

# The Harvard-Radcliffe Orchestra

Saturday, December 2, 2017 8PM Sanders Theatre

Federico Cortese | Music Director

**Leonard Bernstein**

Profanation from Symphony No. 1

**Conducted by Reuben Stern '20**

**Claude Debussy**

Prélude à l'après-midi d'un faune

**Dmitri Shostakovich**

Cello Concerto No. 1 in E-flat Major

**With Soloist  
Audrey Chen '18**



## Tickets

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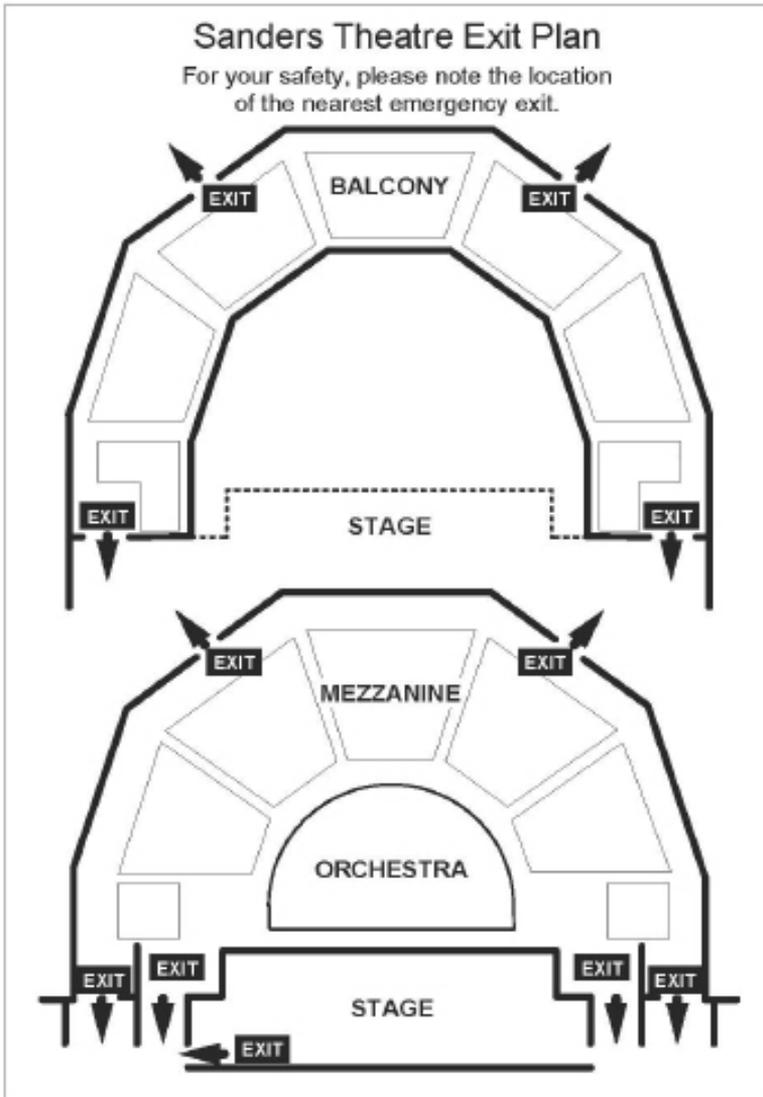
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# HISTORY OF THE HRO

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The Harvard-Radcliffe Orchestra (HRO) is the oldest symphony orchestra in the United States. It traces its history back to the night of March 6, 1808, when Joseph Eaton (class of 1810) and five other Harvard men formed the Pierian Sodality, taking its name from the Pierian Springs, where Greek immortals drank and found musical inspiration. (In contrast, the oldest professional orchestra – the New York Philharmonic – was founded only in 1842.)

In its early years, the Sodality was a student club not only for playing music, but also for consuming brandy and cigars, as well as the “serenading of young ladies.” In the 1830s, the Faculty of Harvard College publicly admonished the Sodality for a whole night serenading away from Cambridge. Administration censure was so great that in 1832 the Pierian Sodality was reduced to one man. Gradually, however, other members were elected, and the Sodality played on. According to a June 29, 1840 entry in the Sodality’s record book, the group’s late-night music-making antics earned them fame that “did wax exceedingly great, and did reach all the places round about Cambridge.”

