Thursday, November 1, 8pm  |  THE GROSSMAN FAMILY CONCERT IN MEMORY OF DR. JEROME H. GROSSMAN
Saturday, November 3, 8pm  |  THE ROBERT AND JANE MAYER CONCERT
Tuesday, November 6, 8pm  |  ANDRIS NELSONS conducting

HAYDN
SYMPHONY NO. 93 IN D
Adagio—Allegro assai
Largo cantabile
Menuetto: Allegro
Finale: Presto ma non troppo

MARK-ANTHONY TURNAGE
“REMEMBERING: IN MEMORIAM EVAN SCOFIELD” (2015)
(AMERICAN PREMIERE; CO-COMMISSIONED BY THE BOSTON SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA,
ANDRIS NELSONS, MUSIC DIRECTOR, THROUGH THE GENEROUS SUPPORT OF THE ARTHUR P.
CONTAS COMMISSIONING FUND)
I. q = 104
II. q = 54
III. q. = 84
IV. Very expressive (q = 54)
{ I N T E R M I S S I O N }

ELGAR
VARIATIONS ON AN ORIGINAL THEME, OPUS 36, “ENIGMA”
Theme (Andante)  8. W.N. (Allegretto)
1. C.A.E. (L’istesso tempo)  9. Nimrod (Adagio)
2. H.D.S.-P. (Allegro)  10. Intermezzo (Dorabella)
6. Ysobel (Andantino)  13. ***Romanza (Moderato)

BANK OF AMERICA AND TAKEDA PHARMACEUTICAL COMPANY LIMITED ARE PROUD TO SPONSOR THE BSO’S 2018-19 SEASON.
These concerts will end about 10.
Concertmaster Malcolm Lowe performs on a Stradivarius violin, known as the “Lafont,” generously donated to the Boston Symphony Orchestra by the O’Block Family.
First associate concertmaster Tamara Smirnova performs on a 1754 J.B. Guadagnini violin, the “ex-Zazofsky,” and James Cooke performs on a 1778 Nicolò Gagliano violin, both generously donated to the orchestra by Michael L. Nieland, M.D., in loving memory of Mischa Nieland, a member of the cello section from 1943 to 1988.
Steinway & Sons Pianos, selected exclusively for Symphony Hall.
The BSO’s Steinway & Sons pianos were purchased through a generous gift from Gabriella and Leo Beranek.
Special thanks to Fairmont Copley Plaza, Delta Air Lines, and Commonwealth Worldwide Executive Transportation.
Broadcasts of the Boston Symphony Orchestra are heard on 99.5 WCRB.
In consideration of the performers and those around you, please turn off all electronic equipment during the performance, including tablets, cellular phones, pagers, watch alarms, messaging devices of any kind, anything that emits an audible signal, and anything that glows. Thank you for your cooperation.
Please note that the use of audio or video recording devices, or taking pictures of the artists—whether photographs or videos—is prohibited during concerts.
Friday, November 2, 8pm
(“Casual Friday” concert, including introductory comments from the stage by BSO trombonist Stephen Lange)

ANDRIS NELSONS conducting

HAYDN
SYMPHONY NO. 93 IN D
Adagio—Allegro assai
Largo cantabile
Menuetto: Allegro
Finale: Presto ma non troppo

ELGAR

VARIATIONS ON AN ORIGINAL THEME, OPUS 36, “ENIGMA”

Theme (Andante) 8. W.N. (Allegretto)
1. C.A.E. (L’istesso tempo) 9. Nimrod (Adagio)
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6. Ysobel (Andantino) 13. ***Romanza (Moderato)

Please note that there is no intermission in this concert, which will end about 9:10.

The Program in Brief...

The works on this week’s BSO concerts were all premiered in London, in the 18th, 21st, and 19th centuries, respectively: the first of Haydn’s “London” symphonies, the English composer Mark-Anthony Turnage’s Remembering: In Memoriam Evan Scofield, and Elgar’s orchestral masterpiece, the Enigma Variations.

Franz Josef Haydn was Austrian, composed much of his prodigious output for the noble Esterházy family on their estate in Hungary, and, as his reputation spread, in the decade 1785-1795 wrote nine symphonies specifically for Paris and twelve for his two acclaimed visits to London. These astonishingly popular final symphonies of Haydn are considered the pinnacle of Classical symphonic style, along with the Mozart symphonies of the 1780s. Haydn’s No. 93, the earliest-numbered of his London symphonies, was premiered in the Hanover Square Concert Room on February 17, 1792, and repeated soon after, the audience on both occasions calling for immediate encores of individual movements.

Mark-Anthony Turnage wrote his Remembering as a memorial to a friend, Evan Scofield, who was the son of the composer’s longtime collaborator, the American jazz guitarist John Scofield. This four-movement, symphony-like work ends with an orchestral elegy based on a small piano work that Turnage had written just after Evan’s death in 2013. The other three movements are colorful and expressively varied. Remembering was commissioned by the London Symphony Orchestra at the request of Simon Rattle, who led its premiere in January 2017. The BSO and the Berlin Philharmonic were co-commissioners of the piece, which receives its American premiere in these concerts.

Closing the program is Edward Elgar’s evergreen orchestral showpiece, the Enigma Variations. Mostly self-taught and having achieved local renown as a composer, Elgar began writing the Variations on an Original Theme for orchestra in 1899, at age forty-two. Upon its completion he sent it to the eminent conductor Hans Richter, who led its sensational success premiere in London, which established Elgar in one fell swoop as England’s most significant living composer. Apart from being a tour de force of compositional skill and orchestral brilliance, the “Enigma” aspect of the piece titillated: Elgar produced fourteen wide-ranging character sketches of friends and acquaintances based on his original theme, beginning with his wife Alice and ending with himself. Although he later revealed to the public most of the personalities sketched in his piece, one (Variation 13) has never been satisfactorily identified. Further, in Elgar’s words, “through and over the whole set another theme ‘goes’ but is not played.” He never revealed that unheard theme—an enigma that remains unraveled, in spite of the sweat of many musicologists’ brows.

Robert Kirzinger

A Message from Andris Nelsons

Very Dear Friends

As we begin our fifth season of making music together, I could not be happier about the sense of family that continues to deepen the connections between the BSO, our devoted audience, and myself. This shared musical journey is so meaningful to all of us, and so important for bringing our entire community together, including not just our devoted subscribers, but so many new concertgoers we’re pleased to welcome to Symphony Hall.

