



HOLST'S THE PLANETS

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 29, AT 7 PM | FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 30 &
SATURDAY, OCTOBER 1 AT 8 PM | SUNDAY, OCTOBER 2 AT 2 PM

NASHVILLE SYMPHONY & WOMEN'S CHORUS

GIANCARLO GUERRERO, conductor
Martha & Bronson Ingram Music Director Chair

TUCKER BIDDLECOMBE, chorus director

AUGUSTIN HADELICH, violin

KAIJA SAARIAHO **4 minutes**
Asteroid 4179: Toutatis

PYOTR ILYCH TCHAIKOVSKY **34 minutes**
Concerto in D major for Violin and Orchestra, Op. 35

- I. Allegro moderato
- II. Canzonetta: Andante
- III. Finale: Allegro vivacissimo

Augustin Hadelich, violin

-INTERMISSION-

GUSTAV HOLST **48 minutes**
The Planets

- 1. Mars, the Bringer of War
- 2. Venus, the Bringer of Peace
- 3. Mercury, the Winged Messenger
- 4. Jupiter, the Bringer of Jollity
- 5. Saturn, the Bringer of Old Age
- 6. Uranus, the Magician
- 7. Neptune, the Mystic

This concert will last approximately one hour, 46 minutes, including a 20-minute intermission.

NASHVILLE SYMPHONY WOMEN'S CHORUS

SOPRANO

Lucy Alegria	Emily Kivi
Dana Amindaneshpour	Jennifer Lynn
Stephanie Breiwa+	Sophia Meyer
Christine Brosend	Jean Miller
Julia Brown	Kathryn Nobbe
Daphne Bugelli	Jennifer Ondrey
Sara Curtiss	Emily Packard
Julia Damore	Angela Pasquini
Cierra Doss	Sabrina Ponte
Katie Doyle	Nicole Rivera
Kacie Dunham	Allie Smith
Amy Frogge	Kristine Smith
Kelli Gauthier	Renita Smith-Crittendon
Deborah Gil	Taylor Stroud
Grace Guill	Clair Susong
Ally Hard+	Marva Swann
Emily Harrison	Marjorie Taggart
Rose Hellmers*	Cassidy Van Amburg
Christina Hemsath	Caitlyn Wollett
Rebekah Howell	Sylvia Wynn
Vanessa Jackson*	McClain Ziegler

ALTO

Carol Armes	Leah Handelsman
Rachel Asmus	Robin Hutton
Kathy Bearden	Sidney Hyde
Tessa Berger	Liza Johnston
MJ Britton	Leah Koesten
Vinéecia Buchanan	Stephanie Kraft+
Kel Cadence Mellone	Shelly McCormack
Mary Callahan*	Brittney McDonald
Cathi Carmack+	Sharon McDonough
Sara Chang	Kirsten McGlone
Kelsey Christian	Alisha Menard
Gwendolyn Collao	Asha Moody
Lisa Cooper	Lisa Pellegrin
Carla Davis	Lydia Pion
Amanda Dier	Madalynne Putz
Bethany DiSantis*	Stacy Reed+
Becky Evans-Young	Anna Ritchie
Anne-Carine Exume	Macke Rodamaker
Elizabeth Gilliam	Julie Schwarz
Bevin Gregory	Anjali Sivaankaran
Judith Griffin	Deanna Talbert
Sherie Grossman	Liv Torkelson
Elizabeth Grossman	Clara Warford

* Section Leader

+ Chairs/Officer

KAIJA SAARIAHO

Asteroid 4179: Toutatis

Born on October 14, 1952 in
Helsinki, Finland

Currently resides in Paris

Composed:
2005

**Estimated
length:**
4 minutes



First performance:

March 16, 2006, with Simon Rattle
conducting the Berlin Philharmonic.

**First Nashville Symphony
performance:**

These are the first Nashville
Symphony performances of
this work.