Two decades later, the performing career of the Pierians began. In 1860, shortly after Harvard President James Walker made Harvard the first institution to add music as a regular subject of study in the curriculum, the Pierian Sodality was given permission to “hire a hall and give a public concert, on condition that no tickets be sold.” They began to give regular concerts, and even rehearsed to prepare for them.

Therefore, by the turn of the century, the Pierian Sodality could justly refer to itself as the Harvard University Orchestra. It had developed into a serious musical organization and become the largest college orchestra in America. The late thirties saw joint concerts with the Radcliffe Orches-

tra and in 1942, the Pierians suggested that the Harvard-Radcliffe Orchestra be formed. Since the Sodality’s membership was depleted during the years of World War II, and since the Radcliffe Orchestra lacked certain instruments, both groups benefitted from the merger. Thus the men and women of Harvard and Radcliffe united in their music-making efforts, and the HRO as it is today was born.

The orchestra was conducted by students until 1926, when the first professional conductor was hired by orchestra members. Most conductors remained for only a few years (with the exception of Malcolm Holmes, conductor from 1933-50), until on a recommendation from Leonard Bernstein, Dr. James Yannatos became conductor in 1964 and served as the music director for 45 years. Under his baton, HRO developed into a high-quality orchestra, and toured all over the country and the world. Following Dr. Yannatos’ retirement, Federico Cortese was appointed music director of HRO in 2009. He has continued its tradition of musical excellence, of performing with other Harvard musical organizations, such as the Holden Choirs, and of performance tours.

It is now over one century ago that HRO deemed itself ready for its first out-of-state tour. Beginning with a successful tour through New York State in 1908, HRO’s travels have featured such highlights such as performing at Washington DC’s National Theatre for First Ladies Mrs. Warren Harding and Mrs. Calvin Coolidge, gracing the stage of Carnegie Hall and, in 1978, placing third in the Fifth Annual International Festival of Student Orchestras. Since the 1980s, HRO has taken tours to the Soviet Union, Asia and Europe, Italy, Brazil, Canada, Cuba, Israel, Jordan, Korea, the Philippines and most recently in 2017, Argentina.

# Harvard-Radcliffe Orchestra

210th Season, 2017-2018

## VIOLIN I

Natalie Hodges '19

### Co-Concertmaster

Cecilia Yao '18

### Co-Concertmaster

August Chen '20

Brandon Duffy '20

Jonathan Huang '21

Andrew Kim '21

Joyce Lu '21

Allie Quan '21

Ben Rhee '21

Emily Spector '21

Angela Tang '20

May Wang '20

Yi Lin Wang '21

Unice Yoo '20

## VIOLIN II

NaYoung Yang '18

### Principal

Jonathan Chu '21

Clare Criscione '19

Yooree Ha '20

Eloise Hodges '21

Andrew Lee '21

Lucy Li '21

John Lim '20

Allison Pao '21

Julia Riew '21

Alexis Ross '20

Aaron Shi '20

Diana Wang '20

William Yao '21

## VIOLA

Martine Thomas '18

### Principal

Roger Cawdette\*

Frances Choi '21

Jonathan Karp (Grad)

William Lundell '21

Carter Nakamoto '21

Faith Pak '19

Nivi Ravi '21

Isabel Seguin\*

Tamara Shamir '21

## CELLO

Lev Mamuya '18

### Principal

Patrick Barham '21

Emily Chung '21

Ethan Cobb '21

Danielle Davis '21

Spencer Kim '20

Raymond Lin '20

Sang-O Park '21

Jeanna Qiu '20

Grant Riew '19

Ila Shon '19

Nate Steele '21

## BASS

Frederick Metzger '18

### Principal

Christian Lin '20

Claire Murphy '21

Steve Tarsa (Grad)

