

Got summer plans, Cleveland Orchestra? Blossom + Summers@Severance + a few extra notables

by Jarrett Hoffman



Absence makes the heart grow fonder, and Clevelanders haven't heard their orchestra live since mid-May. In the interim, The Cleveland Orchestra has been on the road, finishing off their centennial-capping Prometheus Project with performances at Vienna's Musikverein and Tokyo's Suntory Hall. Oh, how we miss them.

We'll get reacquainted with TCO soon, thanks to their schedule at this year's 50th anniversary season of Blossom Music Festival, plus their fourth Summers@Severance series.

The Cleveland Orchestra marks the unofficial beginning of summer when they open their Blossom season on Saturday, July 7 at 8:00 pm. At the helm will be music director Franz Welser-Möst, leading the Orchestra in Mussorgsky's *Pictures at an Exhibition* in its orchestration by Ravel, Reznicek's Overture to *Donna Diana*, and Beethoven's Triple Concerto, featuring TCO's own soloists — pianist Joela Jones, violinist Stephen Rose, and cellist Mark Kosower. At this concert and two others, check out the Image Magnification system, which displays live video of the performers on LED screens in the Blossom Pavilion. Fingers crossed for the weather — a firework show is planned for afterwards.



Vocalist Roger Daltrey and conductor Keith Levenson will join The Cleveland Orchestra and members of The Who to perform the complete rock opera *Tommy* on Sunday, July 8 at 8:00 pm. Released in 1969, that fourth album from The Who has sold over 20 million copies, and spawned the hits "Pinball Wizard" and "I'm Free."

A note to deal-seekers: this concert is not part of any subscriptions, packages, or discounted-ticket programs.

The first food-themed event of The Cleveland Orchestra's summer takes place on Friday, July 13 at 6:00 pm on the Pavilion Stage to celebrate the Music Center's 50th anniversary. "A Symphony of Food and Fine Wine" begins with a cocktail hour at Blossom's Kulas Plaza, followed by a performance of a Mozart flute quartet featuring TCO members flutist Joshua Smith, violinist Amy Lee Rosenwein, cellist Tanya Ell Woolfrey, and violist Joanna Patterson Zakany.

Next is a multi-course, farm-to-table dinner paired with wine from Bodegas Fusion (Ribera del Duero, Spain), Cast Wines (Sonoma County, California), CLE Urban Winery (Cleveland), and Treasure Hunter (California and Washington).



Once bellies are stuffed, auctioneer Bob Hale will lead the in-person portion of the wine auction — which will have already begun [online](#) on July 6 at 9:00 am, closing on the 13th at 9:15 pm. (Feel free to bid online even if you can't attend the event in person.) The auction include bottles appraised by Brian Fife (above) and wine from prized collections. An important note: the event is not part of the subscription season. Get tickets and check out the featured chefs and farms [here](#).

Next up is a screening of *Singin' In the Rain*, with The Cleveland Orchestra and conductor Richard Kaufman performing the score live on Saturday, July 14 at 8:30 pm. Even at your grumpiest, it's hard to resist that iconic image of Gene Kelly lamppost-swinging.



Conductor John Storgårds leads the Orchestra in a program of Schumann's "Spring" Symphony, George Antheil's *Over the Plains*, and Britten's *Violin Concerto* — featuring Vilde Frang as soloist — on Sunday, July 15 at 7:00 pm.

Earlier that night is an event for all those concertgoers who know that they make the best picnics in town — and want to prove it. As early as 4:30 pm on Sunday the 15th, lay out your best spread on the lawn to compete in the second free Blossom Picnic Contest. And be prepared to share a plate with the judges, a panel of local celebrities and TCO members. Between 5:30 and

6:30, they'll evaluate your picnicking skills based on presentation, taste, and creativity. Two winners will be chosen — best presentation and best food — and announced at intermission on TCO's Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram accounts. Just by entering the contest, you get a free lawn ticket to attend that evening's concert. The winners earn a pair of tickets to a TCO performance at Severance Hall during the 2018-19 season. To register, fill out the form [here](#).



The partnership between The Cleveland Orchestra and the Kent Blossom Music Festival is long and storied. That relationship which will be on display on Saturday, July 21



during a three-part evening. At 7:00 pm, TCO assistant conductor Vinay Parameswaran will make his Blossom Music Festival debut when he leads the Kent/Blossom Chamber Orchestra in Prokofiev's "Classical" Symphony and de Falla's Suite No. 1 from *The Three-Cornered Hat*. At 8:00 pm, TCO will join that Chamber Orchestra for a side-by-side performance of Berlioz's Overture to *Benvenuto Cellini* and Vaughan Williams' *Serenade to Music*,

featuring the Blossom Festival Chorus. At 9:00, TCO will close out the evening with a performance of Mahler's "Titan" Symphony.

