

NORTH CAROLINA **SYMPHONY**

Rachmaninoff Piano Concerto No. 4 and Dvořák New World Symphony

FRI/SAT, SEP 19-20, 2025 | 8PM

MEYMANDI CONCERT HALL, RALEIGH

North Carolina Symphony
Carlos Miguel Prieto, *conductor*
Denis Kozhukhin, *piano*

PROGRAM

Samuel Barber (1910-1981)

Overture to *The School for Scandal*

Sergei Rachmaninoff (1873-1943)

Piano Concerto No. 4 in G minor, Op. 40

I. Allegro vivace

II. Largo

III. Allegro vivace

Denis Kozhukhin, *piano*

Intermission

Antonín Dvořák (1841-1904) **Symphony No. 9**

in E minor, Op. 95, "From the New World"

I. Adagio – Allegro molto

II. Largo

III. Molto vivace

IV. Allegro con fuoco



At the heart of this **America 250** program is Dvořák's "New World" Symphony, written in America. Works by Barber and Rachmaninoff—whose Fourth Piano Concerto took shape in New York—expand the reflection on identity and place.

WEEKEND SPONSOR



Thank you also to the generous individuals, businesses, foundations, and community partners who support the North Carolina Symphony through contributions each season.

About the Artists



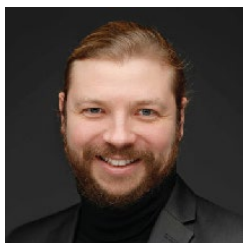
Carlos Miguel Prieto, *Music Director*
The Maxine and Benjamin Swalin Chair

Mexican conductor and Grammy-winner Carlos Miguel Prieto started his tenure as Music Director of the North Carolina Symphony at the beginning of the 2023/24 season. From 2007 to 2022, he was Music Director of the Orquesta Sinfónica Nacional de México. In 2023, he received the Fine Arts Medal—Mexico’s highest honor for a musician. He served as Music Director of the Louisiana Philharmonic Orchestra from 2006 to 2023, helping lead the cultural renewal of New Orleans following Hurricane Katrina and earning a Grammy in 2024. Since 2008, he has also led the Orquesta Sinfónica de Minería (OSM), guiding the ensemble to a Latin Grammy award and residencies at Bravo! Vail in 2024 and 2025. This past summer, he continued an ambitious recording project of the complete works of Revueltas and Ortiz, as well as recording Beethoven Piano Concertos with Anne-Marie McDermott.

Prieto is in demand as a guest conductor for major orchestras, including the Chicago Symphony Orchestra; the symphony orchestras of Atlanta, Dallas, and Toronto; The Cleveland Orchestra and Minnesota Orchestra; and the San Francisco, Houston, and New World symphonies. In 2025, he led concerts with the Philharmonia Orchestra in London and Switzerland and conducted the Los Angeles Philharmonic at the Hollywood Bowl. He also served as Semifinal and Final Round Conductor for the 2025 Van Cliburn International Piano Competition.

Since 2002, Prieto has conducted the Orchestra of the Americas, serving as Principal Conductor until 2011, when he was appointed Music Director. He has also worked extensively with young musicians at The Juilliard School, the Colburn School, the Curtis Institute, and elsewhere. In 2025 he led the Sinfónica Azteca (Mexico’s acclaimed youth orchestra) tour of Mexico. He continues to mentor emerging talent through the Carlos Miguel Prieto Conducting Fellowship at OAcademy, an online conservatory bringing together teachers and students from around the world. He has also worked with the National Youth Orchestra of Great Britain and conducted both the National Youth Orchestra-USA and NYO2 at Carnegie Hall.

Prieto has conducted over 100 world premieres of works by Mexican and American composers, many commissioned by him. He has an extensive discography and was recognized by *Musical America* as Conductor of the Year in 2019. He is a graduate of Princeton and Harvard universities.



Denis Kozhukhin, *piano*

These concerts are the North Carolina Symphony debut for Denis Kozhukhin.

Belgian pianist Denis Kozhukhin will perform this season with orchestras including the Copenhagen Philharmonic and London's Philharmonia. He began the 2024/25 season with a return to the BBC Proms and a debut at the Hollywood Bowl, later returning to the Netherlands Radio Philharmonic Orchestra and BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra and touring Spain with the Luxembourg Philharmonic Orchestra. He also gave recitals at venues including Carnegie Hall, Concertgebouw Amsterdam, BOZAR Brussels, Vienna's Musikverein, Philharmonie Paris and Cologne, Stockholm's Konserthus, Berlin's Pierre Boulez Saal, and Wigmore Hall in London.

In 2023, Kozhukhin joined the National Symphony Orchestra at the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts to perform Rachmaninoff's Piano Concerto No. 4 in a celebration of the composer's 150th birthday. Recent highlights also include performances with the Oslo Philharmonic, NHK Symphony Orchestra, Orquestra Sinfònica de Barcelona, Danish National Symphony Orchestra, Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, Düsseldorfer Symphoniker, Dallas and Melbourne symphony orchestras, San Francisco Symphony, Orchestre symphonique de Montréal, Frankfurt's hr-Sinfonieorchester, BBC Symphony Orchestra, Orchestre National de Belgique, and WDR Sinfonieorchester, among others. Away from the piano, Kozhukhin has also begun to appear as a conductor.

Since winning the Queen Elizabeth Competition in 2010, Kozhukhin has performed with the London Symphony Orchestra, Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra, Rotterdam Philharmonic Orchestra, and Staatskapelle Berlin. He regularly appears at music festivals including Verbier Festival, Menuhin Festival Gstaad, Grafenegg Festival, Dresden Music Festival, