ANDRIS NELSONS LEADS THE BOSTON SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA IN A FOUR-CITY, EIGHT-CONCERT TOUR TO EAST ASIA, INCLUDING THEIR FIRST PERFORMANCES TOGETHER IN SEOUL, TAIPEI, HONG KONG, AND SHANGHAI, FEBRUARY 6–16

- **Music Director Andris Nelsons** Conducts the **Boston Symphony Orchestra** in Performances at the **Seoul Arts Center** (2/6 & 7), **Taipei’s National Concert Hall** (2/9 & 10), the **Hong Kong Cultural Centre** (2/12 & 13), and the **Shanghai Oriental Art Center** (2/15 & 16)

- The Boston Symphony’s 29th International Tour Since the Orchestra’s Founding in 1881; 2020 Tour Represents the Orchestra’s **First Official Visit to Korea** and **Long-Awaited Returns to Taipei** (the first time since 1960) and **Hong Kong** (previous visits in 1989 and 1994)

- First of Two Tour Programs Features Beethoven’s Fourth Piano Concerto with Pianist **Yefim Bronfman**, Dvořák’s **New World Symphony**, and Barber’s **Medea’s Meditation and Dance of Vengeance**; Second Program Includes Mozart’s Piano Concerto No. 24 in C minor with Bronfman, Bartók’s **Concerto for Orchestra**, and Ravel’s **Daphnis et Chloé Suite No. 2**

Click here to view an online press kit with a BSO history, concert listing, photos, and artist bios

**Andris Nelsons** leads the Boston Symphony Orchestra in a four-city, eight-concert tour to East Asia, including their first performances together in Seoul, Taipei, Hong Kong, and Shanghai, February 6–16. The four-city, eight-concert tour will include concerts at the **Seoul Arts Center** (2/6 & 7), **Taipei’s National Concert Hall** (2/9 & 10), the **Hong Kong Cultural Centre** (2/12 & 13), and the **Shanghai Oriental Art Center** (2/15 & 16). Mr. Nelsons is currently in his sixth year as BSO Music Director.
The 2020 tour signifies the orchestra’s first official visit to Korea. Of special note, the orchestra’s last time in Taipei was in April 1960, which also marked the orchestra’s first tour of Asia, Australia, and New Zealand, under the direction of Charles Munch. The BSO previously appeared in Hong Kong twice— in November 30–December 3, 1989 and December 2–4, 1994. The BSO returns to Hong Kong after a 25-year hiatus, previously appearing there in 1994 and 1989, when the orchestra took part in the opening ceremonies for the inaugural season of the Hong Kong Cultural Centre. The BSO’s upcoming performance at the Hong Kong Cultural Centre, which just celebrated its 30th anniversary, is the opening concert of the prestigious annual Hong Kong Arts Festival. The BSO revisits China after its historic 1979 tour (the first by an American orchestra after the two countries established diplomatic relations) and a successful return in 2014. The 2020 tour represents the first time the Boston Symphony Orchestra and Andris Nelsons will perform in China.

The tour represents the Boston Symphony’s 29th international tour since the orchestra’s founding in 1881; it will be Mr. Nelsons’ second visit to Asia in his role as music director of the Boston Symphony Orchestra (Japan 2017) and his fifth international tour with the BSO. (Maestro Nelsons has previously conducted in China, including tours with the Leipzig Gewandhaus Orchestra in June 2019 and the Vienna Philharmonic in fall 2017.)

Joining the BSO and Mr. Nelsons on tour is pianist Yefim Bronfman, a frequent collaborator with the BSO, who will perform Beethoven’s Fourth Piano Concerto and Mozart’s Piano Concerto No. 24 in C minor, K.491 on alternate programs. The BSO is also pleased to bring on tour works that carry significant meaning to the orchestra and Mr. Nelsons, including Bartók’s Concerto for Orchestra which was commissioned by BSO music director Serge Koussevitzky who gave the premiere in December 1944, only a few months before the composer’s death. Additionally, Ravel’s Daphnis et Chloé Suite No. 2 has been a popular work in the BSO’s repertoire and championed by past music directors Pierre Monteux, Koussevitzky, Munch, Seiji Ozawa, and James Levine who led the BSO in a live recorded performance that won the 2010 Grammy Award for Best Orchestral Performance.

