



Season 2026-27 subscription series *Booklet*

TOKYO PHILHARMONIC



chie 17.

Feb. 2026

The 1028th Suntory Subscription Concert
Wed. Feb. 18, 2026, 19:00 at Suntory Hall

The 1029th Orchard Hall Subscription Concert
Mon./Holiday Feb. 23, 2026, 15:00 at Bunkamura Orchard Hall

Myung-Whun Chung, conductor

Seiji Okamoto, violin*

Kaoru Kondo, concertmaster

Weber:

Overture to the opera "Der Freischütz", Op. 77 (ca. 10 min)

〈The 200th anniversary of Weber's death〉

Bruch:

Violin Concerto No. 1 in G minor, Op. 26* (ca. 25 min)

- I. Prelude: Allegro moderato
- II. Adagio
- III. Finale: Allegro energico

— intermission (ca. 15 min) —

Mendelssohn:

Symphony No. 3 in A minor, Op. 56 "Scottish" (ca. 40 min)

- I. Andante con moto - Allegro un poco agitato -
- II. Vivace non troppo -
- III. Adagio -
- IV. Allegro vivacissimo - Allegro maestoso assai
 (all movements played without pause)

Presented by Tokyo Philharmonic
 Subsidized by the Agency for Cultural Affairs Government of Japan |
 Japan Arts Council
 In Association with **Bunkamura** (Feb. 23)



- ♪ All seats are reserved. Late admittance will be refused during the live performance. If you enter or reenter just before the concert or between movements, we may escort you to a seat different from the one to which you were originally assigned.
- ♪ Exiting during the performance will be tolerated. If you do not feel well, please exit or enter as you need. However, please mind the other listeners so that they will be minimally disturbed.
- ♪ Please refrain from using your cellphone or other electronic devices during performance.
- ♪ Please cherish the "afterglow" at the end of each piece for a moment before your applause.

Artists Profile



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Myung-Whun Chung, conductor

Honorary Music Director of the Tokyo Philharmonic

Born in Seoul, Myung-Whun Chung won the silver medal at the Tchaikovsky International Piano Competition in 1974. After completing conducting studies at the Juilliard School, he served as assistant and subsequently associate conductor to Carlo Maria Giulini at the Los Angeles Philharmonic.

Since his appointment as Music Director of the Paris Opera (L'Opéra Bastille) in 1989, Maestro Chung has conducted many prominent orchestras including the Vienna Philharmonic, the Berlin Philharmonic, and la Filarmonica della Scala. He has served as the Music Director of l'Orchestre Philharmonique de Radio France (2000-2015), the Seoul Philharmonic Orchestra (2006-2015), and the Asia Philharmonic Orchestra, which he founded in 1997. Since 2012, he has been Principal Guest Conductor of the Staatskapelle Dresden. He has served as Artistic Director of Classic Busan since 2023, and as Music Director of the KBS Symphony Orchestra since 2026.

In June 2022, he received the title of Grand Officer of the Order of Merit of the Republic of Italy for his contributions to Italian cultural development over the years. In March 2023, he became the first-ever Conductor Emeritus of the Filarmonica della Scala in Milan. His long and outstanding musical career is marked by his recent appointment as Music Director Designate of Teatro alla Scala (from 2027).

For the Tokyo Phil, Maestro Chung was Special Artistic Advisor from 2001 to 2010, and its Honorary Conductor Laureate from 2010 to 2016. In September 2016 he was appointed Honorary Music Director. He has also undertaken numerous overseas tours with the Tokyo Phil. Most recently, he led their European tour in autumn 2025 to landmark success.

He is active in education for the younger generation and in promotion of peace, especially in Asia through a variety of musical activities. He currently serves as a UNICEF Ambassador.

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Seiji Okamoto, violin

Seiji Okamoto is a Berlin-based Japanese violinist who has built an international career marked by major competition successes and performances with leading orchestras. In 2014, he won First Prize and the Audience Award at the International J. S. Bach Competition in Leipzig, becoming the first Asian winner in the violin category. He was awarded Second Prize at the International Henryk Wieniawski Violin Competition in Poland in 2016, and became a Laureate of the Queen Elisabeth International Music Competition in Brussels in 2019. In 2021, he achieved First Prize at the ARD International Music Competition in Munich, also receiving several special prizes, including awards for the interpretation of the commissioned work.

