

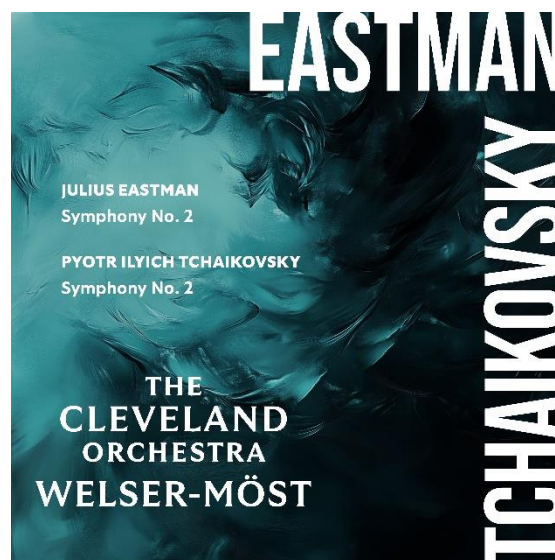
**THE  
CLEVELAND  
ORCHESTRA**  
FRANZ WELSER-MÖST, MUSIC DIRECTOR

**NEWS**

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SEASON

For release: March 7, 2025

## **The Cleveland Orchestra releases recordings of Eastman’s Symphony No. 2 and Tchaikovsky’s Symphony No. 2 exclusively on Apple Music Classical**



CLEVELAND — The Cleveland Orchestra released a new spatial audio recording of [Julius Eastman’s Symphony No. 2](#) and [Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky’s Symphony No. 2](#), led by Music Director Franz Welser-Möst.

The recordings are available exclusively on Apple Music Classical as part of a continued partnership with the streaming platform. They were produced by Elaine Martone, who just secured her third Grammy Award for Classical Producer of the Year and her sixth Grammy overall. Both works were recorded live at Severance Music Center in 2023.

This is the Orchestra’s first release this year and follows four releases in 2024: [Béla Bartók’s](#) String Quartet No. 3 (arranged for double string orchestra by Cleveland Orchestra Assistant Principal Viola [Stanley Konopka](#)) and his Suite from *The Miraculous Mandarin*, [Sergei Prokofiev’s](#) Symphony No. 6, [Anton Bruckner’s](#) Symphony No. 4, and [Hector Berlioz’s](#) *Symphonie fantastique*.

Apple Music Classical is a dedicated music streaming app designed specifically for classical music lovers and musicians. The app provides users with access to the world’s largest classical music catalog, with fully optimized search, and allows them to enjoy the highest audio quality available and experience many classical favorites in new ways with immersive Spatial Audio. Additionally, users can browse

expertly curated playlists, insightful composer biographies, and descriptions of thousands of works, including many recent and historical Cleveland Orchestra recordings. For more information about Apple Music Classical, visit Apple's product launch announcement [here](#).

### **Media Reviewing Access**

Access to the recording's audio files for media reviewing is available upon request. Album cover art, digital booklet, and high-resolution images can be found in the [press kit](#).

### **Product Information**

#### **The Cleveland Orchestra**

**Franz Welser-Möst**, *conductor*

Julius Eastman

Symphony No. 2, "The Faithful Friend: The Lover Friend's Love for the Beloved"

Track 1

Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky

Symphony No. 2 in C minor, Op. 17, "Ukrainian"

Track 2 – I. Andante sostenuto — Allegro vivo

Track 3 – II. Andantino marziale, quasi moderato

Track 4 – III. Scherzo: Allegro molto vivace

Track 5 – IV. Finale: Moderato assai

### **Audio Production**

Elaine Martone, *recording producer*

Gintas Norvila, *recording, editing, and mixing Engineer*

Jennifer Nulsen, *stereo mastering engineer*

Alan JS Han, *immersive mixing engineer*

### **About Eastman's Symphony No. 2** (by Kira Thurman)

Julius Eastman was a brilliant and deeply affective composer, a man light-years ahead of his time. Born in New York City and raised in Ithaca, New York, he was a student at the Curtis Institute of Music in Philadelphia before joining a vibrant new-music scene at SUNY Buffalo. Early on, his works demonstrated a capacity to shock, awe, and thrill.

If Eastman was musically progressive, his identity as an unapologetically out Black gay man was equally radical in some circles in the 1970s. "What I am trying to achieve is to be what I am to the fullest," Eastman remarked in a 1976 interview. "Black to the fullest, a musician to the fullest, a homosexual to the fullest." It may appear to some that each of those categories exists independently of the others, but to Eastman, they were all necessary components of his identity that could not be separated — nor did he wish for them to be.

Unfortunately, by the 1980s, Eastman's life had begun to fall apart. Unable to secure a permanent faculty appointment and on bad terms with his family, he became difficult to locate, residing either outdoors or in homeless shelters. He died in a Buffalo hospital in 1990 from cardiac arrest at age 49. Only eight months after he died did a notice appear in any newspaper or media outlet.

Eastman's Second Symphony, dedicated to his former lover and a chronicle of their failed relationship, is an example of the musical bravery and deep affect that Eastman is known for expressing. The work requires 100 musicians and takes anywhere from 12 to 20 minutes to perform. It offers opportunities for asynchronous and improvisatory music-making, but the challenge is to ensure that the ensemble also performs certain musical phrases or cadences in time at the right moments.