The 2018-19 season has so much to look forward to, for example, Shostakovich’s first and last symphonies as part of our recording project with Deutsche Grammophon, concert performances of Puccini’s beautiful one-act opera Suor Angelica, Bruckner’s unfinished Symphony No. 9 as part of our ongoing exploration of his symphonies, all-Beethoven and all-Strauss programs, Bach’s Christmas Oratorio for our second “Leipzig Week in Boston,” and several commissioned works. These include the world premiere of Sebastian Currier’s Aether for violin and
orchestra, co-commissioned by the BSO and Gewandhausorchester Leipzig as part of our BSO/GHO Alliance, and the American premieres of two other BSO commissions, Mark-Anthony Turnage’s Remembrances and Latvian composer Andris Dzenītis’ Maˇra. Latvian composer Maija Einfelde’s Lux aeterna this month and Dzenītis’ Maˇra in November are being performed to mark the 100th anniversary of Latvian independence.

We are also very happy to have three members of our BSO family conduct subscription programs in 2018-19—Associate Conductor Ken-David Masur in October, Artistic Partner Thomas Adès in March, and Youth and Family Concerts Conductor Thomas Wilkins also in March—and to working with so many wonderful guest artists in what promises to be such an exciting season.

Thank you as always for your great devotion and support, and for being here tonight. We look forward to seeing you at many more concerts this season.

With warm wishes,
Andris Nelsons

Music, the Ultimate Renewable Energy
by Gerald Elias

Former BSO violinist Gerald Elias, who continues to perform with the orchestra at Tanglewood and on tour, reflects on the BSO’s September 2018 tour to London, Hamburg, Berlin, Leipzig, Vienna, Lucerne, Paris, and Amsterdam.

There’s ample occasion for reflection amidst the classic “hurry up and wait” mode of international concert tours. Not onstage, of course, when it’s essential to remain focused on the task at hand, but certainly while in transit from one concert hall to the next. On the recent nineteen-day BSO tour to Europe there was one long train trip of 355 miles, plus no fewer than twenty bus rides for another 547, and six plane flights totaling 8,455 more. Not to mention waiting in airports and train stations for another twenty hours, more or less. All in all, plenty of time for mulling.

On one such excursion a window seat on the upper level of our bus from Hamburg to Berlin provided an ideal observation point to view the rolling farmland of central Germany. What better setting than such bucolic monotony to allow one’s mind to wander mindlessly? It lulled one into the sense that all was right with the world. Yet we know very well that behind the tranquil façade, we live in a turbulent world. A changing climate is wreaking havoc on every continent, and the threat of terrorism—the result of geopolitical instability—is a constant, dark presence. What is our role? I wondered. What is the role of music and musicians in all this turmoil?

Flanking the road, in the agriculturally unworkable strip of land between freeway and field, mile after mile of recently installed solar panel arrays caught my attention. Farther off, battalions of monumental windmills, so imposing they would have given Don Quixote pause, dotted the horizon. All this new technology to create renewable energy gave me a starting point to wonder how many gallons of fuel we’d consumed on all those trains, planes, and buses rumbling under our feet. From there, my imagination took flight, thinking about what potential untapped sources of energy humanity has not yet considered. Over the millennia, we’ve tried tallow, beeswax, olive oil, coal, wood, whales, gas, fossil fuel oil, and nuclear combustion.

And let us not forget the energy produced by human muscles. A case in point: During our stay in Paris, the sunny Sunday morning of September 16 had a festive atmosphere, the day having been declared car-free in the central city as part of that city’s commitment to the 2016 international climate change agreement that bears its name. As a result, the Champs-Élysées, usually congested with bumper-to-bumper traffic, was a pedestrian mall. Instead of engines revving and horns honking, all you heard was the cordial buzz of people talking! The only “motorized” vehicles were human-powered bicycles and scooters.

What progress we’ve made in the quest for efficient energy! Mozart might have penned the last notes of his Requiem under the dim rays of an oil lamp, the big technological breakthrough from candles. Beethoven, tucked away in the cellar of his brother’s house when Vienna was bombarded by Napoleon, might have had a gas lamp at his disposal to enable him to compose the Eroica Symphony. In Brahms’s last years, when he recorded the Hungarian Dance in G minor on a wax cylinder, he might have marveled at an incandescent light bulb hanging over his piano keyboard. 20th- and 21st-century composers have had it easy being able to see what they were writing.

Now, given the urgency of reckoning with climate change, we’ve seen the rapid development of safely renewable sources of energy: solar, wind, and geothermal. But as our fuel-efficient bus hummed along the autobahn, it dawned on me that up to this very day, there has been a powerful source of renewable energy that has been providing light and warmth without interruption for all these centuries, but which has gone almost unrecognized: Music!

Scientifically, we’re told the energy in sound waves is far weaker than other forms of energy. But when you consider the effect of the complex jumble of the sound waves we call music on the human psyche, from the individual level all the way up to the societal, it’s hard to imagine an energy source more powerful, more transformative, and more
sustaining.
That power becomes even more acute when performing in a Stradivari of a concert hall. In a sense, the more perfect the acoustics, the more “fuel efficient” the music, providing the listener literally more bang for the buck. That’s one reason it was such a pleasure to perform in three of the world’s four greatest concert halls on the tour: Berlin’s Philharmonie, Vienna’s Musikverein, and Amsterdam’s Concertgebouw. (The fourth, if you’re wondering, is where you’re sitting right now.) The experience of playing in—and listening to—a great orchestra led by a great conductor performing great music in a great concert hall is transformative, and the energy from that experience, stored in the listeners’ mental batteries, radiates outward in all directions.

“In all directions” refers to time as well as space. When musicians walk onstage for a concert on an international tour, they not only represent our orchestra and the music, they become de facto ambassadors of our city and country. It’s quite a bit different from a business person going to an international conference, because orchestras have such a public face, seen and heard every night by thousands of different people representing all walks of life. While on tour, the musicians’ diplomatic role often extends outward from the concert hall. Musicians have friends in other countries, meet with colleagues in other orchestras, or give master classes at conservatories from city to city.

The energy of musical connections is passed from generation to generation and to every corner of the earth. For all that these international tours have to commend them—the art and architecture, the music, the culture, the history, the food, the gardens, the museums, even the shopping—for me the most important thing is the one-on-one, the connections we make with people and not just places. That—and playing great music—is the most valuable export we can provide in our roles as international representatives.

I’d bet many of my colleagues would agree that, as musicians, if there is anything more gratifying and fulfilling than playing Beethoven in the Concertgebouw it’s seeing former students thrive and succeed. Why? When you consider the years of intensive, often grueling lessons that are part and parcel of helping students achieve their musical aspirations; of being part parent, part counselor, sometimes part therapist to your student; helping them find suitable instruments to play on, summer programs to participate in, scholarships to audition for, colleges to apply to, observing them wend their way through life—it’s almost like seeing your own child grow up. When the orchestra was in Lucerne, I had that very opportunity to witness the fruits of my labors as a teacher, of passing the torch of musical energy to the next generation.