Celebrating her 70th birthday in just a couple of weeks, Kaija Saariaho is a scientist and a magician alike in her exploration of sonic texture. She belongs to a remarkable generation of composers hailing from Finland who for decades have had a significant presence in the contemporary music scene. Her opera, *L'amour de loin*, became the second work by a woman to ever be staged by the Metropolitan Opera.

Collaborating with fellow artists at IRCAM, the musical research center established by Pierre Boulez in Paris (where she settled in 1982), Saariaho experimented with electronic-acoustic hybrids and was influenced by the approach to instrumental timbre pioneered by IRCAM's "Spectralist" composers. The Spectralists develop their ideas from computer-assisted studies of the complex array of sounds produced by any tone or chord. In Saariaho's compositions—which, like *Asteroid 4179: Toutatis*, sometimes create the illusion of electronics through purely acoustic instruments—sounds seem to hover and shift about the listener like a mobile sculpture and acquire an uncanny, ghostlike tangibility even as they evoke the aura of unstable mirages.

IN THE COMPOSER'S WORDS

The elongated asteroid 4179 Toutatis, rediscovered in 1989, is named after an ancient Celtic god thought to serve as a protective figure. Saariaho writes: "I first became interested in Toutatis when reading that it is the asteroid whose orbit passes closest to Earth. When reading more and then seeing pictures of it, I started to find its unusual shape and complex rotation interesting—different areas of it rotate at different speeds. One consequence of this is that Toutatis does not have a fixed north pole like the Earth; instead, its north pole wanders along a curved path roughly every 5.4 days. The stars viewed from Toutatis wouldn't repeatedly follow circular paths, but would crisscross the sky, never following the same path twice. So Toutatis doesn't have anything you could call a 'day.' Its rotation is the result of two different types of motion with periods of 5.4 and 7.3 Earth days that combine in such a way that Toutatis's orientation with respect to the solar system never repeats. All these peculiarities, and the fact that Toutatis already has had many collisions with other heavenly objects, inspired me to write this small work..."

Scored for 3 flutes (3rd doubling piccolo), 3 oboes, 3 clarinets, 1 bassoon, 1 contrabassoon, 6 horns, 4 trumpets, 3 trombones, tuba, 2 timpani, 3 percussionists, 2 harps, celesta and strings.

PYOTR ILYCH TCHAIKOVSKY

Concerto in D major for Violin and Orchestra, Op. 35

Born on May 7, 1840, in
Votkinsk, Russian Empire

Died on November 6, 1893, in
St. Petersburg, Russian Empire

First Nashville Symphony performance:

December 6, 1955, conducted by Guy Taylor at War Memorial Auditorium with violin soloist, Ivry Gitlis.



Composed:
1878

Estimated
length:
34 minutes

First performance:

December 4, 1881, in Vienna, with Adolph Brodsky as the soloist and Hans Richter conducting.

Tchaikovsky wrote his sole violin concerto at a rapid pace in the spring of 1878. At the time he was living in Switzerland, in retreat from his problems back home in Russia. The concerto's irresistible blend of lyricism, epic breadth and festive energy has made it one of Tchaikovsky's most beloved scores and a cornerstone of the violin repertory.

The previous year had been emotionally turbulent, since the composer had undertaken a smokescreen marriage to a lovesick former student, Antonina Miliukova, to offset gossip about his sexuality. The marriage rapidly disintegrated, and Tchaikovsky sought to recover from what he described as his "brief insanity." He composed the Violin Concerto during the following spring in a whirlwind of inspiration that seemed to underscore his sense of recovery.

The Violin Concerto fully exploits the violin's expressive flexibility, ranging from elevated lyricism to rhythmic vivacity and celebrates an extroverted theatricality. Tchaikovsky dedicated the Concerto to the celebrity violinist Leopold Auer. Though he later became a passionate advocate for the piece, Auer initially rejected the score as "unviolinistic" and declined to perform the premiere.

