

Palm Springs Friends of Philharmonic Presents

ISRAEL PHILHARMONIC

LAHAV SHANI, MUSIC DIRECTOR

Sponsored by Barbara Fremont

SATURDAY, MARCH 22, 2025, AT 7:30 PM

MCCALLUM THEATRE, PALM DESERT, CA

PROGRAM:

FELIX MENDELSSOHN

Symphony No. 3 in A minor, op. 56, "Scottish"

40'

I. Andante con moto - Allegro un poco agitato

II. Vivace non troppo

III. Adagio

IV. Allegro vivacissimo - Allegro maestoso assai

-INTERMISSION-

PYOTR ILYICH TCHAIKOVSKY

Symphony No. 5 in E minor, op. 64

44'

I. Andante - Allegro con anima

II. Andante cantabile con alcuna licenza

III. Valse: Allegro moderato

IV. Finale: Andante maestoso - Allegro vivace



AMERICAN FRIENDS

ISRAEL PHILHARMONIC

The Israel Philharmonic's 2025 tour of the United States is underwritten by the American Friends of the Israel Philharmonic and sponsored by Pfizer



**Israel
Philharmonic**

Music Director: Lahav Shani

Entry to the hall will not be permitted while music is playing. Ushers will seat late arrivals at an appropriate time. Please remain seated until the performers leave the stage at intermission and at the end of the program. PS Phil audiences are known for the warm and courteous welcome extended to visiting performers - *thank you!*

Photography and recording of any kind are strictly prohibited. Please remember to silence your phone and other devices. Programming and artists subject to change without notice.

PROGRAM NOTES

SYMPHONY NO. 3 IN A MINOR, OP. 56. "SCOTTISH"

FELIX MENDELSSOHN

Born February 3, 1809, Hamburg

Died November 4, 1847, Leipzig

Mendelssohn made his first visit to England in 1829 at the age of twenty, and after a successful stay in London—where he conducted his own music and played the piano—he set off with his friend Karl Klingemann on a walking tour of Scotland that would lead him to compose two pieces. The first was the *Fingal's Cave Overture*, inspired directly by a stormy sea trip to the misty Hebrides Islands, but the creation of the "Scottish" Symphony proved a more complex process. Mendelssohn claimed to have had the initial idea for this music during a visit to the ruined Holyrood Chapel in Edinburgh: "In the evening twilight we went today to the palace where Queen Mary lived and loved; a little room is shown there with a winding staircase leading up to the door. . . The chapel close to it is now roofless, grass and ivy grow there, and at that broken altar Mary was crowned Queen of Scotland. Everything round is broken and mouldering and the bright sky shines in. I believe I today found in that old chapel the beginning of my 'Scottish' Symphony."

Mendelssohn may have been precise about the inspiration for this music, but he was in no hurry to write it—not until 1842, thirteen years after his trip to Scotland, did he complete this symphony (listed as No. 3, it is actually the last of his five symphonies). Though Mendelssohn referred to the music as his "Scottish" Symphony, no one is sure what that nickname means. This music tells no tale, paints no picture, nor does it quote Scottish tunes. In fact, Mendelssohn loathed folk

music, and it was during this walking tour that he unloaded a famous broadside: "No national music for me! Ten thousand devils take all nationality! Now I am in Wales and, dear me, a harper sits in the hall of every reputed inn, playing incessantly so-called national melodies; that is to say, the most infamous, vulgar, out-of-tune trash, with a hurdygurdy going on at the same time. It's maddening, and has given me a toothache already."

If one did not know that it bore the nickname "Scottish," there would be little in Mendelssohn's Symphony No.3 to suggest anything distinctively Scottish. And in fact, Mendelssohn's friend Robert Schumann managed to humiliate himself on just this issue. He had been sent a copy of the score and wrote a review of it under the impression that he was writing about Mendelssohn's "Italian" Symphony. So convinced was he of the Italian-ness of this music that he singled out for special praise its "beautiful Italian pictures, so beautiful as to compensate a hearer who had never been to Italy."