The first programs for the BSO’s 2020 Asia tour will feature Samuel Barber’s Medea’s Meditation and Dance of Vengeance, Beethoven’s Fourth Piano Concerto with pianist Yefim Bronfman, and Dvořák’s Symphony No. 9, From the New World, the latter of which received critical and audience acclaim during a performance last summer at Tanglewood. The second tour program includes Mozart’s Piano Concerto No. 24 in C minor, K.491 with Bronfman, Bartók’s Concerto for Orchestra, and Ravel’s Daphnis et Chloé Suite No. 2. Before leaving for Asia, the BSO, Bronfman, and Music Director Nelsons perform the second program at Symphony Hall on January 30 and 31.

QUOTE FROM ANDRIS NELSONS, RAY AND MARIA STATA BSO MUSIC DIRECTOR

“The upcoming tour with the BSO to Seoul, Hong Kong, Taipei, and Shanghai—our first tour together to these amazing cities—reflects such important historic milestones for the orchestra. Both the orchestra and I will be visiting Seoul for the first time and we are so looking forward to performing for the wonderful music-loving audiences there. In Hong Kong, it’s an honor for me to lead the orchestra in the opening concert of the Arts Festival at the Hong Kong Cultural Centre, 30 years after it opened the inaugural season of this prestigious and versatile performance space. We are so greatly anticipating the orchestra’s return to Taipei since its first visit there in 1960 with one of its most famous conductors, Charles Munch.

“We are very excited to bring these special audiences performances of two works very closely associated with the Boston Symphony Orchestra: Bartók’s Concerto for Orchestra, one of the 20th century’s most
significant masterpieces, which was commissioned by another legendary BSO conductor, Serge Koussevitzky, who led the premiere in 1944; and Ravel’s *Daphnis et Chloé*, a magnificent score that shows the orchestra’s amazing affinity for the French repertoire.

“We couldn’t be happier than to have Yefim Bronfman—an extraordinary interpreter of the music of Mozart and Beethoven—with us to perform concertos by these geniuses of the classical music canon. Dvorák’s enduring and beloved *New World Symphony* and Barber’s *Medea’s Meditation and Dance of Vengeance*, a beautiful work perhaps less known by audiences, complete our tour programming.

“We hope our performances of this glorious music will bring great joy and inspiration to the wonderful audiences in Seoul, Hong Kong, Taipei, and Shanghai. We so look forward to sharing the BSO’s many musical gifts with the many music lovers of these wonderful places of the world.”

**THE BSO AND ITS MUSIC DIRECTOR ANDRIS NELSONS**

When Mr. Nelsons took on the title of BSO Music Director on September 27, 2014, at age 35, he became the youngest conductor to hold that title with the orchestra in over 100 years. The fifteenth music director since the Boston Symphony Orchestra’s founding in 1881, Mr. Nelsons is also the first Latvian-born conductor to assume the post. In summer 2015, the Boston Symphony Orchestra and [Andris Nelsons](#) reached an agreement to extend Mr. Nelsons’ original 5-year contract as BSO Music Director (beginning in the 2014-15 season) through the 2021-22 season. Please see the Andris Nelsons bio and Boston Symphony Orchestra history below.

**BOSTON SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA TOURING HISTORY**

The upcoming Asia tour will be Mr. Nelsons’ fifth tour as music director of the Boston Symphony Orchestra. Mr. Nelsons’ most recent tour with the BSO was an eight-city and 12-concert European tour in September 2018, preceded by a tour to Japan in November 2017 and a nine-concert, eight-city European tour in spring 2016. In August/September of 2015, Andris Nelsons led his first BSO tour as the orchestra’s music director, with highly acclaimed performances in London, Salzburg, Grafenegg, Lucerne, Milan, Paris, Cologne, and Berlin.

In addition to its performance series at Boston’s Symphony Hall, Tanglewood (the orchestra’s summer home in Lenox and Stockbridge, Mass.), and New York’s Carnegie Hall, the Boston Symphony Orchestra has regularly toured nationally and internationally since its first U.S. transcontinental trip to perform at the Panama-Pacific Exposition in San Francisco, under the baton of Karl Muck (BSO Music Director 1906-08; 1912-18) in May 1915. As early as 1882, the orchestra traveled throughout New England, and in 1886 the orchestra expanded its touring to major East Coast cities. Having performed more than 5,100 concerts outside of Boston since 1881, the BSO has embarked on 28 international tours and 8 major domestic tours. The BSO has also been featured in more than 60 shorter domestic and Canadian tours, between 1889 and 1983, including appearances in such cities as Buffalo, Chicago, Cincinnati, Cleveland, Columbus, Detroit, Minneapolis, Philadelphia, Pittsburgh, and St. Louis, as well as Toronto, Ottawa, Montreal, and Winnipeg, among others.