Everybody talks about the prevalence of gray hair inside concert halls — except for TCO’s exceptionally young audiences — but a 91-year-old conducting? That’s really something. Herbert Blomstedt will turn that ripe age by the time this first Summers@Severance concert rolls around, leading the Orchestra in Brahms’ Fourth Symphony on July 27 at 7:00 pm. Check out the pre-concert happy hour beginning at 5:30, and stay for the 8:00 after-party on Severance Hall’s outdoor terrace.



Blomstedt will stick around Northeast Ohio for another day of music-making. The program on Saturday, July 28 at 8:00 pm at Blossom holds over Brahms’ 4th Symphony from the previous night and adds Mozart’s 41st (“Jupiter”).



On Sunday, July 29 at 7:00 pm, soprano Audra McDonald will join the Orchestra and conductor Andy Einhorn to sing Broadway favorites. McDonald has quite the resume, having been named one of *Time* magazine’s 100 most influential people and garnered six Tony Awards. Come hear her sing tunes by composers like Richard Rodgers, Stephen Sondheim, and Leonard Bernstein.



Next is another movie night. Sarah Hicks will lead the Orchestra in the score to *The Little Mermaid* during a screening of that Disney animated film on Saturday, August 4 at 8:30 pm. Commence twenty hours of humming “Under the Sea.”

An all-Czech program features conductor Michael Francis, leading The Cleveland Orchestra in Dvořák's Seventh Symphony, Janáček's *Taras Bulba*, and Smetana's "Sarka" No. 3 from *Má Vlast* on Sunday, August 5 at 7:00 pm.

The second edition of Summers@Severance brings Vasily Petrenko to town to lead TCO in Elgar's *In the South* and Bartók's popular *Concerto for Orchestra* on August 10 at 7:00 pm.



TCO and Petrenko will have an entirely different program — and a partnership with a soloist — ready to show off one night later at Blossom. The concert on Saturday, August 11 at 8:00 pm stars Simon Trpčeski in Rachmaninoff's *Rhapsody on a Theme of Paganini*, and also includes Liadov's *Baba-Yaga* and Prokofiev's Symphony No. 5.

Yo-Yo Ma will be featured on Sunday, August 12 at 7:00 pm, playing Bach's complete Solo Cello Suites, part of the cellist's two-year project spanning six continents. Look for Image Magnification.



Pianist Stephen Hough receives the spotlight at Blossom on Saturday, August 18 at 8:00 pm in Mendelssohn's First Concerto. James Gaffigan conducts the Orchestra in this program, which also features Barber's Second Essay and Sibelius' Second Symphony.

A real jack-of-all-genres and master of all of them, Randall Craig Fleischer will follow up on last year's tribute to Ella Fitzgerald by leading TCO in a concert devoted jointly to Frank Sinatra and Lady Ella on Sunday August 19 at 7:00 pm. Also returning is vocalist Capathia Jenkins



(pictured), joined by fellow vocalist and pianist Tony DeSare.

The final Summers@Severance concert of the season takes place on August 24 at 7:00 pm, when Jonathan Cohen will conduct the Orchestra in three works all written within a span of 40 years by a trio of hot-shots. The playlist includes Handel's *Occasional Oratorio* Overture, Haydn's *Piano Concerto in D* featuring Kristian Bezuidenhout, and Mozart's *Symphony No. 25*.

The Cleveland Orchestra reaches the climax of its Blossom season with Orff's *Carmina Burana* on Saturday, August 25 at 8:00 pm. Adrien Perruchon (pictured) conducts this



performance featuring soprano Audrey Luna, tenor Matthew Plenk, and baritone Elliot Madore, as well as the Blossom Festival Chorus and Cleveland Orchestra Children's Chorus. Copland's *Statements* precedes the Orff — and that fancy Image Magnification should be a fun amplifier of this program's thrills.

There's no better feel-good ending to the season than *Star Wars: A New Hope*. Vinay Parameswaran will lead TCO in John Williams' classic score accompanying live screenings of Episode IV on Friday, August 31, Saturday, September 1, and Sunday, September 2, all at 8:30 pm. If the weather's decent, look for fireworks after the performance. Don't think about it too hard — you can already taste that bittersweet end of summer.



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