

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Sounds of strings usher in spring with the BPO

March concerts highlight string instrumentalists from the University at Buffalo, the BPO, and beyond



Don Quixote, March 1 & 2

JoAnn Falletta, conductor; Roman Mekinulov, cello

The Music of Phil Collins & Genesis, March 8

Bradley Thachuk, conductor; Steve Thachuk, guitar; Jeremy Saje, vocals
Paul III, bass; Dan Potruch, drums; Zachary Provost, keyboard

First Ladies of Song, March 9

Bradley Thachuk, conductor; Carmen Bradford, vocals

Mendelssohn's Reformation, March 15 & 16

Leon Botstein, conductor; Melissa White, violin

Schubert & Wagner, March 23 & 24

Gerard Schwarz, conductor; Julian Schwarz, cello

This March, the Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra welcomes springtime with an invigorating, eclectic lineup of musical experiences. Upcoming BPO performances feature a wide array of string instruments, from the elegant voices of the violin and cello to the bold sound of electric guitar, continuing both the Classics and Rock series. In keeping with the season, the orchestra pulls at the audience's heartstrings with the warmth of music famously associated with vocal jazz greats like Ella Fitzgerald.

Beginning the month, BPO Principal Cellist **Roman Mekinulov** takes the spotlight to musically portray **Don Quixote** in the beloved tone poem by Richard Strauss of the same name, based on the novel by Miguel de Cervantes. In a unique addition to a typical Classics performance, Music Director **JoAnn Falletta** speaks from the podium mid-concert to share the story of Don Quixote, introducing the characters and playing excerpts with the orchestra, to enhance the audience's knowledge of the story before the music unfolds in its entirety.

The following weekend, the second installment of the BPO's Rock series hits the stage with the music of **Phil Collins & Genesis**, featuring brothers **Bradley and Steve Thachuk**, known for their arrangements of rock music with orchestral accompaniment. This setlist of Phil Collins hits from his solo career and 25 years with Genesis is reimagined for full orchestra, with frontman **Jeremy Saje** and an all-star band.

A night later, former lead vocalist of the Count Basie Orchestra **Carmen Bradford** comes to Kleinhans Music Hall to serenade concertgoers in the swinging and rich signature styles of the **First Ladies of Song**: vocal jazz legends Ella Fitzgerald, Billie Holiday, Sarah Vaughan, and Lena Horne. After the concert, the final Musician's Nightcap of the 2023-2024 concert season takes place on the lower level of Kleinhans, with complimentary refreshments and discussion with BPO bassist **Jonathan Borden** for concert attendees to enjoy.

On March 15 and 16, **Melissa White** – a 2024 GRAMMY Award-winner and a recently appointed **Professor of Music at the University at Buffalo** – makes her BPO debut with a violin concerto rediscovered 15 years ago, written by 20th-century composer Florence Price. As a member of the Harlem Quartet, celebrated for advancing diversity in classical music while engaging new audiences with varied repertoire, White is well-equipped to deliver this music to Buffalo audiences. The program, led by renowned conductor **Leon Botstein**, also includes **Mendelssohn's "Reformation"** symphony.

Concluding the month's concerts, the gifted father-son duo of conductor **Gerard Schwarz** and cellist **Julian Schwarz** teams up with the BPO for Copland's beloved *Billy the Kid* Suite, a cello concerto by Arthur Foote, and masterworks by **Schubert & Wagner**. This is a rare opportunity to experience Boston Six composer Foote's cello concerto, being the BPO's first-ever performance of the work, and their first time performing a work by Foote since 1937.

For a complete list of 2023-24 season concerts and details, visit bpo.org/events. Ticket prices for select concerts start at \$20 and can be purchased online at bpo.org/tickets, in-person at the Box Office in Kleinhans Music Hall, or by calling (716) 885-5000.

Find images [here](#). For additional information, interviews, photos, or video, contact Simone Viola at sviola@bpo.org or (716) 242-7814.

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BPO BUFFALO PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA



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