One of my former Utah students, Celeste Carruth, currently living in Geneva, whom I had seen only once since she went off to college about ten years ago, visited me in Lucerne for a splendidly productive lesson of Mozart, Brahms, and Prokofiev. But the other half of Celeste’s story is the reason she’s in Geneva: after earning her Ph.D. in physics at Berkeley, she’s doing antihydrogen research at the CERN European Organization for Nuclear Research particle accelerator. (Don’t ask me to explain what antihydrogen is, but it must be quite a powerful source of energy because NASA estimates it costs $92 trillion to produce a gram of the stuff.) See what practicing your scales can do?

Back to Paris. As I strolled along the sunny Champs-Élysées, soaking up the car-free celebratory atmosphere, I was suddenly confronted by the dark shadow of our troubled times. A block from the Arc de Triomphe, a phalanx of police appeared out of nowhere. They quickly cordoned off a wide perimeter around the George V café, politely but firmly ordering pedestrians to detour around the block. I later learned that there had been a bomb scare or threat—I’m not sure which—that fortunately turned out to be a false alarm.

How will we deal with today’s challenges? The two main works of the Boston Symphony tour were the Mahler Symphony No. 3, which ends in joy and triumph, and the Shostakovich Symphony No. 4, which ends in fear and despair. In a way, that dichotomy is a reflection of Paris on September 16 and, more broadly, the world we currently live in. It’s up to all of us to determine which ending we want to hear. Humanity will be able to draw upon music as a vital source of renewable energy as long as there are musicians to transform black dots written on a piece of paper into the sound waves of music. As the Boston Symphony Orchestra once again demonstrated, music is a source of energy that can light up the world.

GERALD ELIAS, formerly a BSO violinist and associate concertmaster of the Utah Symphony, continues to perform with the BSO at Tanglewood and on tour. Music director since 2004 of the Vivaldi by Candlelight chamber orchestra series in Salt Lake City and author of the six-part Daniel Jacobus mystery series (including two audio books), he recently completed his first nonfiction work, “Symphonies & Scorpions,” which relives via stories and photos the BSO’s history-making 1979 concert tour to China and its return in 2014. An expanded version of a BSO essay from last season, “War & Peace. And Music,” was recently awarded first prize in creative nonfiction by the Utah Division of Arts and Museums.

Joseph Haydn
Symphony No. 93 in D
FRANZ JOSEPH HAYDN was born at Rohrau, Lower Austria, on March 31, 1732, and died in Vienna on May
31, 1809. He wrote this symphony in England in the summer of 1791 and led its first performance on February 17, 1792, in London.

THE SCORE OF HAYDN’S SYMPHONY NO. 93 calls for two flutes, two oboes, two bassoons, two horns, two trumpets, timpani, and strings.

The story of Haydn’s dramatic meeting with the impresario Johann Peter Salomon (who walked into the composer’s home one morning in December 1790 and announced, “I am Salomon from London and have come to fetch you!”) is too well known to require elaboration. What is perhaps overlooked in the story of Haydn’s trip to England and his success there—which not only left him well off financially for the rest of his life, but also made the Viennese realize that they had a great composer in their midst—is that until this late period in his life (he was nearing sixty), the only member of the audience who really counted was the prince who had been paying his salary. London had the most varied and active musical life of the time, with extended concert series to which enthusiastic listeners could subscribe. If they didn’t like what they heard, they could stay away in droves. It was the first time in Haydn’s life that he had to face the test of the box office. The initial concerts were certain to be well attended, since curiosity was high; yet there was concern that anyone who wrote so much must sooner or later write himself out. The first concert showed that English audiences had no cause for alarm. Over and over the reviewers noted that Haydn’s symphonies were both “pleasing” and “scientific,” that this was music at once immediately accessible yet structurally significant (for the naive listener) and original in its application of a fully refined technique (for the musical connoisseur).

Though the symphonies Haydn composed for London were published as numbers 93 to 104, the numbering system bears little relationship to the actual chronology of the works. During Haydn’s first winter in London he introduced the symphonies we know as numbers 96 and 95. Both were received with great enthusiasm. Haydn was determined not to rest on his laurels. He paid careful attention to the taste of the English public, observing what particularly excited them. The season was so successful that Haydn decided to stay another year. During the summer of 1791 he worked on two symphonies—the ones we know as numbers 93 and 94—while paying a long visit to friends in Hertfordshire. And he surely bore in mind the lessons learned during concerts the preceding winter. The result was even greater success that he had enjoyed the year before. When Symphony No. 93 was performed at Hanover Square on February 17, 1792, the Times commented:

Such a combination of excellence was contained in every movement, as inspired all the performers as well as the audience with enthusiastic ardour. Novelty of idea, agreeable caprice, and whim combined with Haydn’s sublime and wonted grandeur, gave additional consequence to the soul and feelings of every individual present. The Critic’s eye brightened with additional lustre—then was the moment that the great Painter might have caught—that, which cannot be thrown on the human frame, but on such rare and great occasions.

The symphony appealed to “the English taste” from the first moment, with a brief but bold slow introduction that implies some hair-raising harmonic adventures before settling onto the jumping-off point for the Allegro. The principal theme is, as H.C. Robbins Landon has remarked, “born popular,” a melody of such directness and familiarity that we seem to have known it always. (In some Protestant churches it has even been converted into a hymn tune.) After the first theme has been presented in the strings, Haydn engineers a modulation to the dominant key and the strings introduce a new, though related, theme. The development is devoted almost entirely to a single rhythmic-melodic figure that does not appear in either the first or second themes but seems to fuse elements of both into a new idea.

The slow movement is an original and effective theme-and-variations that emphasizes a number of soloists within the orchestra. The theme is presented strikingly by a solo string quartet, then repeated by the full string ensemble with the addition of a bassoon. A dramatic contrast comes with a section in the minor key filled with weighty dotted rhythms; this is surely Haydn’s homage to Handel, whose music he was discovering in London (it was still enormously popular in London even thirty years after Handel’s death). Alternations between the main theme and orchestral outbursts of various kinds set us up to expect something poignant and serious as delicate solo statements die away in ethereal silence. Suddenly, though, the bassoons sound a humorous low C, fortissimo—almost the musical equivalent of a Bronx cheer. (This touch of cheerful vulgarity in the elegant context is a much more unexpected “surprise” than the one that gave the nickname to Symphony No. 94.)