In his preface to the score, Mendelssohn had originally marked the finale *Allegro guerriero*, and some critics have taken their cue from this and claimed to hear the sound of a battle between Scottish warriors in the last movement. Others have heard in this music a depiction of windswept moors, but all these critics are guessing wildly.

The four movements of this symphony, played without pause, are unified around the somber opening melody—the theme inspired by the visit to Holyrood Chapel—which appears in quite different forms throughout. Played by winds and divided violas, it opens the slow introduction; when the music leaps ahead at the *Allegro un poco agitato*, the violins’ surging main theme is simply a variation of the slow introduction. The first movement alternates a nervous, insistent quality with moments of silky calm, and all of these moods are built from that same material. A tempestuous climax trails off into quiet, and Mendelssohn brings back part of the introduction as a bridge to the second movement.

Mendelssohn was famous for his scherzos, and the second movement of this symphony, marked *Vivace non troppo*, is one of his finest. It is actually in sonata form (and in 2/4, rather than the 3/4 standard in scherzos). Throughout, there is a sense of rustling motion—the music’s boundless energy keeps it pushing forward at every instant. Solo clarinet has the swirling first theme, and some have identified this tune’s extra final accent as the “Scottish snap” (though typical of Scottish folk music, such extra cadential accents are part of the folk music of many nations). The scherzo rushes to its quiet close and proceeds directly into the *Adagio*, which alternates a long and graceful main idea marked cantabile with a martial fanfare as a second theme.

Out of the quiet conclusion of the third movement, the finale explodes. Marked *Allegro vivacissimo*, this movement is full of fire and excitement (this is the one originally marked

Allegro guerriero), beginning with the violins’ dancing, dotted opening idea. Along the way, Mendelssohn incorporates a second theme, derived once again from the symphony’s introduction, and this energetic music eventually reaches a moment of calm. And here Mendelssohn springs a surprise: back comes the simple melody that opened the symphony, but now—marked *Allegro maestoso assai* and set in bright A major—it has acquired an unexpected nobility. That once-simple melody now gathers its strength and drives the symphony to an energetic conclusion.

Many regard the “Scottish” Symphony as Mendelssohn’s finest orchestral work, but no one can explain that nickname satisfactorily. Rather than searching for the sound of gathering clans or hearing bits of Scottish folk tunes or seeing windswept moors in this music, it may be simplest—and safest—to regard this as a work inspired by one specific Scottish impression, which then evolved ingeniously into an entire symphony.



The Ruins of Holyrood Chapel, By Louis Daguerre, 1824

SYMPHONY NO. 5 IN E MINOR. OP. 64

PYOTR ILYICH TCHAIKOVSKY

Born May 7, 1840, Votkinsk

Died November 6, 1893, St. Petersburg

In the winter of 1887-88, Tchaikovsky made a tour of Western Europe, conducting his own works in Leipzig, Hamburg (where he met Brahms), Berlin, Prague, Paris, and London. Those audiences responded enthusiastically to his music (Brahms was an exception), and Tchaikovsky returned to Russia ready to attempt a new symphony. In April 1888, he moved into a villa in Frolovskoye, northwest of Moscow, where he could work on his new symphony and take long walks in the woods. Two years later, he would return to Frolovskoye to discover—in a moment straight out of Chekhov—that the forests had all been cut down, but now he worked happily in this beautiful setting, and his Fifth Symphony was done by August. Tchaikovsky led the premiere in St. Petersburg on November 17, 1888.