The symphony itself is a mix of droning with articulated musical phrases that prod at the ear, building up slowly in thickness and richness in its orchestration. In Eastman's inscription of the work, he writes:

*On Tuesday, Main and Chestnut at 19 o'clock, The Faithful Friend and his Beloved Friend decided to meet. On Monday the day before, Christ came, just as it was foretold. Some went up on the right, and some went down on the left. Trumpets did sound (a little sharp), and electric violins did play (a little flat). A most terrible sound. And in the twinkling of an eye the Earth vanished and was no more. But on Tuesday, the day after on Main and Chestnut at 19 o'clock, there stood the Lover Friend and his Beloved Friend, just as they had planned, embracing one another.*

The ending of the symphony portrays just that: two former lovers, standing in darkness, grieving from heartbreak, unsure of what, exactly, comes next.

### **About Tchaikovsky's Symphony No. 2** (by Maria Sonevytsky)

Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky is said to have found inspiration for his Second Symphony while relaxing at his sister-in-law's estate in the Ukrainian village of Kamianka (about 250 miles south of Kyiv), where he heard the folk songs of rural Ukrainian peasants, who had been emancipated from serfdom less than a decade earlier. Though some claims about the Ukrainian provenance of folk materials used in the symphony are contested — specifically, the song referenced in the first movement, *Down the River Volga*, which was likelier thought of in Tchaikovsky's time as a Russian folk song — no one disputes that the rousing Finale of the symphony is based on a still-popular Ukrainian children's song, *Zhuravel'* (The Crane).

In Tchaikovsky's Finale, the hummable tune is introduced plainly and then, over a series of increasingly brassier variations, interrupted by a lyrical countermelody of his own devising, developed to a bombastic conclusion. The premieres of both the original and the now-canonical revised versions of the symphony were held in the most important cities in Imperial Russia: Moscow (1873) and St. Petersburg (1881). Even Tchaikovsky's most rancorous critic, the composer César Cui of the Russian musical nationalist clique known as the "Mighty Five," allowed that the Finale was "magnificent."

Perhaps because of the clear use of the Ukrainian tune in the Finale, the Russian music critic Nicholas Kashkin dubbed the symphony as "Little Russian" — a demeaning name adopted in Imperial Russia to refer to the territory of Left Bank Ukraine that had come under Tsarist domination in the late 18th century. By the 19th century, according to the historian Andreas Kappeler, the term had "acquired the pejorative meaning of the inferior part of Russia." At the same time, though, a surge of nationalism brought profound transformations in Ukrainian society: a boom in Ukrainian literature and the resurgence of Ukrainian vernacular and classical music, the nascent imaginings of something like a national community.

However, orchestras around the world subsequently performed Tchaikovsky's Second Symphony with the programmatic title "Little Russian." In light of the Russian invasion of Ukraine in February 2022, many have since pivoted away from this title, instead calling it the "Ukrainian" Symphony in honor of those

who have lost their lives, those who were displaced, and those who continue to valiantly defend their homeland.

### **About The Cleveland Orchestra**

The Cleveland Orchestra, under the leadership of Franz Welser-Möst since 2002, is one of the most sought-after performing ensembles in the world. Year after year the ensemble exemplifies extraordinary artistic excellence, creative programming, and community engagement. In recent years, *The New York Times* has called Cleveland “the best in America” for its virtuosity, elegance of sound, variety of color, and chamber-like musical cohesion.

Founded by Adella Prentiss Hughes, the Orchestra performed its inaugural concert in December 1918. By the middle of the century, decades of growth and sustained support had turned the ensemble into one of the most admired around the world.

The past decade has seen an increasing number of young people attending concerts, bringing fresh attention to The Cleveland Orchestra’s legendary sound and committed programming. More recently, the Orchestra launched several bold digital projects, including the streaming platform Adella.live and its own recording label. Together, they have captured the Orchestra’s unique artistry and the musical achievements of the Welser-Möst and Cleveland Orchestra partnership.

The 2024–25 season marks Franz Welser-Möst’s 23rd year as Music Director, a period in which The Cleveland Orchestra has earned unprecedented acclaim around the world, including a series of residencies at the Musikverein in Vienna, the first of its kind by an American orchestra, and a number of acclaimed opera presentations.

Since 1918, seven music directors — Nikolai Sokoloff, Artur Rodziński, Erich Leinsdorf, George Szell, Lorin Maazel, Christoph von Dohnányi, and Franz Welser-Möst — have guided and shaped the ensemble’s growth and sound. Through concerts at home and on tour, broadcasts, and a catalog of acclaimed recordings, The Cleveland Orchestra is heard today by a growing group of fans around the world. [Find out more.](#)

### **About Franz Welser-Möst**

For 23 years, Franz Welser-Möst has shaped an unmistakable sound culture as Music Director of The Cleveland Orchestra. Under his leadership, the Orchestra has been repeatedly praised by international critics for its musical excellence, continued its strong commitment to new music, and brought opera back to the stage of Severance Music Center. Through innovation and cooperation, the Orchestra also founded its own streaming platform (Adella.live) and now has one of the youngest audiences in the US.

In addition to residencies in the US, Europe, and China, Welser-Möst and the Orchestra are regular guests at all the major international festivals. Welser-Möst will remain Music Director until 2027, making him the longest-serving music director of The Cleveland Orchestra.

Welser-Möst enjoys a particularly close and productive artistic partnership with the Vienna Philharmonic. He regularly conducts the orchestra in subscription concerts at the Vienna Musikverein, at the Salzburg Festival, and on tour in Europe, Japan, China, and the US, and has appeared three times on the podium for their celebrated New Year’s Concert (2011, 2013, and 2023). At the Salzburg Festival, Welser-Möst has set new standards in interpretation as an opera conductor, with a special focus on the operas of Richard Strauss.

Welser-Möst has been the recipient of several major honors and awards, including the Honorary Membership of the Vienna Philharmonic, bestowed upon him in 2024.

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