Haydn’s Menuetto is a much faster movement than he generally wrote in Austria, and it is full of surprises too. Among these is the strikingly scored passage with a flute playing eighth-notes on a high D while the timpanist, in a rare solo, plays sixteenth-notes on a low D. Oboes and violins speak alternately in the empty octaves in between. This astonishing texture already seems to foreshadow sonorities favored by Gustav Mahler a century later. The Trio is marked by repeated fanfares on the woodwinds and brass; each time, the strings respond in a different—usually unexpected—key.

The finale begins with a lighthearted theme that carries a poignant shift to the minor even within its initial
statement. Haydn’s treatment leads us to the brink of harmonic cliffs, only to pull us back at the last moment. The return to the tonic is especially witty, convincing us first that we are still a long way from home (with a lone cello playing a figure of octave leaps on a note that implies a distant harmony), when suddenly the entire orchestra blares out the octave leap on D, the home key. Another brief silence, as if to take stock, and the restatement begins.

Steven Ledbetter
STEVEN LEDBETTER was program annotator of the Boston Symphony Orchestra from 1979 to 1998.

THE FIRST AMERICAN PERFORMANCE OF HAYDN’S SYMPHONY NO. 93 was given by Carl Bergmann and the Philharmonic Society on February 12, 1859, at Niblo’s Saloon in New York.

THE FIRST BOSTON SYMPHONY PERFORMANCES of HAYDN’S SYMPHONY NO. 93 were given by Wilhelm Gericie on November 16 and 17, 1900, followed by a repeat performance in Cambridge on December 6 that year. After that, the BSO did not play the piece again until January and February of 1953, when Guido Cantelli led it in Boston, Providence, New London, New York, Washington, and Brooklyn, subsequent performances then being given by Erich Leinsdorf, David Zinman, Trevor Pinnock (July 18, 1986), Seiji Ozawa, David Robertson, and Roberto Abbado (March 2011).

MARK-ANTHONY TURNAGE

“REMEMBERING; IN MEMORIAM EVAN SCOFIELD” (2015)

(AMERICAN PREMIERE; CO-COMMISSIONED BY THE BOSTON SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA, ANDRIS NELSONS, MUSIC DIRECTOR, THROUGH THE GENEROUS SUPPORT OF THE ARTHUR P. CONTAS COMMISSIONING FUND)

I. q = 104
II. q = 54
III. q = 84
IV. Very expressive (q = 54)

Mark-Anthony Turnage

“Remembering: In Memoriam Evan Scofield” (2015)

MARK-ANTHONY TURNAGE was born in Grays, Essex, England, on June 10, 1960, and lives in Lewes, Sussex. He composed “Remembering: In Memoriam Evan Scofield” in 2014-15; it was co-commissioned by the London Symphony Orchestra (with support from Susie Thomson), the Stiftung Berliner Philharmoniker, and the Boston Symphony Orchestra (through the generous support of the Arthur P. Contas Commissioning Fund). Simon Rattle led the London Symphony Orchestra in the world premiere on January 19, 2017, at the Barbican, London; he led the German premiere with the Berlin Philharmonic on June 21 that same year. These are the American premiere performances.

THE SCORE OF “REMEMBERING” calls for three flutes (third doubling piccolo), two oboes, English horn, two clarinets, two bass clarinets (first doubling E-flat clarinet), two bassoons, contrabassoon, soprano saxophone, four horns, three trumpets, three trombones, tuba, timpani (with sleigh bells), percussion (six players suggested: crotales, vibraphone, almglocken, tubular bells, Japanese temple bells, bell plates, two large desk bells, cabasa [metal rattle], steel drum, large metal bar, large woodblock, claves, maracas, guiro [rasp], ratchet, tom-toms, log drum, djembe [West African drum], bass drum, pedal bass drum, sizzle cymbal, large suspended cymbal, gong), harp, piano (doubling celesta), violas, cellos, and basses. The piece is about thirty minutes long.

Remembering: In Memoriam Evan Scofield began life as a little elegy for piano that Mark-Anthony Turnage wrote as a direct response to the July 2013 death from sarcoma of his friend Evan Scofield, the twenty-six-year-old son of the composer’s longtime collaborator, the American jazz guitarist John Scofield. Turnage and Scofield first began working together when the latter was a soloist in Turnage’s Blood on the Floor (1996-98), a large-scale hybrid work for fully notated ensemble with improvising jazz quartet. That piece, too, was a memorial, part of Turnage’s complex process of mourning the death of his own younger brother from an overdose. Others of Turnage’s works—Speranza and From the Wreckage, for example—are “about” finding a way forward in the face of loss.

After Evan’s death, his friends and family did something remarkable to acknowledge his adventurous spirit: they honored his dying wish that his ashes be scattered in interesting places throughout the world. The results of Project Scatter Evan are documented on a website, www.scatterevan.com, listing locations including Japan, the Gulf of Alaska, Iceland, Legoland in Denmark, Lake Marian in New Zealand, and the Ganges River in India. Remembering has also begun its journey, beginning in London, traveling to Berlin, and now making its way to Boston, where the BSO has performed a number of Turnage’s works.

Turnage was a Tanglewood Composition Fellow in 1983, where his In My Solitude (note the nod to Duke
Ellington) was performed, the first of many of his pieces to be programmed at Tanglewood, where he has also been a frequent visiting composer. Prior to Remembering, the BSO has given the U.S. premieres of four Turnage orchestral works: his orchestral song cycle Some Days with mezzo-soprano Cynthia Clarey, led by Bernard Haitink in April 1994; his “asteroid for orchestra” Ceres, led by Robert Spano in January 2007; the forty-minute orchestral work Speranza, a BSO co-commission with the London Symphony Orchestra and the Swedish Radio Symphony Orchestra, conducted by Daniel Harding in October 2013, and the trumpet concerto From the Wreckage, featuring soloist Håkan Hardenberger under Marcelo Lehninger’s direction in January 2014. Although Turnage’s biggest successes are in the conservative classical music realm of orchestral music, as well as the even more tradition-bound world of opera, his route to these traditions had its productive digressions. If one knows only his mature style—from about the time of his breakout opera Greek (1988)—it might come as a surprise to learn that Turnage grew up primarily interested in classical music. His intense encounters with jazz, soul, and rock came late in his development as a musician, in his late teens, but the effect of those genres on his composing was seismic and immediate. His deft and provocative Night Dances (1981) was an explicit response to that newfound wellspring: a solo muted trumpet in the third movement is a deliberate nod to Miles Davis, and its orchestral accompaniment taps into the voicings and harmonies of the great jazz orchestrator Gil Evans. Turnage studied at the Royal College of Music under Oliver Knussen before arriving in 1983 at Tanglewood, where he worked with the eminent German composer Hans Werner Henze and the American Gunther Schuller. In spite of the short time Turnage had with them, both Henze and Schuller turned out to be well suited as models for Turnage’s career: Henze was a veteran and estimable opera composer, and Turnage would go on to become one of the more successful English composers of opera of our time. Schuller, a musical polymath, had played French horn in ensembles under Miles Davis, and had pioneered the melding of jazz and modern classical music in the late 1950s with the genre he dubbed “Third Stream.” These associations soon began to bear significant fruit. Henze was in the process of founding a music theater festival, the Munich Biennale, and commissioned Turnage to write an opera for its first season, 1988. This was Greek, based on playwright Steven Berkoff’s modern retelling of Sophocles’ Oedipus set in London’s gritty and urban East End. Fundamentally a dramatic behind the composer, Turnage went on to write several more operas, including two commissioned by London’s Royal Opera: Anna Nicole, which was premiered in 2011, and Coraline, first performed in March 2018. Turnage’s dramatic bent extends to his instrumental music as well. Many of his pieces were triggered by extramusical impulses. His saxophone concerto Your Rockaby was inspired by Samuel Beckett; the two-trumpet concerto Dispelling the Fears by Heather Betts paintings, and Three Screaming Popes and Blood on the Floor by Francis Bacon paintings.