Andrew Wilson\*

## FLUTE

Karissa Huang '21

### Piccolo

Annie Wu '18

Anya Zhang '20

### Piccolo

## OBOE

Rachel Clemens '19\*

### English Horn

Annika McDermott-

Hinman '21

Mara Roth '19

## CLARINET

Erica Chang '19

### E-flat Clarinet

### Bass Clarinet

HyukJoo Hwang '19

Wesley Shin '21

## BASSOON

Steven Ekert '20

Eli Holmes '21

### Contrabassoon

Reuben Stern '20

## HORN

Grace Chang '21

Simon Eder '20

William Hartog '21

Alec Jones '19

## TRUMPET

William Brechtelsbauer '19

Elaine Grace '21

Sóley Hyman '19

Avril Saavedra '21

## TROMBONE

Topher Colby '19

Ben Court\*

Brendan Pease '17\*

Jack Stone '20

### Tuba

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Rachelle Ambroise '21

Grant Hoechst '18

Sam Markowitz '21

Matthias Pergams '19

Nicholas Pham '19

Dhilan Ramaprasad '21

Kai Trepka '20

## PIANO

Tristan Yang '21

## HARP

Elizabeth Yeoh-Wang '20

\*guest performer

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# Harvard-Radcliffe Orchestra

*210th Season, 2017-2018*

Federico Cortese, Conductor, Music Director  
Adrian Slywotsky, Teaching Fellow  
Mark Miller, Teaching Fellow

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Saturday, December 2, 2017, 8:00 pm  
Sanders Theatre, Harvard University

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## Program

Screening of Bernstein's Lecture on  
Debussy's *Prélude à l'après-midi d'un faune*

Claude Debussy (1862-1918)  
*Prélude à l'après-midi d'un faune*

INTERMISSION

Leonard Bernstein (1918-1990)  
Profanation from Symphony No. 1  
Conducted by Reuben Stern '20

Dmitri Shostakovich (1906-1975)  
Cello Concerto No. 1 in E-Flat Major  
I. *Allegretto*  
II. *Moderato*  
III. *Cadenza-Attacca*  
IV. *Allegro con moto*  
With Soloist Audrey Chen '18

# NOTES ON THE MUSIC

## Debussy – *Prélude à l'après-midi d'un faune*

Often referred to as the “beginning of modern music,” *Prélude à l'après-midi d'un faune*, or “Prelude to the Afternoon of a Faun,” was recognized as revolutionary the day it premiered in 1894. At the time, its Parisian audience was astounded by its subtle shadings of orchestral color and rich harmonic language and demanded an immediate encore. In the history of music, it is indeed rare that such a groundbreaking work is celebrated so early, and its popularity and esteem have certainly not diminished in the least over the past century.

An experimentalist from the outset, Debussy dismayed his teachers with his unflinching willingness, from a young age, to use yet-unheard chords and harmonic progressions, flaunting centuries-old tradition in the process. Despite recognition of his potential, his headstrong adherence to his own musical vision scarcely put him in good standing with the musical establishment, which largely thought that he was wasting his talents by “courting the unusual.” In short, Debussy was a musical outcast and, as Massenet put it, “an enigma.”

Surreal and magical, the *Prelude* was Debussy's first significant orchestral work and marked the solidification and maturation of Debussy's efforts in cultivating his unique style. Its instant success vindicated the musical path he had forged over the preceding years of his life and launched him into great fame, establishing him as prominent composer. On its heels masterwork after masterwork would follow.

Based the poem “*L'après-midi d'un faune*” by his friend, the poet Stéphane

Mallarmé, the *Prelude* seeks not to translate the poem directly into music but rather to paint with music an impression of the poem. As the half-human-half-goat faun in the poem recounts his sensual encounters with nymphs upon awaking from deep slumber, his memories fade between reality and fantasy, an ambiguity and fluidity vividly portrayed by Debussy's music.

Organized as a seamless, coherent whole with three faintly discernible sections, the *Prelude* starts with a chromatic, seductive theme, a shapely curve painted by the flute alone. The music gradually picks up as layer upon layer of orchestral color is applied, and the opening theme undergoes a continuous process of morphing and transformation all the while. Toward the center of the composition, a new, stately theme takes over, and the music grows to become expansive, broadening into a flowing torrent of sound evocative of soaring flight. After a graceful landing, the opening melody returns with its ever-changing guises, even dreamier and hazier than before. The music eventually disperses into mere wisps, the distant ringing of the antique cymbals adding final splashes of color to a vanishing canvas.