Charles Munch (BSO Music Director 1949–62) and special guest conductor Pierre Monteux (BSO Music Director 1919–1924) led the orchestra in its first international tour in May 1952, which included performances in Paris, The Hague, Amsterdam, Brussels, Frankfurt, Berlin, Strasbourg, Metz, Lyon, Bordeaux, and London; the tour was sponsored by the Congress for Cultural Freedom, who chose the BSO to represent the American symphonic tradition in Europe. In 1956, the orchestra returned to Europe,
performing in 19 cities including historic concerts in the Soviet Union, making its mark as cultural ambassadors and becoming the first American orchestra to perform there. Two more continents were introduced to the BSO’s touring repertoire when Mr. Munch led the orchestra on an expansive 56-day tour to parts of Australia, New Zealand, and Asia in 1960.

Seiji Ozawa (BSO Music Director 1973–2002; BSO Music Director Laureate since 2002) played a major role in BSO touring, leading the ensemble on 15 of its 28 major international tours; he led the BSO in eight European tours, including a 9-concert, 5-city tour to London, Paris, Vienna, Munich, and Athens in 1998. Mr. Ozawa’s last overseas trip with the orchestra as its music director was a 5-concert tour to Paris and Cologne in 2000, which included a special performance at the foot of Paris’s Eiffel Tower in celebration of the new millennium. Mr. Ozawa also led the BSO on two major tours in celebration of the BSO’s centennial in 1981, including a U.S. tour in March 1981, which included 14 performances in New Jersey, New York, Chicago, Colorado, Utah, California, Arizona, Texas, South Carolina, and Washington, D.C. A world tour to Europe and Japan in celebration of the centennial took place in October and November 1981 and included performances in Osaka, Nagoya, Tokyo, Paris, Frankfurt, Berlin, Vienna, and London.

In 1979, the BSO and Seiji Ozawa traveled to Shanghai and Beijing, becoming the first western orchestra to visit the People’s Republic of China following the establishment of diplomatic relations. With Ozawa at the helm, the orchestra made frequent trips to Japan, including major tours in 1978, 1981, 1986, 1989, 1994, and 1999. As part of a tour celebrating Seiji Ozawa’s 25th anniversary season as BSO music director, Mr. Ozawa and the orchestra were to return to Beijing in 1999, but a bombing of the Chinese embassy in Yugoslavia led to a cancellation of the trip; performances in Tokyo, Nagoya, and Osaka, which were also part of that tour, went ahead as scheduled. Mr. Ozawa also led the Boston Symphony Orchestra's first tour to South America in 1992, with performances in São Paulo, Buenos Aires, and Caracas.

Recent tours include the BSO's 2014 spring tour to China, where the orchestra returned 35 years after its historic visit in 1979; this tour also included three concerts in Tokyo. James Levine (BSO Music Director 2004-2011) led the BSO on a tour of European music festivals in summer 2007, and BSO Conductor Emeritus Bernard Haitink conducted the orchestra in a 5-country, 10-concert tour through Europe in 2001.

**The BSO at Home at Symphony Hall in Boston, at Tanglewood in Lenox and Stockbridge, MA, in New York at Carnegie Hall, and on the Road on Tour to Europe**

The Boston Symphony Orchestra, founded by Henry Lee Higginson in 1881, performs late September through early May in internationally acclaimed Symphony Hall (301 Massachusetts Avenue, Boston, MA), which opened in 1900 and is widely regarded as one of the top three concert halls in the world. Click here to view the BSO’s 2019-20 season announcement. The orchestra’s summer season takes place at Tanglewood—this country’s preeminent music festival and the summer home of the Boston Symphony Orchestra since 1937—located in the Berkshire Hills between Stockbridge and Lenox, MA; details of the 2018 Tanglewood season—which was dedicated to celebrating the Leonard Bernstein centennial—are available at www.tanglewood.org. Besides its performances in its Boston and Berkshire homes at Symphony Hall and Tanglewood, the BSO will also be featured in its annual series at Carnegie Hall, April 14 and 15, 2020 (full press release), and in a February 2020 four-city tour to Korea, Taiwan, Hong Kong, and China.