The eighty-minute Blood on the Floor, written over several years in the mid-to-late 1990s, was a watershed in Turnage’s career. For the first time in his music, Turnage incorporated improvising jazz musicians into the fabric of the piece. The definitive version of the piece was a collaboration with guitarist John Scofield, saxophonist/clarinetist Martin Robertson, and drummer Peter Erskine performing with the specialist new music group Ensemble Modern. Collaboration with improvisers had an effect on his music for traditional orchestras and ensembles, in the form of expanded structures and freer use of instruments. Opportunities to develop his orchestral chops came via associations with such ensembles as the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra, the BBC Symphony, the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, and the London Philharmonic. He has composed on commission for most of the major London and U.S. orchestras as well as the Berlin Philharmonic, and his music is among the most often programmed of any living composer.

It was while working with the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra that Turnage first worked closely with the conductor Simon Rattle, who from 1980 to 1998 was that orchestra’s music director. More recently Rattle was one of the principals behind the request for Remembering, which was jointly commissioned by the London Symphony Orchestra, the Berlin Philharmonic, and the BSO; Rattle ultimately conducted the world and German premieres of the piece. Turnage responded to the request for an orchestral work by returning to the small piano elegy he’d written in response to Evan Scofield’s death, using that as the seed for the finale of Remembering. Also wanting to illustrate the positives of Evan’s life, he expanded the work’s expressive range by preceding the elegy with three movements of varied character. “I’m reluctant to call it a symphony, although it does follow that plan,” the composer has said, indicating that he doesn’t feel the traditional connotations of the word quite fit his intentions. (His earlier Speranza suggests an even stronger comparison to the genre.) One unusual feature of the scoring is the lack of violins, which results in the music’s particular dusty, subdued hue. The idea of omitting violins was not the composer’s but rather Simon Rattle’s. The conductor felt that Turnage would need to come up with interesting new colors and orchestral solutions to make up for their absence. Violins are such an integral part of an orchestra’s sound that Turnage at first “found it really hard,” as he related in an interview, but “it was good for me to do it.” The first movement of Remembering starts with punch and energy, with syncopated chords, percussion
punctuation, and fragmentary melodic figures building to swinging, dotted-note lines in the strings with skittering wind accompaniment. A contrasting passage features legato melodies in the strings, violas in counterpoint with the cellos and basses. A hesitant, bluesy tune with a syncopated chordal backdrop reconciles the two contrasting ideas, rhythmic/fragmented vs. melodic/linear. In the second movement, a pedal-point in timpani and double basses defines a pulse for Gil Evans-like, lush, sustained harmonies. This sets up an intricate, ranging melody backed by sharp short-long commentary, and builds to an intense, dark peak before fading out. A lone flute concludes the movement.

Although Turnage didn’t designate it so, the third movement is clearly the scherzo of this non-symphony. High woodwinds characterize the opening; violas enter with a jaunty triple-meter tune. Where a traditional scherzo would feature a Trio, though, this movement’s middle section is a dense wash of sound over a series of repeated chords. The scherzo music returns, but is twice defeated by the dark, dense music. The scherzo idea returns ever so briefly at the end of the movement. The elegy finale, marked “Very expressively,” is the only movement of the four with a character indication at its start. It opens with cellos high in their range, giving the line a keening quality. Woodwinds repeat this sustained, chorale-like passage, and are joined by lovely melodies in solo viola, then cello, which come together in an accompanied duet. High woodwinds repeat the main melody, which is then shouted by the whole orchestra as the movement’s climax. A quiet coda releases the tension but sustains the grief.

Robert Kirzinger
Composer/annotator ROBERT KIRZINGER is the BSO’s Associate Director of Program Publications.

Edward Elgar
Variations on an Original Theme, Opus 36, “Enigma”

EDWARD ELGAR was born at Broadheath, near Worcester, England, on June 2, 1857, and died in Worcester on February 23, 1934. He began the “Enigma” Variations in October 1898 and completed them on February 19, 1899. The score bears the dedication “To my friends pictured within.” The first performance was given in London on June 19, 1899, with Hans Richter conducting.

THE SCORE OF THE “ENIGMA” VARIATIONS calls for two flutes (second doubling piccolo), two oboes, two clarinets, two bassoons and contrabassoon, four horns, three trumpets, three trombones and tuba, timpani, side drum, triangle, bass drum, cymbals, organ (ad lib.), and strings.

Edward Elgar was in almost every respect an outsider: largely self-taught in a day when only strict academic training, preferably including one of the two universities, was considered absolutely essential; Roman Catholic in a country officially Protestant; a musician of deep feeling and commitment in a culture that viewed music as an insignificant entertainment. But most galling was the fact that he was the son of a shopkeeper in a class-ridden society that could never get over looking down its nose at people “in trade.” And yet, ironically, it is just those facts, the very things that made him feel ever the outsider, that also allowed him to develop his musical talents as a composer of marked originality.

He spent his youth in Worcester, a sleepy cathedral town in western England, living over the family music shop. He spent much time absorbing the scores in stock, pursuing his own original course in music rather than the stodgy academic instruction prevalent at the official schools. Except for violin lessons he had no formal training, but already as a child he showed promise of an original talent. At sixteen he left business forever and supported himself as a freelance musician in Worcester, filling various positions as violinist, conductor, and even bassoonist in a wind quintet, as well as teacher of violin. Five years spent as conductor of an “orchestra” made up of staff members of the county mental asylum in nearby Powick were invaluable. He composed original music and rescored the classics for whatever instruments were available each week, gaining in this way a thorough practical knowledge of how instruments sound in performance. He later used to boast that he had never had to reorchestrate a passage after hearing it in performance because it always sounded exactly as he had imagined it would.