As a soloist, he has performed with renowned orchestras such as the Konzerthausorchester Berlin, Bavarian Radio Symphony Orchestra, MDR Symphony Orchestra Leipzig, Vienna Chamber Orchestra, NHK Symphony Orchestra, and major orchestras throughout Europe and Japan. He has appeared at leading international festivals including Bachfest Leipzig, Kronberg Academy Festival, and Moritzburg Festival.

Alongside his solo activities, he is deeply engaged in chamber music and curates a long-term recital project in Japan focusing on works by Bach, Schumann, and Brahms. He is a core member of the Japan National Orchestra, regularly appearing as concertmaster and soloist.

Program Notes

Text by Robert Markow

Weber:

Overture to the opera "Der Freischütz", Op. 77

Der Freischütz, the third of Weber's five complete, extant operas, marked the first important instance of a national German opera. In form, it descended from the *Singspiel* tradition – stage works with passages of spoken German dialogue alternating with musical numbers – but in content it set itself apart from its illustrious predecessors like Mozart's *Zauberflöte* and Beethoven's *Fidelio* through the use of specifically German subject matter. One writer observed that the Overture to *Der Freischütz* could easily be the overture to one of Grimm's fairy tales, for the heart and soul of German folklore is embodied in this opera, involving as it does a dark mysterious forest, huntsmen, a friendly hermit, ghosts, evil spirits, a devil and a pair of lovers.

Weber selected the story from a collection of supernatural tales, the *Gespensterbuch* (Ghost Stories) of Apel and Laun. Friedrich Kind fashioned the libretto, working closely with Weber. The complete opera had a highly successful premiere in Berlin on June 18, 1821, but the overture alone had first been heard nine months earlier in Copenhagen, and was published separately under its own opus number.

The overture is a synthesis of the opera that follows. The slow introduction features a horn quartet, softly and gently evoking the peaceful, romantic forest. A dark shadow crosses the sylvan setting – the evil Samiel lurks about, portrayed by a string tremolo and soft throbs from the timpani. The music of the *allegro* section is at first stormy and restless, representing the events of the wild, macabre Wolf's Glen scene, replete with ghosts, goblins, eerie winds and a host of supernatural occurrences. This leads into a long solo for the clarinet, Weber's favorite instrument. Then comes the heroine Agathe's theme – a soaring, graceful melody in the clarinet and strings. Throughout the symphonic development, the forces of good and evil engage in a dramatic conflict. As in most fairy tales, good triumphs in the end. Following a long, pregnant pause, *fortissimo* chords for the full orchestra lead to a return of Agathe's theme, and the overture ends joyously.

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CARL MARIA VON WEBER: Born in Eutin (near Lübeck), Germany, November 18, 1786; died in London, June 5, 1826

Work composed: 1821 **World premiere:** June 18, 1821 at the Royal Theatre (Schauspielhaus) in Berlin, conducted by the composer

Instrumentation: 2 flutes, 2 oboes, 2 clarinets, 2 bassoons, 4 horns, 2 trumpets, 3 trombones, timpani, strings

Bruch: Violin Concerto No. 1 in G minor, Op. 26

Bruch began working on his First Violin Concerto in the mid 1850s but put it aside for a number of years. It was completed and first performed in 1866. Otto von Königslow performed the work in Koblenz on April 24, with the composer conducting. But Bruch was not satisfied with the concerto; after some revisions, he submitted it to the famous violinist Joseph Joachim for comment. Joachim suggested numerous changes, but rejected the composer's opinion that, because of the free-form first movement, it would be better entitled a fantasy than a concerto. Joachim wrote: "The designation concerto is completely apt. Indeed, the second and third movements are too fully and symmetrically developed for a fantasy. The separate sections of the work cohere in a lovely relationship, and yet – and this is the most important thing – there is adequate contrast. Moreover, Spohr entitled his *Gesangszene* a concerto!" The final version was first heard in Bremen probably on January 7, 1868 (some sources claim January 5). Nearly forty years later, Joachim still ranked the concerto as one of the four greatest of the nineteenth century, alongside those of Beethoven, Mendelssohn and Brahms, noting that Bruch's was "the richest, the most seductive."

The composer himself had these comments to make regarding his interest in the violin: "In my youth I studied the violin for four or five years. ... The violin seemed to me even at that time the queen of instruments. ... I was destined by nature to write compositions for the voice, and I always studied singing with special interest and have associated largely with singers. This tendency has, of course, also been displayed in my violin works."