While it lacks the white-hot fury of the Fourth Symphony or the dark intensity of the Sixth, the Fifth Symphony—full of those wonderful Tchaikovsky themes, imaginative orchestral color, and excitement—has become one of his most popular works, so popular in fact that it takes a conscious effort to hear this symphony with fresh ears. As he did in the Fourth, Tchaikovsky builds this symphony around a motto-theme, and in his notebooks he suggested that the motto of the Fifth Symphony represents “complete resignation before fate.” But that is as far as the resemblance goes, for Tchaikovsky supplied no program for the Fifth Symphony, nor does this music seem to be “about” anything. The motto theme returns in each of the four movements, often in quite different guises, but it may be best to understand this motto as a unifying device rather than as anything so dramatic as the Fourth

Symphony’s “sword of Damocles.” Listeners are of course free to supply their own interpretations as to what this music is about, but despite the tantalizing hints about “resignation before fate,” Tchaikovsky apparently regarded his Fifth Symphony as abstract music.

Clarinets introduce the somber motto-theme at the beginning of the slow introduction, and gradually this leads to the main body of the movement, marked *Allegro con anima*. Over the orchestra’s steady tread, solo clarinet and bassoon sing the surging main theme of this sonata-form movement, and there follows a wealth of thematic material. This is a lengthy movement, and it is built on three separate-theme groups, full of soaring and sumptuous Tchaikovsky melodies. The development fuses these lyric themes with episodes of superheated drama, and listeners will hear the motto-theme hinted at along the way. The movement draws to a quiet close, its furious energy finally exhausted.

Deep string chords at the opening of the *Andante cantabile* introduce one of the great solos for French horn, and a few moments later the oboe has the graceful second subject. For a movement that begins in such relaxed spirits, this music is twice shattered by the return of the motto-theme, which blazes out dramatically in the trumpets.

Tchaikovsky springs a surprise in the third movement—instead of the expected scherzo, he writes a lovely waltz. Its trio section skitters along a steady flow of sixteenth-notes from the strings (this section feels very much like a scene

from one of his ballets), and Tchaikovsky rounds the movement off beautifully—he writes an extended coda based on the waltz tune, and in its closing moments the motto-theme makes a fleeting appearance, like a figure seen through the mists.

However misty that theme may have seemed at the end of the third movement, it comes into crystalline focus at the beginning of the finale.

Tchaikovsky moves to E major here and sounds out the motto to open this movement. This music seems to have arrived at its moment of triumph even before the last movement has fairly begun. The main body of the finale, marked *Allegro vivace*, leaps to life, and the motto-theme breaks in

more and more often as it proceeds. The movement drives to a great climax, then breaks off in silence. This is a trap, designed to trick the unwary and propel them into premature applause, for the symphony is not yet over. And in fact, no attentive listener should be fooled, for this false “conclusion” is in the wrong key of B major (one wonders just what thoughts were



Cabinet Card Portrait of Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky in 1888 by Émile Reutlinger
New York Public Library Digital Gallery

running through Tchaikovsky’s mind when he designed this trap). Out of the ensuing silence begins the real coda, and the motto-theme now leads the way on constantly-accelerating tempos to the (true) conclusion in E major.

Program notes by Eric Bromberger

ARTIST BIOS

LAHAV SHANI, CONDUCTOR

Since 2018, Lahav Shani has been the Chief Conductor of the Rotterdam Philharmonic Orchestra. From the 20/21 season he started his position as Music Director of the Israel Philharmonic Orchestra, taking over from Zubin Mehta who held the position for 50 years. Shani was previously Principal Guest Conductor of the Vienna Symphony Orchestra. In February 2023 the Münchner Philharmoniker appointed Lahav Shani as their new Chief Conductor, starting from September 2026.

In June 2016 he debuted with the Rotterdam Philharmonic Orchestra as conductor and solo pianist. No less than two months later, his appointment as Chief Conductor was announced and he became the youngest conductor to hold the position in the orchestra's history. The Rotterdam Philharmonic with Shani have an exclusive recording contract with Warner Classics.