WHAT TO LISTEN FOR

Tchaikovsky integrates an impressive arsenal of technical challenges for the soloist with an unhurried lyricism. Although darker undercurrents occasionally intrude, the cliché of the hyper-emotive, crisis-ridden Tchaikovsky takes a holiday,

offering a style touched by Mediterranean grace. The first theme cleverly emerges from what seems to be a free-flight improvisation, while all three themes in the exposition play up various aspects of the solo instrument's personality. Like Mendelssohn in his earlier Violin Concerto, Tchaikovsky positions his cadenza earlier than usual, at the end of the development. Its music represents an intriguing synthesis of thematic splicing and "showy" technical hurdles.

As a contrast to the Mediterranean character of the opening, the other two movements, remarks David Brown, seem suddenly to inject the composer's "Russian voice." The *Canzonetta* was actually a replacement (composed in a single day!) for an earlier slow movement Tchaikovsky rejected. In this simple, light song, the soloist takes on the personality of a singer delivering a gently muted, melancholy aria.

Because it is directly linked, the finale comes as even more of a surprise, rapidly disrupting the *Canzonetta*'s soulful spell. The ethereal soloist is now recast as an earthy fiddler who plays with joyful abandon. In his notoriously vicious review of the world premiere (given in Vienna, in the composer's absence), critic Eduard Hanslick wrote disparagingly of the scene of "vulgar and savage faces," "crude curses" and the smell of cheap booze the finale conjured for him. But most audiences have been more than delighted to be guests at this village party.

In addition to solo violin, scored for 2 flutes, 2 oboes, 2 clarinets, 2 bassoons, 4 horns, 2 trumpets, timpani and strings.

GUSTAV HOLST

The Planets, Op. 32

Born on September 21, 1874,
in Cheltenham, England

Died on May 25, 1934,
in London, England

First Nashville Symphony performance:

February 9, 1970, conducted by Thor Johnson at War Memorial Auditorium with Peabody College Women's Chorus.



Composed:
1914-16

Estimated length:
48 minutes

First performance:

September 29, 1918, in a private performance, with Adrian Boult conducting the Queen's Hall Orchestra in London; first public performance on November 15, 1920, in London, with Albert Coates conducting the London Symphony.

Gustav Holst drew on influences ranging from Romanticism to early Modernism for *The Planets*, creating an orchestral epic that has in turn influenced countless film scores. “These pieces were suggested by the astrological significance of the planets,” he wrote. Each of its seven movements takes its cue from the unique character and astrological symbolism associated with the planet in question.

Yet Holst realized that the musical material for Mars made a spectacular opening, so *The Planets* takes liberties with traditional astrology. The sequence of movements seems “out of order” for the first three, while the remaining four movements are in the correct order of distance from the sun (and Earth). Earth is omitted, since it represents the vantage point from which the other planets are observed. There is no movement for Pluto, which was not discovered until 1930, a few years before Holst’s death (and which in any case was demoted from its planetary status in recent years).

The first audiences associated the symbolism of Mars the warrior with the First World War, which officially ended over a month after the premiere—though in fact Holst had composed “Mars” in the summer of 1914, when talk of war was in the air but before the brutality of the Great War had come to pass. Alongside the ancient astrological associations, nowadays we are inclined to think of the dazzling revelations of modern scientific technology.

WHAT TO LISTEN FOR

Holst paints a vast sonic canvas at the beginning of “Mars, the Bringer of War,” with a mixture of aggressive brass, expanded woodwinds, low harp and strings playing with the wood of the bow. The repetitive background rhythm hammered out in an uneven (5/4) meter suggests an inhuman, mechanizing force that intensifies the menace of the looming three-note motif. “Mars” builds in intensity to reach a devastatingly dissonant climax. “Venus, the Bringer of Peace” introduces a contrastingly pastoral horn solo, using woodwinds and strings to enhance a feeling of serenity—more peaceful than erotic. Rocking chords evoke an Impressionist, Debussy-like harmonic stasis that is the opposite of the forward thrust of “Mars.” “Mercury, the Winged Messenger,” the briefest movement, resembles a light-hearted scherzo with its gossamer textures and tricky cross-rhythms that pit varying pulses against each other.