In 1889 he married Caroline Alice Roberts, a woman convinced of his genius. Alice was eight years his senior and far his social superior (this was a time when such things were considered to be very important), but she had the backbone to withstand the relatives who objected to the match. She encouraged Elgar to compose the great works that she knew he had in him. During the thirty years of their marriage, Elgar became England’s first composer of international stature in two centuries—and after her death, which occurred fourteen years before his own, he was never able to complete another large work.

Until he was forty Elgar remained a purely local celebrity. Shortly after the premiere of his cantata Caractacus at the Leeds Festival in October 1898, Elgar sat musing at the piano one day, idly playing a pensive melody that had occurred to him. When his wife asked what it was, he said, “Nothing, but something might be made of it.” He named several of their friends. “Powell would have done this, or Nevinson would have looked at it like this.” Alice commented, “Surely you are doing something that has never been done before?” Thus encouraged, Elgar sketched
out an entire set of variations on his original theme. On October 24 he wrote to his friend August Jaeger at Novello’s music publishers to announce that he had sketched a set of orchestral variations. “I’ve labelled ’em with the nicknames of my particular friends—you are Nimrod. That is to say I’ve written the variations each one to represent the mood of the ‘party’ writing the var[iation] him (or her)self and have written what I think they wd. have written—if they were asses enough to compose.”

On November 1, the Elgars’ young friend Dora Penny was invited to lunch and to hear Elgar’s new piece. The composer played the piano, while Dora turned pages for him. He played the theme and started in on the variations. Then he turned over two pages and I saw No. III, R.B.T., the initials of a connexion of mine. This was amusing! Before he had played many bars I began to laugh, which rather annoyed me. You don’t generally laugh when you hear a piece of music for the first time dedicated to someone you know, but I just couldn’t help it, and when it was over we both roared with laughter! “But you’ve made it like him! How on earth have you done it?”

Dora Penny (herself a “variation” named “Dorabella”) was probably the first person outside the Elgar household to learn the secret of the variations.

After completing the orchestration, between February 5 and 19, 1899, Elgar sent the score off to Hans Richter, and waited a nervous month before learning that he would program the work. At the premiere, on June 19, a few critics were miffed at not being let in on the identity of the friends whose initials appeared at the head of each movement. But the work itself achieved a sensational success.

All but one of the friends have long since been identified, so that mystery is solved. But another mystery about the Enigma Variations will probably be argued over forever. It has to do with the title and a statement Elgar made in the program note at the work’s premiere. The manuscript of the score simply bears the title “Variations for orchestra composed by Edward Elgar, Op. 36.” Over the theme, though, someone has written in pencil the word “Enigma.” The handwriting appears not to be Elgar’s. Still, he did not object to the word, and in fact his program note implied the presence of a mystery, a “dark saying” that “must be left unguessed.” He added, “through and over the whole set another larger theme ‘goes’ but is not played.” The mysteries of the “dark saying” and the “larger theme” have exercised the ingenuity of many people since 1899. Whenever a new solution is proposed (Mozart’s Prague Symphony and Beethoven’s Pathétique piano sonata have figured among the possible answers), the arguments inevitably start all over again. In the end, however, it is the quality of the music, and our enjoyment of it, that determine how frequently we wish to hear the piece.

Elgar himself revealed the identity of the “Variations” in a set of notes written in 1913, later published with photographs of each of the individuals. His own remarks will be quoted in the discussion below.

The theme is remarkable in itself. It goes by stops and starts, broken up into little fragments which, at the outset, hardly seem “thematic.” It has been pointed out that the first four notes provide a perfect setting, in rhythm and pitch, of the name “Edward Elgar,” who thus writes his signature, so to speak, on the whole work.

It begins in G minor, has four rising bars in the major, then is restated in the minor with an expressive new counterpoint. It leads directly into:

I. (C.A.E.) Caroline Alice Elgar, the composer’s wife. “The variation is really a prolongation of the theme with what I wished to be romantic and delicate additions; those who know C.A.E. will understand this reference to one whose life was a romantic and delicate inspiration.” Oboe and bassoon have a little triplet figure in the opening measures that had a private resonance for the composer and his wife: it was the signal he used to whistle when he came home (it reappears in the last variation).

II. (H.D.S.-P.) Hew David Steuart-Powell played piano in a trio with Elgar (violin) and Basil Nevinson (Variation XII). “His characteristic diatonic run over the keys before beginning to play is here humorously travestied in the semiquaver passages; these should suggest a Toccata, but chromatic beyond H.D.S.-P’s liking.” The chromatic figures race along in the strings and woodwinds; eventually the theme appears in longer note values softly in the cellos and basses.

III. (R.B.T.) Richard Baxter Townshend was an author of a series of Tenderfoot books (A Tenderfoot in Colorado and A Tenderfoot in New Mexico), as well as a classical scholar and a lovable eccentric. Elgar says that the variation refers to his performance as an old man in some amateur theatricals in which his voice occasionally cracked to “soprano” timbre (the oboe with the main part of the theme, later joined by the flute).

IV. (W.M.B.) William Meath Baker, a country squire with a blustery way about him. He tended to give “orders of the day” to his guests, especially with regard to arrangements for carriages. Elgar depicts his forcible delivery. The middle section of this very fast movement contains “some suggestions of the teasing attitude of the guests.”

V. (R.P.A.) Richard Penrose Arnold, a son of Matthew Arnold, a self-taught pianist. “His serious conversation was continually broken up by whimsical and witty remarks. The theme is given by the basses with solemnity and in the ensuing major portion there is much lighthearted badinage among the wind instruments.”
VI. (Ysocbel) Isabel Fitton was an amateur viola player, whom Elgar draws into the music by writing a leading part for her instrument built on a familiar exercise for crossing the strings, “a difficulty for beginners; on this is built a pensive, and for a moment, romantic movement.”

VII. (Troyte) One of Elgar’s closest friends, Arthur Troyte Griffith, an architect in Malvern. Elgar said that the variation represented “some maladroit essays to play the pianoforte; later the strong rhythm suggests the attempts of the instructor (E.E.) to make something like order out of chaos, and the final despairing ‘slam’ records that the effort proved to be in vain.”

