



Sibelius' First Symphony

October 31–November 1, 2025 | 7:30 p.m.

Holland Performing Arts Center

José Luis Gomez, conductor | Paul Huang, violin

ANTONIO ESTÉVEZ

Mediodía en el Llano

PYOTR TCHAIKOVSKY

Concerto in D Major for Violin & Orchestra, Op. 35,
TH 59

I. Allegro moderato

II. Canzonetta: Andante

III. Finale: Allegro vivacissimo

Paul Huang, violin

INTERMISSION

JEAN SIBELIUS

Symphony No. 1 in E minor, Op. 39

I. Andante, ma non troppo – Allegro energico

II. Andante, ma non troppo lento

III. Scherzo: Allegro

IV. Finale (quasi una fantasia)

This printed program is a condensed version.

For more info about the orchestra, guest artists, and the full
program notes, download the
Omaha Symphony app or scan this QR code with your mobile
device.

*program subject to change



Featured Artists



The Venezuelan-born, Spanish conductor **José Luis Gomez** was catapulted to international attention when he won First Prize at the International Sir Georg Solti Conductors' Competition in 2010 in Frankfurt. Gomez's electrifying presence, talent, creativity, and energy quickly earned him admiration among the Frankfurt Radio Symphony Orchestra's musicians and their music director Paavo Jarvi, immediately launching his conducting career.

Music Director of the Tucson Symphony Orchestra since 2016, Gomez has consistently crafted compelling programs, many of which are juxtaposed with lesser-known composers from South America whom he champions, expanding and enriching the orchestra's repertoire. He's worked diligently to provide innovative and engaging outreach activities and education projects, as well as new commissions from composers such as Arturo Marquez, Michael Torke, Jonathan Leschnoff, Gabriela Smith, Peter Boyer, and Jennifer Higdon.

Recent and upcoming highlights include appearances with the Flanders Symphony Orchestra, the National Symphony Orchestra (Washington, D.C.), conducting a new piece by Paquito D'Rivera performed by Yo-Yo Ma, which resulted in an immediate re-invitation, Rhode Island Philharmonic, Indianapolis Symphony, Houston Symphony, Phoenix Symphony, Rochester Philharmonic, Omaha Symphony, Charleston Symphony, Nashville Symphony, Symphony San Jose, Las Vegas Philharmonic, Puerto Rico Symphony, New Zealand Symphony, Edmonton Symphony, Vancouver Symphony, Orquesta Sinfónica de Minería, Orquestra Sinfônica Brasileira, Orquesta Filarmónica de Bogotá, and Orquesta Sinfónica Nacional del Perú.



Recipient of a 2015 Avery Fisher Career Grant and a 2017 Lincoln Center Award for Emerging Artists, violinist **Paul Huang**'s recent appearances include the Rotterdam Philharmonic with Lahav Shani, BBC Symphony with Marie Jacquot, Dallas and NHK Symphonies with Fabio Luisi, Detroit Symphony with Leonard Slatkin, Baltimore Symphony and Seoul Philharmonic with Markus Stenz, San Francisco Symphony with Mei-Ann Chen, and Houston Symphony with Andrés Orozco-Estrada.

In the 2025–26 season, he makes his Finnish debut with Tampere Philharmonia, Phion Orchestra in the Netherlands, Naples and Rochester Philharmonics, records with London Philharmonic, and returns to Rotterdam Philharmonic, Vancouver, Pacific, North Carolina, Colorado Symphonies, and National Symphony Orchestra of Taiwan.

Huang recently stepped in for Anne-Sophie Mutter at the Bravo! Vail Music Festival, playing Mozart's Violin Concerto No. 4 with Chamber Orchestra Vienna-Berlin, and made recital debuts at the Lucerne and Aspen Music Festivals, all to critical acclaim. In fall 2021, he also became the first classical violinist to perform his own arrangement of the US national anthem for the opening game of the NFL at the Bank of America Stadium to an audience of 75,000. He plays on the legendary 1742 ex-Wieniawski Guarneri del Gesù on loan through the Stradivari Society of Chicago.

Mediodía en el Llano

Antonio Estévez

Born: January 3, 1916 – Calabozo, Venezuela

Died: November 26, 1988 – Caracas, Venezuela

Piece Length: Approximately 8 minutes.

Antonio Estévez was a Venezuelan clarinetist, oboist, conductor, and composer. He began his musical studies in Caracas and Calabozo and later continued his studies in composition and conducting at Columbia University, the Tanglewood Music Festival, and The Juilliard School where his teachers included Serge Koussevitzky, Leonard Bernstein, and Aaron Copland. In 1947, he went to Paris where he explored the music of the post-war European avant-garde. While there, he became friends with the great musical iconoclast Pierre Boulez and started exploring electroacoustic music. He would later work with electronic music pioneer Pierre Schaeffer.

While his later music displayed the influence of Boulez and beyond, his early works – including tonight's *Mediodía en la Llano* (*Noon in the Plains*) – showcase masterful orchestration, using colors and melodies inspired by the various musical traditions of Venezuela. As conductor José Luis Gomez has stated, it is not amiss to call this Venezuela's *Prelude to the Afternoon of a Faun*. Written in 1942, while Estévez was studying composition in Caracas, the work combines striking yet still harmonies, traditional instruments, and thoughtful transitional decisions to beautifully reflect the lush peacefulness of the Venezuelan plains at midday.

Violin Concerto in D Major, Op. 35, TH 59

Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky

Born: May 7, 1840 – Votkinsk, Russia

Died: November 6, 1893 – Saint Petersburg, Russia

Piece Length: Approximately 33 minutes.

While on a trip to Clarens, Switzerland in 1878 to recover from depression caused by his ill-fated, and short, marriage to Antonia Milliukova, Tchaikovsky was visited by one of his pupils, violinist Yosif Kotek. During spells of bad weather, they would play music together, including Édouard Lalo's *Symphony espagnole*. Lalo's work for solo violin and orchestra dazzled Tchaikovsky. He wrote to his patroness Nadezhda von Meck "It has a lot of freshness, lightness, of piquant rhythms, of beautiful and excellently harmonized melodies.... He [Lalo]... does not strive after profundity, but he carefully avoids routine, seeks out new forms, and thinks more about musical beauty than about observing established traditions, like the Germans."

Program Notes

Soon after, Tchaikovsky set aside the composition he was working on—his Piano Sonata in G Major—to dive into a violin concerto of his own. While the reception at its premiere was mixed, the Tchaikovsky Violin Concerto has become a deserving repertoire favorite, renowned both for its unabashed melodies and the superlative technique required of the soloist to make every blisteringly fast note shine.

Symphony No. 1 in E minor, Op. 39

Jean Sibelius

Born: December 8, 1865 – Hämeenlinna, Finland

Died: September 20, 1957 – Järvenpää, Finland

Piece Length: Approximately 40 minutes.

Begun in 1898 and finished the following year, Sibelius' Symphony No. 1 was premiered by the Helsinki Orchestral Society conducted by the composer on April 26, 1899. After the premiere, Sibelius revised the work, and the new version was premiered in Berlin by the Helsinki Philharmonic, conducted by Robert Kajanus on July 1, 1900.

While Sibelius' Symphony No. 1 is his most traditionally structured work in the genre, it still foreshadows many of the original composition ideas found in his later symphonies. Sibelius' affinity for nature, as well as his ready acceptance of wildness and unpredictability, remain tucked within parameters established by composers like Beethoven and Mahler... both of whom shared Sibelius' desire to test the boundaries of the form in their own first goes at the genre.