



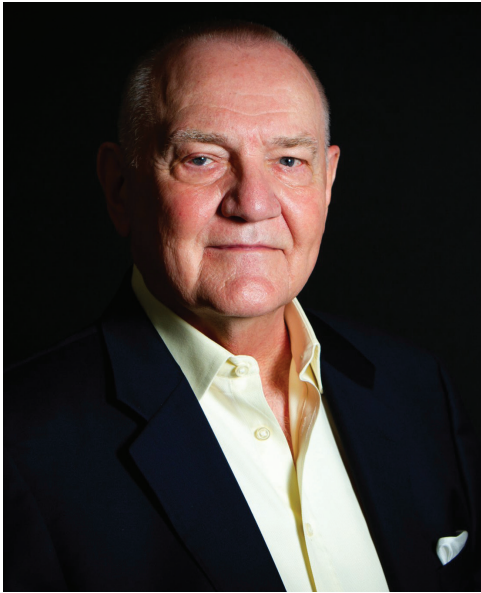
PALM SPRINGS
FRIENDS OF
PHILHARMONIC



2022-2023 SEASON

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

November 2, 2022



“Music is the art-form above all others that can express the spiritual within us.”

The Israel Philharmonic is a favorite of Friends of Philharmonic audiences. When they last appeared here on November 9, 2015, they performed Ioseb Bardanashvili’s beautiful, dramatic symphonic poem “A Journey to the End of the Millennium” composed in 2004. That evening had special significance for all of us in that it was the 77th anniversary of *Kristallnacht* and Zubin Mehta conducted. It was under Mehta’s guidance that the Friends of the Philharmonic was formed, and he conducted our very first performance in 1974 with the Los Angeles Philharmonic. Mehta was Music Director of the Israel Philharmonic from 1977-2019 then tonight’s conductor – the young Lahav Shani – took over in 2020.

Tonight, Israel Philharmonic performs another defining work - Paul Ben-Haim’s *First Symphony* commissioned in 1940 for the fledgling Palestine Symphony Orchestra (now the Israel Philharmonic) and formed from Jewish musicians dismissed from European orchestras leading up to World War II. The virtuoso violinist Bronislaw Huberman recruited and formed the orchestra in 1936.

We hope you enjoy the concert,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Dean Kauffman". The ink is dark and the signature is fluid and personal.

Dean Kauffman, President
Palm Springs Friends of Philharmonic

Cover Photo: The *Vieuxtemps Guarneri* was built around 1741 by renowned Italian instrument maker Giuseppe Guarneri. The violin is named for Belgian violinist Henri Vieuxtemps who owned it during the 19th century. The instrument has also been used by Yehudi Menuhin, Itzhak Perlman and Pinchas Zukerman. In 2012 it was sold to a private collector at an undisclosed price, but reportedly for more than \$16 million, representing at that time the largest sum every paid for a violin. The purchaser subsequently provided lifetime use of the instrument to American violinist Anne Akiko Meyers who performs on our series with San Diego Symphony, January 8, 2023.

Palm Springs Friends of the Philharmonic

PROUDLY PRESENT

The Israel Philharmonic

Lahav Shani, Music Director

*The Music Director's position is endowed
by The Rosalinde and Arthur Gilbert Foundation*

Sponsored by Barbara Fremont

Wednesday, November 2, 2022 at 7:30 pm

PROGRAM

PAUL BEN-HAIM
(1897-1984)

Symphony No. 1

(32 minutes)

Allegro energico

Molto calmo e cantabile

Presto con fuoco

— INTERMISSION —

GUSTAV MAHLER
(1860-1911)

Symphony No. 1 in D Major "Titan"

(59 minutes)

Langsam schleppend

Kräftig bewegt

Feierlich und gemessen

Stürmisch bewegt

Israel Philharmonic gratefully acknowledges American Friends of the Israel Philharmonic for their generous underwriting of the ensemble's United States touring program.

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AS A COURTESY TO THE CONDUCTOR AND ORCHESTRA ...

Please remain seated until the performers leave the stage at intermission and at the end of the program. Also, please do not applaud between movements of any musical composition. Friends of Philharmonic audiences are known for the warm and courteous welcome extended to visiting performers. Please help maintain this fine reputation. THANK YOU.

Photography and recording of any kind is strictly prohibited. Please remember to silence your cell phone.