The first movement, marked "Prelude," does not follow the standard sonata-allegro form. Nevertheless, its dark undercurrent of passion and drama serves to maintain interest. A brief cadenza precedes the orchestral transition to the second movement, the emotional heart of the concerto. Here

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we find three distinct themes, some of the loveliest and most lyrical in the violin repertory. A vigorous, energetic orchestral passage introduces the third movement. The soloist enters with a full statement of the gypsy-like theme, played with virtuosic flair across all four strings of the instrument. It has been suggested that Brahms had this movement in mind when he composed the finale of his own violin concerto. A more expansive and lyrical second theme alternates with the first, and the movement builds to an exciting, brilliant conclusion.

MAX BRUCH: Born in Cologne, January 6, 1838; died in Friedenau, near Berlin, October 2, 1920

Work composed: 1864-66 (revised 1867) **World premiere:** [First Version] April 24, 1866 in Koblenz, conducted by the composer with Otto von Königslow as soloist [Revised Version] January 7 (?), 1868 in Bremen, conducted by Karl Martin Reinthaler with Joseph Joachim as soloist

Instrumentation: 2 flutes, 2 oboes, 2 clarinets, 2 bassoons, 4 horns, 2 trumpets, timpani, strings, solo violin

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Mendelssohn: Symphony No. 3 in A minor, Op. 56 "Scottish"

Mendelssohn spent July and August of 1829 touring Scotland with his friend Carl Klingemann (secretary to the Hanoverian Legation in London). Through his letters we know in considerable detail Mendelssohn's reactions, mostly favorable, to the Highland country, its weather, and its people with their "long, red beards, tartan plaids, bonnets and feathers, naked knees, and their bagpipes in their hands." One day in Edinburgh he came upon the picturesque ruins of the Palace of Holyrood, in which Mary, Queen of Scots, had once lived.

On July 30, Mendelssohn wrote home that "in the darkening twilight" he "went to the Palace where Queen Mary lived and loved. There is a little room to be seen there with a spiral staircase at its door. That is where they went up and found Rizzio in the room, dragged him out, and three chambers away there is a dark corner where they murdered him. The chapel beside it has lost its roof and is overgrown with grass and ivy, and at that broken altar Mary was crowned Queen of Scotland. Everything there is ruined, decayed, and open to the clear sky. I believe that I have found there today the beginning of my

Scottish Symphony.”

The “beginning of my Scottish Symphony” consisted of a scrap of paper containing a few bars of music. That is all that became of the symphony until twelve years later, by which time Mendelssohn had already been to Italy and had written his *Italian* Symphony. In 1831, he wrote from Italy that he could not find his way back into the Scottish fog mood, a quite understandable condition given Italy’s sunny climes. The *Scottish* Symphony was eventually completed in January of 1842. The symphony received its premiere in Leipzig on March 3, 1842, with Mendelssohn on the podium. The work was not very well received, but after revisions, it was heard again two weeks later, this time to great applause. The published score was dedicated to “H. M. Queen Victoria of Great Britain and Ireland” in 1843, following performances in London.

The subtitle, “Scottish” (or “Scotch” – no one seems sure which is correct), appears in Mendelssohn’s correspondence about the symphony, but he never wrote it on the score, parts, piano reduction or the printed programs. Is there anything really “Scottish” about the work? Well, yes and no. The degree of “Scottishness” depends on the individual listener’s susceptibility to programmatic suggestion and on hindsight. The somber, melancholic opening is certainly at least suggestive of the brooding, misty Scottish land; the ebullient clarinet theme of the Scherzo may be based on a Scottish folk air, since the scale pattern corresponds to that of the country’s folk music; the leaping, vigorous, dance-like main theme of the finale is thought by some to be a musical representation of the gathering of the clans.

FELIX MENDELSSOHN: Born in Hamburg, February 3, 1809; died in Leipzig, November 4, 1847

Work composed: 1829-42 **World premiere:** March 3, 1842 in the Leipzig Gewandhaus, conducted by the composer

Instrumentation: 2 flutes, 2 oboes, 2 clarinets, 2 bassoons, 4 horns, 2 trumpets, timpani, strings

Formerly a horn player in the Montreal Symphony, **Robert Markow** now writes program notes for numerous orchestras and other musical organizations in North America and Asia. He taught at Montreal’s McGill University for many years, has led music tours to several countries, and writes for numerous leading classical music journals.

Season 2026-27 Upcoming Subscription Concerts

The Tokyo Philharmonic's new season has begun. A rich array of masterpieces that capture the true essence of orchestral music awaits audiences. Please join us on our musical journey and enjoy every concert, filled with musical joy, together with the Tokyo Philharmonic.