—Michael Cheng '19

# Bernstein – “Profanation” from Symphony No .1

Leonard Bernstein’s 2nd symphony, *Jeremiah*, works seamlessly together as an extrapolation from two important times in Bernstein’s life. The second movement represents the antithesis to the first in its compositional nature as well as motivic function in the larger form, with the liturgically sourced rhythms and calls of the first movement being rebutted with the pagan chaos and mocking of the second.

The title of the movement is incredibly apt for the suggestion it creates as it leads into the lamenting 3rd movement; *Profanation* is the sense of unbridled celebratory caricature made by the corrupt pagan clergy in the face of the prophet *Jeremiah*. The movement dances in a brisk scherzo with many oscillating time signatures that almost play preview to the coming *West Side Story* in their spontaneity, which perfectly portray the inadvertence the city of Jerusalem shows towards the voice of the prophet.

Testified by Bernstein’s working associate at the time, the opening theme of the movement sources from the Ashkenazic cantillation of the Prophets, something that Bernstein perhaps included unknowingly as a result of his upbringing and association with liturgical sources of music from a young age. Although Bernstein described the thematic content of the symphony in relation to Hebrew material as “not one of literalness, but of emotional quality,” the resemblance and affect of the background given by the most fundamental melodic sources of the movement nonetheless reinforces its place in the greater tangibly religious structural background of the symphony as a whole.

While Bernstein composed the third movement *Lamentation* earlier in 1939, the rest of the symphony came to explosive fruition in the winter of 1942, just before the turn of the year in preparation for a composition competition for the following summer. Although *Sergey Koussevitzky*, one of his mentors at the time at *Tanglewood*, did not especially care for the work, he brought it to *Fritz Reiner* after his attempt in the competition, under whom Bernstein studied conducting at the *Curtis Institute of Music*; who was particularly impressed with piece, and invited Bernstein to perform it with the *Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra* that spring.

Following its performance success, the work gained more traction and was eventually brought to perform in Boston, as well as named the best new work of the season by the *New York Music Critics Circle*.

The dedication to Bernstein’s father came later in 1943, however, reflecting the reconciliation the two found in the ensuing radiance and emotional poignancy of a Carnegie hall performance of the work with the *New York Philharmonic*. For Bernstein, the work meant more than a somber reflection on the *Profanation* and desecration across the Atlantic in Europe, but as well, an intensely personal affair that brought him closer to his father, *Sam Bernstein*, and the symphonic musical voice that would become a cornerstone of his rise and enduring position of prominence throughout his tenure in New York and in America as a whole in the following decades.

—Topher Colby ‘19

# NOTES ON THE MUSIC

## Shostakovich – Cello Concerto No. 1

Rarely in history has so accomplished and great a composer as Shostakovich suffered so much public humiliation and defeat. In 1936 and 1948, Shostakovich was officially denounced by the Soviet regime, his music banned and repudiated, he himself dismissed from his offices and stripped of his privileges. It speaks volumes to his genius and resilience that on both occasions, he bounced back not by obediently manufacturing the trivial music demanded of him by the Party but by showing the world his two greatest, most defiant creations—the Fifth and Tenth Symphonies.

Stalin's death in 1953 removed a pall from Shostakovich's psyche, fatigued and paranoid after almost two decades of seeing friends and relatives disappear in Stalin's Great Purge, enduring World War II in the Soviet Union, and living in constant fear of arrest for much of the remaining time. For the first time since the early 1930s, Shostakovich was free to compose without fear of reprimand, and his "desk drawer" compositions—his genuine artistic endeavors, too subversive as long as Stalin still lived—finally saw the light. A much more personal and idiosyncratic style emerged, supplanting his more heroic style of the preceding two decades. This stylistic shift sees a proliferation of Shostakovich's self-referencing in his music with his famous DSCH motif.

The present concerto is undoubtedly the finest of Shostakovich's six (he wrote two each for violin, cello, and piano) and arguably the most

significant contribution to the cello concerto repertoire since Elgar's was completed in 1919. Epitomizing post-Stalin Shostakovich in its idiom, the concerto achieves an astounding profundity of expression while serving as a vehicle for virtuosity of the highest caliber, all while adhering to a rigorous classical framework. The instrumentation is light; a full cast of woodwinds is present, along with the timpani, celesta, and strings, but of the brass instruments there is only a single horn. The texture is transparent throughout, never thick and always lucid.