On April 5, 2018, the Boston Symphony Orchestra announced that its performance and operations activities have more than a $261 million impact on the economic activity of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, according to findings of a new third-party study by Stephen Sheppard, Professor of Economics at Williams College. This number represents an inflation-adjusted increase of approximately
40% ($74 million) when compared to a similar independent study completed in 2008; it was reported at that time that the BSO’s economic impact in the region was $167 million. In addition to his statewide findings, Professor Sheppard did an analysis of the BSO’s impact on the two main regions in which the orchestra operates, showing an impact of $148 million in Suffolk County (reflecting the BSO’s activities in and around its Boston home at Symphony Hall) and a $103 million in Berkshire County (location of the BSO’s summer home at Tanglewood) and reflecting the BSO and Tanglewood as key economic forces in their respective regions of the state. During the period of construction of the new four-building complex in support of the Tanglewood Music Center, the BSO’s summer music academy, and the new Tanglewood Learning Institute which opened in summer 2019, the festival’s economic impact is expected to rise to $127 million per year, an 110% increase over the $60 million economic impact number from the 2008 study. With an operating budget of just under $100 million in the 2017-18 season, the Boston Symphony Orchestra’s activities—including 327 concerts and 340 tour performances, lectures, educational, and other events on average each year—generate a live audience exceeding 1.2 million annually. Click here to view the BSO’s full economic impact study press release.

The Boston Symphony Orchestra’s extensive website, BSO.org, is one of the world’s largest and most-visited orchestral websites, receiving approximately 10 million visitors annually and generating over $134 million in revenue since its launch in 1996. The Boston Symphony Orchestra is on Facebook at facebook.com/bostonsymphony on Twitter at twitter.com/bostonsymphony, and on Instagram at instagram.com/bostonsymphony. Video content from the BSO is also available at youtube.com/bostonsymphony.

Click here for a brief history of the BSO. To search the BSO’s performance history database, go to archives.bso.org.

Andris Nelsons

The 2019–20 season, Andris Nelsons’ sixth as the Boston Symphony Orchestra’s Ray and Maria Stata Music Director, marks his fifth-year anniversary in that position. Named Musical America’s 2018 Artist of the Year, Mr. Nelsons leads 15 of the BSO’s 26 weeks of concerts this season, ranging from repertoire favorites by Beethoven, Dvořák, Gershwin, Grieg, Mozart, Mahler, Rachmaninoff, Ravel, and Tchaikovsky to world and American premieres of BSO-commissioned works from Eric Nathan, Betsy Jolas, Arturs Maskats, and HK Gruber. The season also brings the continuation of his complete Shostakovich symphony cycle with the orchestra, and collaborations with an impressive array of guest artists, including a concert performance of Tristan und Isolde, Act III—one of three BSO programs he will also conduct at Carnegie Hall—with Jonas Kaufmann and Emily Magee in the title roles. In addition, February 2020 brings a major tour to Asia in which Maestro Nelsons and the BSO give their first concerts together in Seoul, Taipei, Hong Kong, and Shanghai.

In February 2018, Andris Nelsons became Gewandhauskapellmeister of the Gewandhausorchester (GHO) Leipzig, in which capacity he also brings the BSO and GHO together for a unique multi-dimensional alliance including a BSO/GHO Musician Exchange program and an exchange component within each orchestra’s acclaimed academy for advanced music studies. A major highlight of the BSO/GHO Alliance is a focus on complementary programming, through which the BSO celebrates “Leipzig Week in Boston” and the GHO celebrates “Boston Week in Leipzig,” thereby highlighting each other’s musical traditions through uniquely programmed concerts, chamber music performances, archival exhibits, and lecture series. For this season’s “Leipzig Week in Boston,” under Maestro Nelsons’ leadership in November, the entire Gewandhausorchester Leipzig comes to Symphony Hall for joint concerts with the BSO as well as two concerts of its own.
In summer 2015, following his first season as music director, Andris Nelsons’ contract with the BSO was extended through the 2021–22 season. In November 2017, he and the orchestra toured Japan together for the first time. They have so far made three European tours together: immediately following the 2018 Tanglewood season, when they played concerts in London, Hamburg, Berlin, Leipzig, Vienna, Lucerne, Paris, and Amsterdam; in May 2016, a tour that took them to eight cities in Germany, Austria, and Luxembourg; and, after the 2015 Tanglewood season, a tour that took them to major European capitals and the Lucerne, Salzburg, and Grafenegg festivals.