May 2026	Wed, May 13 2026, 19:00 start at Suntory Hall Sun, May 17 2026, 15:00 start at Bunkamura Orchard Hall	Conductor: Andrea Battistoni <i>Chief Conductor</i> Soprano: Yui Takahashi
	Schumann (orch. by Battistoni, world premiere): Kinderszenen (Scenes from Childhood) Mahler: Symphony No. 4 <div style="text-align: right;">Single tickets available</div>	
June 2026	Thu, Jun 18 , 2026, 19:00 start at Suntory Hall Sun, Jun 21 , 2026, 15:00 start at Bunkamura Orchard Hall	Conductor & Violin: Pinchas Zukerman
	Mozart: Overture from opera "Le nozze di Figaro" Mozart: Violin Concerto No. 3 Mozart: Symphony No. 40 <div style="text-align: right;">Single tickets available</div>	
July 2026	Thu, Jul 23 , 2026, 19:00 start at Suntory Hall Sun, Jul 26 , 2026, 15:00 start at Bunkamura Orchard Hall Wed, Jul 29 , 2026, 19:00 start at Tokyo Opera City Concert Hall	Conductor: Myung-Whun Chung <i>Honorary Music Director</i> Carmen: Stéphanie d'Oustrac Don José: Matthew Polenzani Escamillo: Nicolas Courjal Micaëla: Slávka Zámečnicková Chorus: New National Theatre Chorus Children Chorus: Setagaya Junior Chorus, and more
	Bizet: Opera "Carmen" (concert style) <div style="text-align: right;">Single tickets available from April on</div>	
August 2026	Thu, Aug 6 , 2026, 19:00 start at Tokyo Opera City Concert Hall Tue/Holiday, Aug 11 , 2026, 15:00 start at Bunkamura Orchard Hall	Conductor: Ken-Ichiro Kobayashi Violin: Keila Wakao
	Mendelssohn: Violin Concerto Rimsky-Korsakov: Symphonic suite "Scheherazade" <div style="text-align: right;">Single tickets available from April on</div>	

October 2026	<p>Thu, Oct 15, 2026, 19:00 start at Suntory Hall</p> <p>Fri, Oct 16, 2026, 19:00 start at Tokyo Opera City Concert Hall</p> <p>Sun, Oct 18, 2026, 15:00 start at Bunkamura Orchard Hall</p>	<p>Conductor: Myung-Whun Chung <i>Honorary Music Director</i></p> <p>Violin: Maxim Vengerov</p>
		Single tickets available from April on
	<p>Sibelius: Violin Concerto Beethoven: Symphony No. 7</p>	
November 2026	<p>Sun, Nov 15, 2026 15:00 start at Bunkamura Orchard Hall</p> <p>Mon, Nov 16, 2026, 19:00 start at Tokyo Opera City Concert Hall</p>	<p>Conductor: Mikhail Pletnev <i>Special Guest Conductor</i></p>
		Single tickets available from April on
	<p>Pletnev: 14 Mémoires musicales (2024) Tchaikovsky: Symphony No. 4</p>	
January 2027	<p>Thu, Jan 21, 2027, 19:00 start at Suntory Hall</p> <p>Mon, Jan 25, 2027, 19:00 start at Tokyo Opera City Concert Hall</p>	<p>Conductor & Bassoon: Sophie Dervaux</p>
		Single tickets available from April on
	<p>Mozart: Overture from opera "The Magic Flute" Weber: Bassoon Concerto (The 200th anniversary of Weber's death) Brahms: Symphony No. 1</p>	
February 2027	<p>Thu, Feb 18 2027, 19:00 start at Tokyo Opera City Concert Hall</p> <p>Wed, Feb 24, 2027, 19:00 start at Suntory Hall</p>	<p>Conductor: Myung-Whun Chung <i>Honorary Music Director</i></p> <p>Piano: Saehyun Kim</p>
		Single tickets available from April on
	<p>Beethoven: Piano Concerto No. 4 (The 200th anniversary of Beethoven's death) Saint-Saëns: Symphony No. 3 "Organ"</p>	

Ticket Prices

()=Discount prices for TOKYO PHIL FRIENDS

SS¥15,000 S¥10,000(¥9,000) A¥8,500(¥7,650) B¥7,000(¥6,300) C¥5,500(¥4,950)

How to join TOKYO PHIL FRIENDS ⇒ <https://www.tpo.or.jp/en/tickets/friends.php>

Inquiries about tickets

Tokyo Phil Ticket Service tel: **03-5353-9522**

(weekdays 10:00-18:00, closed on weekends and holidays)

Tokyo Phil WEB Ticket Service <https://www.tpo.or.jp/en/>