The first movement begins with the solo cello's proposing, somewhat mischievously, the overarching motto that threads together the entire composition: G, F-flat, C-flat, and B-flat, a metamorphosis and reversal of the DSCH motif. The second theme follows after scarcely a transition; stubborn and unyielding, perhaps even obnoxious, with its asymmetric meter and repeated motivic cells, it nonetheless builds to great emotional heights. The movement is concise and lean, and the winds, especially the horn, play a dominant role throughout, happily taking the role traditionally accorded to the strings. In the recapitulation, the soloist and orchestra at times switch roles, creating an additional dimension of variety in timbre.

The second movement, slow despite its *Moderato* marking, is characterized by Shostakovich's signature slow-movement poignancy. The cello intones plaintively over alternatively string- and wind-dominated back-

drops, sometimes supported by the heart-wrenching dissonances and harmonic changes puncture dreamy, lulling bubbles of sound and imagination. Strong emotions eventually fade into spectral emptiness, as the cello (playing only harmonics) and the celesta engage in a final dialogue before their wisps of sound disintegrate into the darkness.

The third movement, a cadenza, or soliloquy, for the soloist alone, follows without pause. While cadenzas successive took on greater structural roles as the concerto archetype evolved in history, this concerto is unique among all concertos in allocating an entire full-fledged movement to its cadenza. The cello first expands on themes from the second movement and then, taking on the opening motto of the first movement, gradually speeds up to transition seamlessly into the finale.

—Michael Cheng '19



# FEDERICO CORTESE

Conductor and Music Director, Harvard-Radcliffe Orchestra



From the moment of his debut in September 1998, stepping in at short notice to conduct Beethoven's

Symphony No. 9 in place of an ailing Seiji Ozawa, Federico Cortese's work as Assistant Conductor of the Boston Symphony Orchestra was widely praised. Serving in that position from 1998-2003, Mr. Cortese led the BSO several times in Symphony Hall and at Tanglewood. His conducting of Puccini's *Madama Butterfly* at Symphony Hall was particularly heralded. Additionally, he has served as Music Director of the Boston Youth Symphony Orchestras since 1999 and is currently Music Director of the New England String Ensemble and Associate Conductor of the Asian Youth Orchestra. Other appointments have included Music Coordinator (in lieu of Music Director) and Associate Conductor of the Spoleto Festival in Italy, Assistant Conductor to Daniele Gatti at the Orchestra dell'Accademia Nazionale di Santa Cecilia in Rome, and Assistant Conductor to Robert Spano at the Brooklyn Philharmonic.

Mr. Cortese has conducted operatic and symphonic engagements throughout the United States, Australia, and Europe. Recent engagements in the US include, among many others, conducting the Dallas and Atlanta Symphony Orchestras, San Antonio and New World Symphonies, and the

Louisville Orchestra; as well as many operatic productions including Mozart's *Don Giovanni* with the Boston Lyric Opera, Puccini's *La bohème* with Opera Theater of Saint Louis and at the Yale Opera program, and Andre Previn's *A Streetcar Named Desire* with the Washington National Opera. In Europe, his opera experience includes conducting productions of Verdi's *Il trovatore* in Parma, Italy as part of the Verdi Centennial Festival; Mozart's *Die Entführung aus dem Serail* at the Spoleto Festival in Italy; Niccolò Piccinni's *La bella verità* at the Teatro Comunale, Firenze, with the Orchestra of the Maggio Musicale Fiorentino; and a new production of Mozart's *Così fan tutte* with the Finnish National Opera in Helsinki. Recent successes include guest conducting Britain's Opera North, BBC-Scottish Symphony, Slovenian Philharmonic, Oslo and Zagreb Philharmonics, and Göttingen Symphony Orchestra, to name just a few.

In Australia, he has conducted the Sydney and Tasmanian Symphonies; Australian Youth, West Australia Symphony, and Queensland Orchestras; and a production of *Madama Butterfly* for Opera Australia in Melbourne.

Mr. Cortese studied composition and conducting at the Conservatorio di Santa Cecilia in Rome and at the Hochschule für Musik in Vienna. In addition, he has been a conducting fellow at the Tanglewood Music Center. In 2009, he was appointed Senior Lecturer in the Harvard music department. In addition to music, Mr. Cortese studied literature, humanities, and law, earning a law degree from La Sapienza University in Rome.