Shani's close relationship with the Israel Philharmonic Orchestra began well over 10 years ago. He debuted with the orchestra at age sixteen, and in 2007 performed Tchaikovsky Piano Concerto under the baton of Zubin Mehta. He then went on to play regularly with the orchestra as a double bassist. In 2013, after winning the Gustav Mahler International Conducting Competition in Bamberg, the orchestra invited him to step in to conduct their season-opening concerts. Since then, he has returned to the orchestra every year as both a conductor and pianist.

Recent and upcoming guest conductor highlights include engagements with Wiener

Photo by Marco Borggreve



Philharmoniker, Berliner Philharmoniker, Gewandhaus Orchester, Münchner Philharmoniker, Symphonieorchester des Bayerischen Rundfunks, London Symphony Orchestra, Filarmonica della Scala, Boston Symphony Orchestra, Chicago Symphony Orchestra, Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra, Philadelphia Orchestra, Budapest Festival Orchestra, Orchestre de Paris and Philharmonia Orchestra. In March 2022, Lahav Shani conducted Munich's Benefit concert in aid of Ukraine at the Isarphilharmonie with Anne-Sophie Mutter and the three orchestras of the city, Bayerisches Staatsorchester, Symphonieorchester des Bayerischen Rundfunks and Münchner Philharmoniker. In the 2022/2023 season, he began his 3-year residency at the Konzerthaus Dortmund.

Born in Tel Aviv in 1989, Shani began his piano studies when he was six with Hannah Shalgi, before continuing with Prof. Arie Vardi at the Buchmann-Mehta School of Music. He went on to study conducting under Prof. Christian Ehwald and piano with Prof. Fabio Bidini at the Academy of Music Hanns Eisler, Berlin, and was mentored by Daniel Barenboim during his time there. As a pianist, Shani has performed as a soloist with Daniel Barenboim, Zubin Mehta and Gianandrea Noseda. He has play-directed piano

ISRAEL PHILHARMONIC

The Israel Philharmonic is one of Israel's oldest and most influential cultural institutions. Since its founding in 1936, the Israel Philharmonic has dedicated itself to presenting the world's greatest music to audiences in Israel and around the world. Founded by Polish violinist Bronislaw Huberman, the Israel Philharmonic represents the fulfillment of his dream "to unite the desire of the country for an orchestra with the desire of the Jewish musicians for a country." Huberman spent countless hours persuading first-chair musicians of Eastern European and German orchestras, who had lost their jobs as a result of Nazism, to immigrate to Palestine. In doing so, Huberman created an "orchestra of soloists" which continues to act as a dynamic, global community for musicians from across the world. Huberman invited the greatest conductor of the time, Arturo Toscanini, to conduct the opening concert, performed at the Levant Fair in Tel Aviv on 26 December 1936.

Major soloists and conductors have always performed with the Israel Philharmonic. Martha Argerich, Yefim Bronfman, Leonidas Kavakos, Itzhak Perlman, Kirill Petrenko, Gil Shaham, Sir Andrés Schiff and Pinchas Zukerman, among many others, are regular guests of the orchestra. Leonard Bernstein maintained close ties with the orchestra from 1947. The memory of him conducting the Orchestra in front of 5,000 soldiers on the Negev dunes after the battle for

concerts with many orchestras including the Vienna Philharmonic, Philharmonia Orchestra, Filarmonica della Scala, Staatskapelle Berlin and Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra. Shani also has considerable experience performing chamber music and in recital, and is a regular performer at the Verbier Festival, and has also appeared at the Aix-en-Provence Easter and Jerusalem Chamber Music Festivals, and in duo recitals with Martha Argerich.

Beersheba is an historic moment. In 1988, the IPO bestowed on him the title of Laureate Conductor, which he retained until his death in 1990. Yoel Levi and Gianandrea Noseda served as Principal Guest Conductors.