These first three movements introduce a series of ideas and transformations—motivic, harmonic, rhythmic and textural—that recur in subtle ways within the highly varied content of the remaining movements. “Jupiter, the Bringer of Jollity” lies at the center and touches on both the playful and the serious. While the orchestra initially dances with joy, at the center of the movement we hear a hymn-like tune that unfolds with stately dignity. “Saturn, the Bringer of Old Age” recalls the oscillating harmonies of “Venus,” now transformed into something tantalizingly mysterious. Holst

conveys a palpable sense of iciness and growing distance through his orchestration. A slow, funereal march proceeds to a frightening climax of clanging bells, but the specter of “physical decay,” notes the composer, yields to “a vision of fulfillment” in the final minutes. In “Uranus, the Magician,” the opening four-note motif becomes incantatory, and the music conjures elements of a sinister, march-like scherzo that reaches a climax supported by the organ, dissipating into fragments in a postlude.

“Neptune, the Mystic” seems almost completely liberated from the emotional energy of the first movements. Texture rather than thematic development becomes the focus. Holst asks for *pianissimo* throughout the piece, shifting from one instrumental texture to another. “Neptune” circles back to reference the beginning by using the same time signature (5/4) as “Mars.” This most-distant

and disembodied of *The Planets* introduces the human voice in the form of a wordless female double choir (three parts each), which Holst instructs to remain invisible to the audience. The final bar—a pair of chords which echoes the oscillating motion from “Venus” and is sung by the women alone—implies an infinitely repeating loop that diminishes toward absolute silence.

Scored for a very large orchestra consisting of 4 flutes (3rd and 4th doubling piccolo, 4th also doubling bass flute), 3 oboes (3rd doubling bass oboe), English horn, 3 clarinets, bass clarinet, 3 bassoons, double bassoon, 6 horns, 4 trumpets, 3 trombones, tenor and bass tuba, 6 timpani, triangle, snare drum, tambourine, cymbals, bass drum, gong, tubular bells, glockenspiel, xylophone, celesta, organ, 2 harps and strings, plus a 6-part women's choir (only for "Neptune").

— Thomas May is the Nashville Symphony's program annotator.



AUGUSTIN HADELICH

Violin

Augustin Hadelich is one of the great violinists of our time. Named *Musical America's* 2018 "Instrumentalist of the Year," he is consistently cited worldwide for his phenomenal technique, soulful approach and insightful interpretations.

Highlights of his 2022/23 season include return engagements with The Philadelphia Orchestra and the Boston Symphony, as well as the U.S. premiere of a new violin concerto written for him by Irish composer Donnacha Dennehy, to be performed by the Oregon Symphony this fall.

Augustin Hadelich has appeared with virtually every major orchestra in North America, including the Boston Symphony, Chicago Symphony, Cleveland Orchestra, Los Angeles Philharmonic, New York Philharmonic and the Philadelphia Orchestra, among many others. His worldwide presence has been rapidly rising with recent

appearances with the Berlin Philharmonic, Hamburg Elbphilharmonie, Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra and London Philharmonic, as well as numerous engagements in the Far East, South America and Australia.

Among his numerous recordings, Mr. Hadelich was the winner of a 2016 GRAMMY® Award – “Best Classical Instrumental Solo” – for his recording with the Seattle Symphony of Dutilleux’s Violin Concerto, *L'Arbre des songes*. Other prizes include the 2006 Gold Medal at the International Violin Competition of Indianapolis.

Born in Italy, the son of German parents, Mr. Hadelich is now an American citizen. He holds an Artist Diploma from The Juilliard School, where he was a student of Joel Smirnoff.

Augustin Hadelich is on the violin faculty of Yale School of Music at Yale University. He plays the violin "Leduc, ex-Szeryng" by Giuseppe Guarneri del Gesù of 1744, generously loaned by a patron through the Tarisio Trust.

More at AugustinHadelich.com.