Program Notes

Symphony No. 1

PAUL BEN-HAIM

Born July 5, 1897, Munich

Died January 14, 1984, Tel-Aviv

Paul Frankenburger studied violin and piano as a boy in his native Munich, then moved on to study composition with Friedrich Klose, who had been a pupil of Bruckner. In his twenties, he served as an assistant conductor to Bruno Walter and Hans Knappertsbusch at the Bavarian State Opera but gave up his career as a conductor to concentrate on composing. By the early 1930s the young man was all too aware of growing anti-Semitism in Austria, and when the Nazis came to power in 1933, he emigrated to Palestine. There he settled in Tel Aviv and changed his last name to Ben-Haim. He served as president of the Israel Composers League in 1948, and from 1949 until 1954 he taught at the Jerusalem Academy of Music. Ben-Haim was a prolific composer (he wrote about 250 works), and in his music he aimed for a fusion of the great European classical music tradition with the music of the Eastern Mediterranean and Jewish peoples. Ben-Haim described his artistic identity succinctly: "I am of the West by birth and education, but I stem from the East and live in the East. I regard this as a great blessing indeed and it makes me feel grateful. The problem of synthesis of East and West occupies musicians all over the world. If we—thanks to our living in a country that forms a bridge between East and West—can provide a modest contribution to such a synthesis in music, we shall be very happy." Sadly, on a return visit to Munich in 1972, Ben-Haim was struck by a car and seriously injured. Paralyzed and confined to a wheelchair, he continued to compose until his death in 1984.

Ben-Haim's *First Symphony* comes from a dark moment in human history—he began it in August 1939, just as World War II was about to begin, and completed it at the end of June 1940, just as France fell to the Nazis—so perhaps it is no surprise that this music is dramatic and often very dark. It is in three sharply contrasted movements. The opening *AllLEGRO energico* bursts to life with a powerful rhythmic

figure in the lower strings that will return in various forms throughout the movement. Strings announce a second subject, brooding and dark, and this sonata-form movement develops vigorously. There is something pointillistic, almost mechanistic, about the sound Ben-Haim generates across the span of this movement, which drives to a dramatic climax and powerful close.

As its name suggests, the *Molto calmo e cantabile* takes us into a different world entirely. It opens with a long, unharmonized melody for strings, and in the final part of this melody Ben-Haim quotes from a song of the ancient Persian Jews, "I Shall Lift My Eyes to the Mountains." Gradually the rest of the orchestra enters, and this movement features a number of prominent solos for winds as it builds to a soaring climax. A serene flute melody helps lead the way to the quiet conclusion. This movement has become popular on its own, and it is sometimes performed separately under the title *Psalm*.

The concluding *Presto con fuoco* ("fast, with fire") returns to the mood of the opening movement, though here that atmosphere is projected through a series of wild dances, including *tarantella* and *hora*. Racing violas create a sense of a perpetual-motion movement, and that feeling of breathless rush will continue throughout. Grieving and violent interludes intrude into this animated dancing before Ben-Haim's *First Symphony* pounds its way to an exciting close.

Symphony No. 1 in D Major

GUSTAV MAHLER

Born July 7, 1860, Kalischt, Bohemia

Died May 18, 1911, Vienna

Mahler's *First Symphony* is one of the most impressive first symphonies ever written, and it gave its young creator a great deal of trouble. He began it late in 1884, when he was only 24, and completed a first version in March 1888. But when it was first performed—to a mystified audience in Budapest on November 20, 1889—it had a form far different from the one we know today. Mahler would not even

call it a symphony. For that first performance he called it *Symphonic Poem*, and it was in two huge parts that seemed to tell a story: the opening three-movement section was called “Days of Youth,” while the concluding two movements made up what Mahler called the “Human Comedy.” But as Mahler revised the symphony for later performances, he began to let slip quite different hints about the “meaning” of this music. At one point he called it the “*Titan*,” borrowing the title of Jean Paul Richter’s novel about a wild young hero who feels lost in this world. Some further sense of its content comes from the fact that the symphony borrows several themes from Mahler’s just-completed *Songs of a Wayfarer*, which are about his recovery from an ill-fated love affair. But finally, Mahler, who had a love-hate relation with verbal explanations of his music (denouncing them one moment, releasing new ones the next), abandoned any mention of a program. When he finally published this symphony in 1899, he had cut it to only four movements, greatly expanded the orchestration, and suppressed all mention of the “Titan” or of any other extra-musical associations. Now it was simply his *Symphony No. 1*.

And what a first symphony it is! The stunning beginning—Mahler asks that it be “like a nature-sound”—is intended to evoke a quiet summer morning, and he captures that hazy, shimmering stillness with a near-silent A six octaves deep. The effect is magical, as if we are suddenly inside some vast, softly humming machine. Soon we hear twittering birds and morning fanfares from distant military barracks. The call of the cuckoo is outlined by the interval of a falling fourth, and that figure will recur throughout the symphony, giving shape to many of its themes. Cellos announce the true first theme, which begins with the drop of a fourth—when Mahler earlier used this same theme in his *Wayfarer* cycle, it set the disappointed lover’s embarking on his lonely journey: “I went this morning through the fields, dew still hung upon the grass.” A noble chorus of horns, ringing out from a forest full of busy cuckoos, forms the second subject, and the brief development—by turns lyric and dramatic—leads to a mighty restatement of the *Wayfarer* theme and an exciting close.