VIII. (W.N.) Winifred Norbury is the bearer of the initials, but Elgar commented that the variation was “really suggested by an eighteenth-century house. The gracious personalities of the ladies are sedately shown.” But because W.N. was also involved with music—she was a competent pianist—Elgar makes specific reference to her characteristic laugh.

IX. (Nimrod) August Jaeger (“Jaeger” is German for “hunter,” and Nimrod is the “mighty hunter” of the Old Testament) worked for Elgar’s publisher, Novello, and often provided enthusiasm and moral support for the composer, who rarely in those years found encouragement from anyone but Alice. The variation is a record of a “long summer evening talk, when my friend discoursed eloquently on the slow movements of Beethoven.” According to Mrs. Powell, Jaeger also discoursed eloquently on the hardships Beethoven endured in his life, and he encouraged Elgar not to give up. In any case, the theme is arranged so as to suggest a hint of the slow movement of Beethoven’s Pathétique Sonata, Opus 13. This Adagio is the best-known single excerpt from the Variations, noble, poignant, and deeply felt. In England it has become a traditional piece to commemorate the dead. Elgar, writing after Jaeger’s own death, said, “Jaeger was for many years my dear friend, the valued adviser and the stern critic of many musicians besides the writer; his place has been occupied but never filled.”

X. (Dorabella) Dora Penny, later Mrs. Richard Powell, who first heard the variations even before Elgar had orchestrated them. The “intermezzo” that comprises this movement is a lighthearted contrast to the seriousness of “Nimrod.” It is also the farthest away from the theme of any of the variations in the set.

XI. (G.R.S.) Dr. George R. Sinclair, organist of Hereford Cathedral, though the variation has more to do with his bulldog Dan, who was a well-known character. As Elgar explained, the opening had to do with Dan “falling down the steep bank into the river Wye; his paddling upstream to find a landing place; and his rejoicing bark on landing. G.R.S. said, ‘Set that to music.’ I did; here it is.”

XII. (B.G.N.) Basil G. Nevinson was a fine amateur cellist who performed with Elgar and Steuart-Powell (Var. II) in a trio. The variation features a melody, marked “molto espressivo,” for cello solo in “tribute to a very dear friend whose scientific and artistic attainments, and the wholehearted way they were put at the disposal of his friends, particularly endeared him to the writer.”

XIII. (****) Another mystery: It has often been asserted that the asterisks represent Lady Mary Lygon, who was supposedly on a sea voyage to Australia at the time of composition (she wasn’t), hence the clarinet quoting Mendelssohn’s Calm Sea and Prosperous Voyage. Other candidates have been put forward, some of which would seem to have a more intimate relationship with the composer. The variation is highly atmospheric, as the “drums suggest the distant throb of the engines of a liner” under the Mendelssohn quotation.

XIV. (E.D.U.) Elgar himself. When Dora Penny first heard this movement in Elgar’s study, she couldn’t figure out whose initials stood at the head of the page. Only after he dropped a broad hint did she realize that it was Alice’s nickname for Elgar—“Edu”—written as if it were initials. Elgar wrote that the movement was “written at a time when friends were dubious and generally discouraging as to the composer’s musical future.” During the course of the movement he refers especially to C.A.E. and to Nimrod, “two great influences on the life and art of the composer.” As Elgar correctly noted, “The whole of the work is summed up in the triumphant, broad presentation of the theme in the major.”

The Enigma Variations remains, justifiably, Elgar’s best-known work. In its invention, its range of expression, its play of light and dark between movements and keys, the craftsmanship of its links between movements, its exploiting of the various possibilities of the orchestra, its melodic fertility—in all of these things, the work is quite simply a masterpiece. If we remember that it appeared unannounced in a country that had not produced a serious composer of major stature since Purcell (who died in 1691), we can appreciate the tone of Arthur Johnstone’s remarks in the Manchester Guardian after a performance of the Variations in 1900: “The audience seemed rather astonished that a work by a British composer should have other than a petrifying effect upon them.”

Steven Ledbetter

THE FIRST AMERICAN PERFORMANCE OF THE “ENIGMA” VARIATIONS was given by the Chicago Symphony Orchestra in that city’s Auditorium Theatre on January 3, 1902, with Theodore Thomas conducting.

THE FIRST BOSTON SYMPHONY PERFORMANCES OF THE “ENIGMA” VARIATIONS were given by Wilhelm Gerike on December 24 and 26, 1903. Since then, the orchestra has played it under the direction of
Max Fiedler, Serge Koussevitzky, Sir Henry J. Wood, Sir Adrian Boult, Charles Munch, Jean Morel, Pierre Monteux, Eugene Ormandy, Erich Leinsdorf, Erich Kunzel, Colin Davis, André Previn, Seiji Ozawa, Charles Dutoit, Grant Llewellyn, Simon Rattle, Yuri Temirkanov, Jeffrey Tate, Andrew Davis, Sir Neville Marriner, Mark Elder, Donald Runnicles, Leonard Slatkin (August 2014), and Bramwell Tovey (January 2017).

To Read and Hear More...

A short monograph on Mark-Anthony Turnage by Andrew Clement gives an overview of the composer’s formative and early mature years; however, being now more than ten years out of date, it falls short of being comprehensive (Faber & Faber paperback). Also useful but similarly outdated (from 2001) is the article by Jonathan Cross for the New Grove II. Turnage’s publisher Boosey & Hawkes is an excellent source for information on pieces written after 2003, and also includes up-to-date biographical details and multimedia elements (boosey.com), such as a short promotional video for his opera Anna Nicole. Turnage’s music before 2003 was published by Schott.

A recording of Turnage’s Remembering: In Memoriam Evan Scofield from the world premiere performances was issued as a downloadable/streaming release by the London Symphony Orchestra led by Sir Simon Rattle (LSO Live). The album “Scorched,” the composer’s project with guitarist John Scoфф (Evan’s father and a longtime Turnage collaborator), features as Scoffield’s improvising partners drummer Peter Erskine and bassist John Patitucci, with the Frankfurt Radio Symphony Orchestra and Bigband led by Hugh Wolff (Deutsche Grammophon). The London Symphony Orchestra under Daniel Harding recorded the orchestral work Speranza and the trumpet concerto From the Wreckage, the latter with soloist Håkan Hardenberger; these were released on the orchestra’s own label, LSO Live. (The BSO gave the American premieres of both works.) Hardenberger also recorded From the Wreckage with the Gothenburg Symphony Orchestra and conductor Peter Eötvös soon after its 2005 premiere (Deutsche Grammophon, with trumpet concertos by Eötvös and Gruber). A good place to start for Turnage’s earlier music is the two-CD set in the “British Music Collection” series, featuring the complete Blood on the Floor; the two-trumpet concerto Dispelling the Fears; the saxophone concerto Your Rockaby, and other works, with various ensembles (Decca). The London Philharmonic—which with which Turnage was composer-in-residence—has released three discs’ worth of varied Turnage works on its own label (Lpo). The composer’s opera The Silver Tassie was released on CD by English National Opera on its ENO Live label. The earlier opera Greek, long out of the catalog on CD (the now defunct Argo label), can now be found as a download on iTunes and on a DVD of the television production (Arthaus). A DVD of Turnage’s Royal Opera-commissioned 2011 Anna Nicole, with Eva-Maria Westbroek in the title role and led by Antonio Pappano, was released in August 2011 (Opus Arte).