The 15th music director in the history of the Boston Symphony Orchestra, Andris Nelsons made his BSO debut at Carnegie Hall in March 2011, his Tanglewood debut in July 2012, and his BSO subscription series debut in January 2013. His recordings with the BSO, all made live in concert at Symphony Hall, include the complete Brahms symphonies on BSO Classics; Grammy-winning recordings on Deutsche Grammophon of Shostakovich’s symphonies 4, 5, 8, 9, 10, and 11 (The Year 1905) as part of a complete Shostakovich symphony cycle for that label; and a recent two-disc set pairing Shostakovich’s symphonies 6 and 7 (Leningrad). This November, a new release on Naxos features Andris Nelsons and the orchestra in the world premieres of BSO-commissioned works by Timo Andres, Eric Nathan, Sean Shepherd, and George Tsontakis. Under an exclusive contract with Deutsche Grammophon, Andris Nelsons is also recording the complete Bruckner symphonies with the Gewandhausorchester Leipzig and the complete Beethoven symphonies with the Vienna Philharmonic.

During the 2019–20 season, Andris Nelsons continues his ongoing collaborations with the Vienna Philharmonic. Throughout his career, he has also established regular collaborations with the Berlin Philharmonic, Bavarian Radio Symphony Orchestra, and Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra of Amsterdam, and has been a regular guest at the Bayreuth Festival and the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden.

Born in Riga in 1978 into a family of musicians, Andris Nelsons began his career as a trumpeter in the Latvian National Opera Orchestra before studying conducting. He was music director of the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra from 2008 to 2015, principal conductor of the Nordwestdeutsche Philharmonie in Herford, Germany, from 2006 to 2009, and music director of Latvian National Opera from 2003 to 2007.
2020 ASIA TOUR LISTING

Thursday, February 6
Seoul Arts Center
Boston Symphony Orchestra
Andris Nelsons, conductor
Yefim Bronfman, piano
BARTÓK Concerto for Orchestra
MOZART Piano Concerto No. 24 in C minor, K. 491
RAVEL Daphnis et Chloé, Suite No. 2

Friday, February 7
Seoul Arts Center
Boston Symphony Orchestra
Andris Nelsons, conductor
Yefim Bronfman, piano
BARBER Medea’s Meditation and Dance of Vengeance
BEETHOVEN Piano Concerto No. 4
DVOŘÁK Symphony No. 9, From the New World

Sunday, February 9
Taipei, National Concert Hall
Boston Symphony Orchestra
Andris Nelsons, conductor
Yefim Bronfman, piano
BARBER Medea’s Meditation and Dance of Vengeance
BEETHOVEN Piano Concerto No. 4
DVOŘÁK Symphony No. 9, From the New World

Monday, February 10
Taipei, National Concert Hall
Boston Symphony Orchestra
Andris Nelsons, conductor
Yefim Bronfman, piano
BARTÓK Concerto for Orchestra
MOZART Piano Concerto No. 24 in C minor, K. 491
RAVEL Daphnis et Chloé, Suite No. 2

Wednesday, February 12
Hong Kong Cultural Centre
Boston Symphony Orchestra
Andris Nelsons, conductor
Yefim Bronfman, piano
BARTÓK Concerto for Orchestra
MOZART Piano Concerto No. 24 in C minor, K. 491
RAVEL Daphnis et Chloé, Suite No. 2

Thursday, February 13
Hong Kong Cultural Centre
Boston Symphony Orchestra
Andris Nelsons, conductor
Yefim Bronfman, piano
BARBER Medea’s Meditation and Dance of Vengeance
BEETHOVEN Piano Concerto No. 4
DVOŘÁK Symphony No. 9, From the New World

Saturday, February 15
Shanghai Oriental Art Center
Boston Symphony Orchestra
Andris Nelsons, conductor
Yefim Bronfman, piano
BARTÓK Concerto for Orchestra
MOZART Piano Concerto No. 24 in C minor, K. 491
RAVEL Daphnis et Chloé, Suite No. 2

Sunday, February 16
Shanghai Oriental Art Center
Boston Symphony Orchestra
Andris Nelsons, conductor
Yefim Bronfman, piano
BARBER Medea’s Meditation and Dance of Vengeance
BEETHOVEN Piano Concerto No. 4
DVOŘÁK Symphony No. 9, From the New World