Mahler marks the second movement *Kraftig bewegt* (“Moving powerfully”); his original subtitle for this movement was “Under Full Sail.” This movement is a scherzo in ABA form, and Mahler bases it on the *ländler*, the rustic Austrian waltz. Winds and then violins stamp out the opening *ländler*, full of hard edges and stomping accents, and this drives to a powerful cadence. Out of the silence, the sound of a solo horn rivets our attention—and nicely changes the mood. The central section is another *ländler*, but this one sings beautifully, its flowing melodies made all the more sensual by graceful slides from the violins. The movement concludes with a return of the opening material.

The third movement opens what, in Mahler’s original scheme, was the second part of the symphony. Deliberately grotesque, this music was inspired by a woodcut picturing the funeral of a hunter, whose body is borne through the woods by forest animals—deer, foxes, rabbits, shrews, birds—who celebrate his death with mock pageantry. Over the timpani’s quiet tread (once again, the interval of a fourth), solo double bass plays a lugubrious little tune that is treated as a round; the ear soon recognizes this as a minor-key variation of the children’s song *Frère Jacques*. The first episode lurches along sleazily over an “oom-pah” rhythm; Mahler indicates that he wants this played “with parody,” and the music echoes the klezmer street bands of Eastern Europe. But a further episode brings soft relief: muted violins offer another quotation from the *Wayfarer* songs, this time a theme that had set the words “By the wayside stands a linden tree, and there at last I’ve found some peace.” In the song cycle, these words marked the disappointed lover’s escape from his pain and his return to life. The march returns, and the timpani taps this movement to its nearly silent close.

Then the finale explodes. It is worth quoting Mahler on this violent music: “the fourth movement then springs suddenly, like lightning from a dark cloud. It is simply the cry of a deeply wounded heart, preceded by the ghastly brooding oppressiveness of the funeral march.” Mahler’s original title for this movement was “From Inferno to Paradise,” and while one should not lean too heavily on a program the composer ultimately disavowed, Mahler himself did

choose these words and this description does reflect the progress of the finale, which moves from the seething tumult of its beginning to the triumph of the close. Longest by far of the movements, the finale is based on two main themes: a fierce, striving figure in the winds near the beginning and a gorgeous, long-lined melody for violins shortly afterwards. The development pitches between extremes of mood as it drives to what seems a climax but is in fact a false conclusion. The music seems lost, directionless, and now Mahler makes a wonderful decision when back comes the dreamy, slow music from the symphony's very beginning. Slowly this gathers energy, and what had been gentle at the beginning now returns in glory, shouted out by seven horns as the symphony smashes home triumphantly in D major, racing to the two whipcracks that bring it to a thrilling conclusion.

What are we to make of Mahler's many conflicting signals as to what this symphony is "about"? Is

it about youth and the "human comedy"? Is it autobiographical, the tale of his own recovery from an unhappy love affair? Late in his brief life, Mahler even suggested another reading. When he conducted his *First Symphony* with the New York Philharmonic in 1909, Mahler wrote to his disciple Bruno Walter that he was "quite satisfied with this youthful sketch," telling him that when he conducted the symphony, "A burning, and painful sensation is crystallized. What a world this is that casts up such reflections of sounds and figures! Things like the Funeral March and the bursting of the storm which follows it seem to me a flaming indictment of the Creator."

Finally, we have to throw up our hands in the face of so much contradictory information. Perhaps it is best just to settle back and listen to Mahler's *First Symphony* for itself—and the mighty symphonic journey that it is.

Program notes by Eric Bromberger

Lahav Shani

Music Director

Lahav Shani, Music Director of the Israel Philharmonic, started his conducting career when he won first prize at the 2013 *Gustav Mahler International Conducting Competition* in Bamberg. In 2018 he became Chief Conductor of the Rotterdam Philharmonic Orchestra, being the youngest Chief Conductor in the orchestra's history. From the 2017-18 season until 2020, he was Principal Guest Conductor of the Vienna Symphony Orchestra. His performances as guest conductor include concerts with the Bavarian Radio Symphony, London Symphony, Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra, Dresden Staatskapelle, Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra, Berlin Philharmonic, Tonhalle Orchestra of Zurich, Budapest Festival Orchestra, Boston Symphony, Berlin Radio Symphony, Philharmonia Orchestra,