Robert Kirzinger


Complete modern-orchestra sets of the Haydn symphonies at a reasonable price include Adám Fischer’s with the Austro-Hungarian Haydn Orchestra (Brilliant Classics) and Dennis Russell Davies’s with the Stuttgart Chamber Orchestra (Sony). Period-instrument cycles were recorded by Christopher Hogwood with the Academy of Ancient Music (Oiseau-Lyre) and Roy Goodman with the Hanover Band (Helios). Important older sets of the twelve London symphonies (No. 93 among them) include Leonard Bernstein’s with the New York Philharmonic (Sony), Sir Colin Davis’s with the Concertgebouw Orchestra of Amsterdam (Philips; a Davis/London Symphony recording of No. 93 was issued more recently along with Nos. 92 and 97-99 in a two-disc LSO Live set), and Eugen Jochum’s with the London Philharmonic (Deutsche Grammophon). A more recent set of Haydn’s twelve London symphonies (with No. 68 thrown in for good measure) has Nikolaus Harnoncourt conducting the Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra (Warner Classics). George Szell’s recording of No. 93 with the Cleveland Orchestra is in a four-disc set of Haydn’s symphonies 88, 92-99, and 104 (Sony).

Among the most important studies of Elgar and his music is Michael Kennedy’s Portrait of Elgar (Oxford). Kennedy is also the author of The life of Elgar in the series “Musical lives” (Cambridge University paperback) and of the compact BBC Music Guide on Elgar Orchestral Music (University of Washington paperback). Another big biography is Jerrold Northrop Moore’s Edward Elgar: A Creative Life (Oxford). Moore also edited
Edward Elgar: Letters of a Lifetime (Oxford) and produced a discography of Elgar’s work as a conductor, Elgar on Record: The Composer and the Gramophone (out of print). Edward Elgar, Modernist by J.P.E. Harper Scott, published in 2006, is described as “the first full-length analytical study of Edward Elgar’s music” (“Music in the 20th Century,” volume 20, Cambridge University Press; expensive). From 2007, and much more affordable, is Edward Elgar and his World, a compilation of essays originating from the Bard Music Festival and edited by Byron Adams (Princeton University paperback). Also from 2007 is Elgar: An Anniversary Portrait, a valuable collection of essays assembled and introduced by Nicholas Kenyon (Continuum). Ian Parrott’s Elgar is part of the “Master Musicians” series (Dent). Much older books include recollections by the violinist W.R. Reed (who assisted the composer with the solo part in the Violin Concerto) in Elgar As I Knew Him (Oxford) and by two of the composer’s friends: Edward Elgar: Memories of a Variation by Mrs. Richard Powell, the “Dorabella” of Elgar’s Enigma Variations ( Methuen), and Edward Elgar: The Record of a Friendship by Rosa Burley, headmistress of the school where he taught for a while (Barrie & Jenkins). Donald Francis Tovey’s program note on the Enigma Variations is among his Essays in Musical Analysis (Oxford).

Elgar himself recorded the Enigma Variations twice: in 1921 with the Royal Albert Hall Orchestra ( available on single-disc reissues from EMI, or from Music & Arts in the four-disc box “ Elgar Conducts Elgar: The Complete Recordings 1914-1925”), and in 1926 with the London Symphony Orchestra ( available on EMI paired with The Planets led by its composer, Gustav Holst, or in EMI’s multi-disc “Composers in Person” box). More modern recordings of varying vintage include Sir Colin Davis’s with the London Symphony Orchestra (LSO Live), Mark Elder’s with the Hallé Orchestra (Hallé), Bernard Haitink’s live with the London Philharmonic (Lpo), Simon Rattle’s with the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra (Warner Classics), Adrian Boult’s with the London Philharmonic (EMI), and Leonard Bernstein’s with the BBC Symphony Orchestra (Deutsche Grammophon). An historic 1935 live performance with Arturo Toscanini conducting the BBC Symphony Orchestra will be of interest to collectors (Warner Classics).

Marc Mandel

Andris Nelsons

The 2018-19 season is Andris Nelsons’ fifth as the Boston Symphony Orchestra’s Ray and Maria Stata Music Director. Named Musical America’s 2018 Artist of the Year, Mr. Nelsons will lead fourteen of the BSO’s twenty-six subscription programs in 2018-19, ranging from orchestral works by Haydn, Beethoven, Tchaikovsky, Stravinsky, and Copland to concerto collaborations with acclaimed soloists, as well as world and American premieres of pieces newly commissioned by the BSO from Thomas Ades, Sebastian Currier, Andris Dzenitis, and Mark-Anthony Turnage: the continuation of his complete Shostakovich symphony cycle with the orchestra, and concert performances of Puccini’s one-act opera Suor Angelica. 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. In February 2018, he became Gewandhauskapellmeister of the Gewandhausorchester Leipzig, in which capacity he brings both orchestras together for a unique multidimensional alliance. Immediately following the 2018 Tanglewood season, Maestro Nelsons and the BSO made their third European tour together, playing concerts in London, Hamburg, Berlin, Leipzig, Vienna, Lucerne, Paris, and Amsterdam. Their first European tour, following the 2015 Tanglewood season, took them to major European capitals and the Lucerne, Salzburg, and Grafenegg festivals; the second, in May 2016, took them to eight cities in Germany, Austria, and Luxembourg.

The fifteenth 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 5, 8, 9, and 10, the initial releases in a complete Shostakovich symphony cycle for that label; and a new two-disc set pairing Shostakovich’s symphonies 4 and 11, The Year 1905. 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.

The 2018-19 season is Maestro Nelsons’ final season as artist-in-residence at the Konzerthaus Dortmund and marks his first season as artist-in-residence at Hamburg’s Elbphilharmonie. In addition, he continues his regular collaborations with the Vienna Philharmonic and Berlin Philharmonic. Throughout his career, he has also established regular collaborations with Amsterdam’s Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra, the Bavarian Radio Symphony Orchestra, and the Philharmonia Orchestra, 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.