacious and optimistic statement. Frequently using rhythms that skip downbeats keeps the listener guessing and engaged. A second theme, gentler and introduced by the winds, plays nicer with the downbeats, but it is soon submerged in the nervous energy that drives the movement from beginning to end. An extended development tosses bits of themes around in a multitude of keys. The main theme triumphantly returns, beginning the recapitulation. As the end nears the brass come to the fore, first with a statement of the principal theme, then horn calls. A mighty celebration is over.

The second movement is labeled a scherzo, although it most resembles a Ländler, a folk dance where the men were apt to stomp their hobnail boots. The heel-kicking provides a climax before the music fades away, ending with two barely-audible pizzicato notes.

The strings sing long flowing lines and woodwinds assist to make the “not fast” third movement a restful midpoint of the symphony. Brass and timpani are silent.

At one point the fourth movement was labeled, “In the character of an accompaniment to a solemn ceremony”—doubtless referring to the installation of Cardinal von Geissel. This movement is usually thought of as the “extra” movement of this five-movement (one more than usual) symphony. The movement is a chorale that will not be hurried. It begins very slowly, in the middle reaches a sedate pace, and ends with glacial deliberateness. The Cologne Cathedral took over 600 years to complete and was nearly finished when Schumann saw it. How else could one express the awe of contemplating such an interval?

The finale seems all too brief. Boisterous and celebratory it unifies what has gone before. The optimism of the first movement, a bit of the bumptiousness of the scherzo, even the trombones we first heard in the fourth movement chorale reappear with fragments of their ceremonial proclamation. A triplet fanfare from the brass is the cue to race to the finish in a jubilant fervor.

Schumann conducted the premiere in Düsseldorf, February 6, 1851. It was his last symphony. There is also a Symphony No. 4, composed in 1841, but Schumann withdrew it before it was published. After he revised it, its number reflected its order of publication.

His motivation to see “in the flesh” the cathedral reflected in the Rhine river came from an image captured in a Heine poem he had set to music much earlier. He was so impressed he returned for another tour of the cathedral in November.

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## **Finlandia, Op. 26**

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Jean Sibelius

### ***Finlandia*, Op. 26**

Jean Sibelius

(b. December 8, 1865 in Hämeenlinna, Finland; d. September 20, 1957 in Järvenpää, Finland)

#### **The Accidental Anthem**

By the turn of the century, Jean Sibelius was already a giant in his homeland, celebrated for his symphonies and purely orchestral tone poems. But the premiere of the revised *Finlandia* on July 2, 1900, qualitatively changed his status from “respected composer” to “national prophet.” Ironically, this transformation hinged on a melody he

never intended to be sung. Embedded within the orchestral texture was a hymn-like tune so stirring that it was eventually detached, given lyrics, and adopted as the unofficial second national anthem of Finland. Sibelius, who had not set out to write a song at all, had inadvertently penned the most famous "song" in Finnish history.

### **A Protest in Disguise**

The music originated a year earlier, in 1899, as the finale to the "Press Pension Fund Celebrations." This innocuous title was a cover for a covert protest against the censorship policies of the Russian Empire. The pageant depicted a sweeping arc of Finnish history through specific tableaux, including *The Song of Väinämöinen*, *The Finns in the Thirty Years' War*, and *The Great Hostility*. The final tableau, originally titled *Finland Awakes*, was reworked by Sibelius into the independent symphonic poem we know today. It premiered on July 2, 1900, with the Helsinki Philharmonic Society conducted by Robert Kajanus. For Sibelius, this was no longer just a tableau accompaniment; it had become, in his words, "the song of our battle, our hymn of victory".

### **The Zeal of the Converted**

Sibelius' intense nationalism was that of a convert. The area that became the country of Finland in 1917 was controlled first by Sweden (until 1809), and then by Russia. Even under Russian rule, Swedish remained the language of power. The elite, including Sibelius' own parents, were mostly Swedish. Thus, Sibelius learned Finnish as his second language, but when he joined the independence movement it was with wholehearted zeal. As *The New Yorker* music critic Alex Ross notes, "Sibelius was not merely the most famous composer Finland ever produced but the country's chief celebrity in any field." When Finns characterize their culture today, they list saunas, Fiskars scissors, and "our Sibelius."

### **The Music: A Turbulent Wait**

Listeners waiting for the famous tune are often surprised by how long it takes to arrive. Much like Beethoven holding back the "Ode to Joy" until the final moments of his Ninth Symphony, Sibelius makes us earn the anthem. The first two-thirds of the piece are dominated by musical posturing and "stirring the pot"—ominous brass growls and swirling strings that depict the national struggle. Only when this turbulence exhausts itself does the famous *Finlandia Hymn* emerge. Introduced by the woodwinds, it is quiet, reverent, and gentle—a moment of magic. The peace is short-lived, however, as the strings sweep up the melody, building to a crashing, triumphant return of the hymn to close the work.