The Israel Philharmonic is Israel's premier cultural ambassador and travels extensively throughout the world, particularly to countries where there is little or no Israeli representation. In December 2022, The Israel Philharmonic performed a historic concert in Abu Dhabi at the invitation of the Abu Dhabi Ministry of Culture, celebrating the Abraham Accords. Other historical visits include the orchestra's first tour to Russia in April 1990 and the first tour to India in December 1960. The orchestra performs in the most important venues and festivals in Europe, the USA, South America, China, and Japan.

The Orchestra gives more than 100 performances each year in Israel, where concert series are presented in Tel Aviv, Jerusalem and Haifa. The IPO KeyNote Education and Outreach Program brings classical music to young audiences.

In 1969 Maestro Zubin Mehta was appointed Music Advisor to the IPO and in 1977 he became its Music Director. Maestro Mehta retired in October 2019 and following his retirement, the IPO has named him Music Director Emeritus. Lahav Shani became Music Director in the 2020-21 season.

ISRAEL PHILHARMONIC

LAHAV SHANI, MUSIC DIRECTOR

ENDOWED BY THE ROSALINDE AND ARTHUR GILBERT FOUNDATION

ZUBIN MEHTA, MUSIC DIRECTOR EMERITUS

FIRST VIOLINS

Ilya Konovalov
Concertmaster •
Dumitru Pocitari ♦
Concertmaster •
Saida Bar-Lev
Asst. Concertmaster
Polina Yehudin
Asst. Concertmaster (acting)
Daniel Aizenshtadt
Nitzan Canetty
Sharon Cohen
Adelina Grodsky
Genadi Gurevich
Lev Iomdin
Andrei Kuznetsov
Eleonora Lutsky
Linor Katz
Solomon Markman
Shai Nakash
Gilad Rivkin
Anna Siegreich
Yelena Tishin
Drorit Valk
Nasif Francis
The Academy Program

- Canada Concertmaster Chair
- * Principal
- ** Asst. Principal
- ♦ On Leave or Sabbatical
- Guest-player

SECOND VIOLINS

Yevgenia Pikovsky*
Ari Þór Vilhjálmsson*
Amnon Valk**
Liora Altschuler
Alina Boyarkina
Hadar Cohen
Alexander Dobrinsky
Anna Doulov
Shmuel Glaser
Yuki Ishizaka
Sivann Maayani
Tomoko Malkin
Asaf Maoz
Marianna Povolotzky
Avital Steiner Tuneh
Olga Stern
Albatina Rachmanina
The Academy Program

VIOLAS

Miriam Hartman*
Dmitri Ratush*
Amir van der Hal**
Lotem Beider Ben Aharon
Jonathan Gertner
Yeshaayahu Ginzburg
Vladislav Krasnov
Sofia Lebed
Klara Nosovitsky
Matan Noussimovitch
Evgenia Oren
Gili Radian-Sade
Inbar Segev Susar
The Academy Program

CELLOS

Haran Meltzer*
Lia Chen Perlov*
Gal Nyska**
Dmitri Golderman
Iakov Kashin
Linor Katz
Enrique Maltz
Kirill Mihanovsky
Felix Nemirovsky
Tamar Deutsch
The Academy Program

BASSES

Nir Comforty**
Brad Annis
Uri Arbel ♦
Nimrod Kling
Noam Massarik
David Segal
Kirill Sobolev
Omry Weinberger