Credit by Marco Borggreve

Orchestre de Paris, Philadelphia Orchestra, Royal Stockholm Philharmonic, Bamberg Symphony, and Orchestre Philharmonique de Radio France. He also works regularly with the Berlin Staatskapelle, both at the Berlin Staatsoper and for symphonic

concerts. In October 2013 he was invited to open the season of the Israel Philharmonic. An immediate re-invitation followed for the next two seasons. His close relationship with the Israel Philharmonic started in 2007, when he performed Tchaikovsky's *Piano Concerto* under the baton of Zubin Mehta, and continued in 2010, when Maestro Mehta invited him to join the Israel Philharmonic on its Far East tour as pianist, assistant conductor, and double bass player. Lahav Shani was born in 1989 in Tel Aviv and started his piano studies aged six with Hannah Shalgi, continuing with Prof. Arie Vardi at the Buchmann-Mehta School of Music in Tel Aviv. He then went on to complete his studies in conducting with Prof. Christian

Ehwald and piano with Prof. Fabio Bidini, both at the Academy of Music Hanns Eisler Berlin. Whilst a student he was mentored by Daniel Barenboim. As a pianist, Lahav Shani made his solo recital debut at the Boulez Saal in Berlin in July 2018. He has play-directed piano concerti with many orchestras including the Philharmonia Orchestra, Staatskapelle Berlin, Orchestre Philharmonique de Radio France and the Israel Philharmonic. Lahav Shani also has considerable experience performing chamber music and recitals. He is a regular performer at the *Verbier Festival* and has also appeared at the *Aix-en-Provence Easter* and *Jerusalem Chamber Music Festivals*.



Credit by Oded Antman

The Israel Philharmonic

The Israel Philharmonic was founded in 1936 by Bronislaw Huberman and its inaugural concert, on 26 December 1936, was conducted by Arturo Toscanini. The Israel Philharmonic plays in subscription series in Tel Aviv, Jerusalem, and Haifa, in special concerts and in various concert series throughout Israel. The Israel Philharmonic regularly tours the world's cultural centers and prestigious festivals. Israel's creative artists are promoted by many Israel Philharmonic premieres of works by Israeli composers. The Israel Philharmonic has contributed to the absorption of new immigrants and includes in its ranks new immigrant musicians. The orchestra has hosted the

world's greatest conductors and soloists, as well as young talents from Israel and abroad. As part of KeyNote, the Israel Philharmonic's music education and outreach program, Israel Philharmonic musicians perform in numerous schools and concerts for school pupils at the Charles Bronfman Auditorium in Tel Aviv. In 1969 Maestro Zubin Mehta was appointed Music Advisor to the Israel Philharmonic and in 1977 he became its Music Director. Maestro Mehta retired in October 2019 and following his retirement, the Israel Philharmonic has named him Music Director Emeritus. Lahav Shani became Music Director in the 2020-21 season.

The Israel Philharmonic

Music Director: Lahav Shani

The Music Director's position is endowed by The Rosalinde and Arthur Gilbert Foundation

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Youth Education

The Palm Springs Friends of Philharmonic is proud to sponsor a robust youth education program. In addition to summer music camp and college music scholarships for local Coachella Valley youth, the Philharmonic provides financial support to the arts education program at the McCallum Theatre and other area music organizations, and free student tickets to our concerts. During the Covid shutdown, the Philharmonic created a special music emergency grant fund that awarded over \$60,000 to local schools for the purchase of musical instruments.

The Philharmonic also facilitates an instrument donation program, focused primarily on wind and string instruments, for local schools.

JAMES WORKMAN MIDDLE SCHOOL MUSIC STUDENTS



Thank you
 for a great
 experience
 at the camp
 - Sofia R

Thank you for paying
 for had a great time
 in camp.
 - Sofiq M.

Thank you for paying
 for our time at camp!
 - Mirya Liang
 - Fox Bingham

Had a great time!
 - Leilani Bolaños

Thank you for paying
 that way I can have
 a fun time over there!
 - Karime Bon

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Domingo Hindoyan, Conductor

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Carl St. Clair, Conductor

Mon., Feb. 6, 7:30 pm – With Yefim Bronfman, Piano
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Tue., Feb. 14, 7:30 pm
Sponsored by Norman Forrester & William Griffin



ACADEMY OF ST MARTIN IN THE FIELDS

Mon., March 6, 7:30 pm – With Avi Avital, Mandolin
Sponsored by Bernice E. Greene, Norman Gorin, JoAnn G. Wellner



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Dalia Stasevska, Conductor

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