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## **| Orchestra Musicians**

### **Tonight's CSO Musicians**

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#### **Violin 1**

\*Nicholas Naegele, Associate Concertmaster

\*Jasper Sewell

\*David Katz

\*Jeanne Johnson

\*Nathan Banks

Chris Thurstone

Annie Thurstone

Jonathan Urizar

Mariya Potapova

Bryan Hall

#### **Violin 2**

\*Sheri Peck, Principal

\*Lee Smith

\*Rebecca James

Mary Margaret Neel

Jeff Brannen

JP Brien-Slack

Leonardo Rosario

Joanna Pepple

#### **Viola**

\*Casie Runkle

\*Katelyn Hoag

\*Susan Saliny

Laurie Redmer Cadwallader

Theresa Abler

Lacie Savage

#### **Cello**

\*Micah Donar

\*Annie Camp

\*Suzanne Sims

\*Paul Vest

Cirdan Vonnahme

\*Spencer Brewer

\*Eric Reed

#### **Double Bass**

\*Taylor Brown, Principal

\*Dexter Bell  
Given Graber  
Julia Milrod

### **Flute**

Ramakrishnan Kumaran  
Jovana Damnjanovic  
Maria Castillo

### **Oboe**

\*Jessica Smithorn, Principal  
*Norma and Olan Mills II Principal Oboe Chair*  
Jennifer Ownby

### **Clarinet**

\*Emily Bowland  
\*Joseph Miller

### **Bassoon**

\*Eric Anderson, Principal  
Staci Spring

### **French Horn**

Eric Hawkins  
\*Joseph Demko  
Zach Cramer  
Jacob Campbell  
Brody Lindsey

### **Trumpet**

\*Christian Pagnard, Principal  
\*Michael Brown

### **Trombone**

Samuel Chen  
Alex van Duuren  
AJ Abbey

### **Tuba**

\*Neil Konouchi

### **Timpani**

Keith Lloyd

### **Percussion**

Caitlin Jones  
Andy Harnsberger  
Nathan Shew

**Harp**

\*Caroline Brown Hudson, Principal

**Keyboard**

Jason Duroy

**CYS Musicians**

---

**Violin 1**

Calen Singgo  
Westin Walters  
Adalyn Gee  
Britley Frazier  
Henry Moseley  
Indigo Gilbert

**Violin 2**

Justin Flickinger  
MaKayla Malone  
Drew Felker  
Lydia Welch  
John Rothenbach

**Cello**

Annalise Hill  
Daniel Park  
Mackenzie Day  
Arshia Panicker  
Audrey Sharps

**Double Bass**

Justice Dunn

**Flute**

Rose Whitacre

**Oboe**

Kayla Finley

**Clarinet**

Megan Gorden  
Abby Cook  
Gus Wilson  
Preston Hendricks

**Bassoon**

Lander Smith

Joe Chambers

**French Horn**

Acadia Robinson

Ali Gorden

Drew Issa

Jane Blackaby

**Trumpet**

Travis Vaughn

Elliott Herring

**Trombone**

Kylie Beagle

Daniel Mikus

**Timpani**

Reese Crowdis

Andrew Hyberger

**Percussion**

Andrew Hyberger

Atharva Kolappan

Tobin Carson

Reese Crowdis

**Harp**

Atalia Wojick

**CSO Contract Musicians**

---

**Violin 1**

Joshua Holritz, Concertmaster

Nicholas Naegele, Assistant Concertmaster

Nathan Banks

Jeanne Johnson

David Katz

Calvin Lewis

Jasper Sewell

**Violin 2**

Sheri Peck, Principal Second Violin

Mary Benno

Emily Drexler

Nick Hoy

Rebecca James

Rachael McFarlane

Lee Smith  
Jennifer Whittle

### **Viola**

Metiney Suwanawongse, Principal  
Katelyn Hoag  
Cristina Micci-Barreca  
Casie Runkle  
Susan Saliny  
Gabriel Schlaffer

### **Cello**

Eric Reed, Principal  
Spencer Brewer  
Annie Camp  
Micah Donar  
Suzanne Sims  
Paul Vest

### **Double Bass**

Taylor Brown, Principal  
Dexter Bell  
Jonathan McWilliams

### **Flute**

Amelia Dicks, Principal  
*John L. and Norma B. Anderson Principal Flute Chair*  
Lisa Meyerhofer (Leave of Absence)

### **Oboe**

Jessica Smithorn, Principal  
*Norma and Olan Mills II Principal Oboe Chair*  
Teresa Spilko  
Carey Shinbaum, English Horn

### **Clarinet**

Emily Bowland  
Joseph Miller, Bass Clarinet

### **Bassoon**

Eric Anderson, Principal  
Shelby Jones  
G. Eddie McCrary, Contrabassoon

### **Horn**

Gordon James, Principal  
Angela DeBoer  
Matthew Meadows

Joseph Demko  
Mackenzie Newell

**Trumpet**

Christian Pagnard, Principal  
Michael Brown

**Trombone**

Prentiss Hobbs, Principal  
Kevin Dombrowski  
Christopher Brown (Leave of Absence)  
Evan Clifton

**Tuba**

Neil Konouchi, Principal

**Timpani**

Alex Wadner, Principal

**Percussion**

Matthew West, Principal

**Harp**

Caroline Brown Hudson, Principal

**Keyboard**

Alan Nichols, Principal

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**LOVE TO SING? BE A PART OF THE TRADITION!**

Join the Chattanooga Boys Choir in the spring of 2026

When: January 20th, 5:45pm-6:45pm

Where: Second Presbyterian Church, 700 Pine Street, Chattanooga, TN 37402

Who: 3rd-12th graders interested in joining the choir in the 2025-2026 season

*At the Open House you will meet the choir's staff, visit a rehearsal, learn about the choir's music education programs and other opportunities for students, tour our facilities, and have any questions answered!*



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- ♪ The CBC has a computer music theory lab where choristers expand their skills in musicianship, vocal technique, and ear training.
- ♪ As Chattanooga's official "Ambassadors of Goodwill," the tour choir has traveled to over 20 countries and throughout the United States.
- ♪ Through participation in extensive performance opportunities, choristers become confident, independent, and responsible citizens and leaders.
- ♪ With four separate ensembles, the CBC has unique and unmatched opportunities to perform music from Bach to the Beatles, with some of the finest artistic organizations throughout the Chattanooga area.

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