HARP

Sophie Baird-Daniel*

FLUTES

Guy Eshed*
Tomer Amrani*
Boaz Meirovitch
Lior Eitan

PICCOLO

Lior Eitan

OBOES

Dudu Carmel*
Lior Michel Viroth*
Dmitry Malkin
Tamar Narkiss-Meltzer

ENGLISH HORN

Dmitry Malkin

CLARINETS

Ron Selka*
Yevgeny Yehudin*
Rashelly Davis
Jonathan Hadas

PICCOLO CLARINETS

Ron Selka
Yevgeny Yehudin

BASS CLARINET

Jonathan Hadas

BASSOONS

Daniel Mazaki*
Uzi Shalev**
Gad Lederman ♦
Yael Falik
Gal Varon

CONTRABASSOONS

Yael Falik
Gal Varon

TRUMPETS

Yigal Meltzer*
Zachary Silberschlag
Eran Reemy
Yuval Shapiro

HORNS

Dalit Segal**
Michael Slatkin**
Yoel Abadi
Michal Mossek
Gal Raviv
Hagai Shalom

TROMBONES

Nir Erez*
Tal Ben Rei**
Micha Davis

BASS TROMBONE

Micha Davis

TUBA

Itai Agmon*

TIMPANI

Dan Moshayev*
Ziv Stein**

PERCUSSION

Ziv Stein*
Alexander Nemirovsky
Ayal Rafiah

LIBRARIAN

Akkad Isre'el

OPERATIONAL & STAGE MANAGER

Amit Cohen

TECHNICAL ASSISTANTS

Denis Rubin
Noam Polonsky

ORCHESTRA PERSONNEL MANAGER

Michal Bach

ASSISTANT PERSONNEL MANAGER

Yael Glazer
Katya Dashkov Totev

INSPECTOR

Hadar Cohen

MARKETING MANAGER

Yael Yardeni-Sela

MARKETING

Liz Fisher
Ohad Dan

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Ronni Gamzu (Chm'n)
Ephraim Abramson
Anath Levin
Rivka Saker

IPO MANAGEMENT

Yuval Shapiro (Chm'n)
Jonathan Gertner
Boaz Meirovitch

SECRETARY GENERAL

Yair Mashiach

ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

Alisa Meves

PROJECT MANAGER

Iris Abramovici

ARTISTIC OPERATIONS DEPT.

Nitzan Vardi

Israel Philharmonic

For Opus 3 Artists

Robert Berretta, Managing Director
Benjamin Maimin, Chief Operating Officer
Jemma Lehner, Associate Manager
Miles Bentley, Administrative Assistant

For the Israel Philharmonic Tour

Leonard Stein, Consulting Producer
Peter Katz, Touring Coordinator
John Pendleton, Company Manager
Sarah Vardigans, Advance Company
Manager
Carol Patella, Assistant Company Manager
Don Irving, Stage Manager

Exclusive Tour Management and Representation:

Opus 3 Artists
470 Park Avenue South, 9th Floor North,
New York, NY 10016
www.opus3artists.com

Musicians' Council: Sharon Cohen (Chm'n), Jonathan Gertner, Noam Massarik, Boaz Meirovitch, Dan Moshayev, Gili Radian-Sade, Hagai Shalom, Yuval Shapiro, Ari Þór Vilhjálmsson | **Assembly Chm'n:** Nir Erez | **Finance Manager:** Alex Ziv | **Chief Accountant:** Anat Eldar | **Treasurer:** Racheli Timor | **KeyNote and Sulamot Director:** Irit Rub | **KeyNote Pedagogical Director:** Dr. Dochy Lichtensztajn | **KeyNote staff:** Einat Goldstein, Gili Salomon, Ortal Tal | **Sulamot staff:** Nili Yacobi, Raz Landsman | **Mgr. Subscription Dept.:** Nira Oryan | **Team Mgr.:** Bagrat Chen, Zvi Netanel | **IT Mgr.:** Shlomi Timor | **Public Liaison:** Rachel Levy | **Marketing and Social Media:** Ohad Dan | **Payroll Manager:** Orly Zabib | **Payroll Accountant:** Liat Ohayon | **Accountant:** Osnat Laks | **Bookkeeper:** Orly Golan | **Program Editor:** Oded Shnei-Dor | **Asst. Program Editor:** Noga Chelouche | **Archives Mgr.:** Avivit Hochstadter | **Procurement & Transportation:** Golan Peled | **Public Relations:** Shalom Tel Aviv