# REUBEN STERN

## Student Conductor, Harvard-Radcliffe Orchestra



**R**euben Stern, a sophomore living in Dunster House, is the student conductor for HRO's 2017-2018 season. He is also serving as Music Director of the Bach Society Orchestra's this year. A lover of the liberal arts, Reuben is pursuing a degree in mathematics. As a bassoonist, Reuben currently performs with the Harvard-Radcliffe Orchestra. Previously, he has studied with Nancy Goeres, Janet Underhill, and Richard Ranti, and participated in masterclasses with William Short, George Sakakeeny, Suzanne Nelsen, and Whitney Crockett.

His chamber ensemble, the Kalliope Septet, performed at various venues throughout the Greater Boston area, including a public performance of the Beethoven Septet in Boston's South Station, and two performances at the Smith and Wollensky Steakhouse. Reuben played with the Boston Youth Symphony for four years, with notable performances on Stravinsky's *The Rite of Spring* and Strauss *Ein Heldenleben*. Additionally, Reuben has spent two summers touring with the National Youth Orchestra

of the USA, performing in Carnegie Hall, Disney Hall in Los Angeles, Het Concertgebouw in Amsterdam, and Smetana Hall in Prague, among others. With the National Youth Orchestra, Reuben worked under the direction of Maestros David Robertson, Christoph Eschenbach, and Valery Gergiev.

He was a runner-up in the Boston Civic Symphony and Boston Youth Symphony concerto competitions in 2015, a merit award winner at the 2015 National Young Arts Foundation competition, and a winner of the Boston Youth Symphony Orchestras Phillip J. Smith Award in 2016. Reuben was also named the WISE Foundation Emerging Artist of 2016.

# AUDREY CHEN

Soloist, Winner of 2017 James Yannatos Concerto Competition



A native of Redmond, Washington, Audrey Chen has performed solo concerts with multiple orchestras including the Seattle Symphony, Eastside Symphony, and Sammamish Symphony. She originally made her solo debut at age 15 with the National Symphony Orchestra Summer Institute Orchestra at the Kennedy Center in DC as the concerto competition winner in 2012. Aside from receiving 3rd at the 2014 Music Teachers National Association Strings Competition, Audrey has also performed on NPR's radio program *From the Top*, featuring America's best young classical musicians. In addition, she has performed as a guest artist alongside the Silk Road Ensemble, the Parker Quartet, and the Borromeo Quartet in recent years.

Audrey has been a participant of the Tanglewood Music Center, the Taos School of Music, the Sarasota Music Festival, and the Schleswig-Holstein Musik Festival Orchestra Academy in Germany, where she sat as principal cellist under Manfred Honeck. She has also been principal cellist for two seasons of Carnegie Hall's National Youth Orchestra and has performed with them in various concert halls around the world, including the Moscow Conservatory, the Mariinsky Theatre in St. Petersburg, the Walt Disney Hall in Los Angeles, and the Royal Albert Hall at the London BBC Proms. Last January, Audrey was principal cellist of the inaugural Youth Music Culture Guangdong in Guangzhou, China, where she worked closely with Yo-Yo Ma, Michael Stern, and the Silk Road Ensemble on a tour to Taiwan and Hong Kong.

Audrey is a member of the Brattle Street Chamber Players at Harvard as well as the Boston-based Ravos Quartet, an award-winning honors ensemble at the New England Conservatory focused on performing and community outreach. She is currently pursuing her B.A. and M.M. as a senior in the Harvard/NEC dual degree program, where she studies under Laurence Lesser. While she is pursuing her bachelor's degree at Harvard in Molecular and Cellular Biology, she plans to go into music full time post-graduation.



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# Upcoming Concerts of the Harvard-Radcliffe Orchestra

*210th Season, 2017-2018*

All Concerts 8:00 pm  
Sanders Theatre, Harvard University

Saturday, February 24: Junior Parents Weekend Concert

Bernstein - Candide Overture

Beethoven - Piano Concerto No. 5 "Emperor"  
Ft. George Li, piano

Brahms - Symphony No. 4

Friday, April 20: Visitas Concert

Mahler - Symphony No. 2 "Resurrection"  
Ft. the Harvard Choruses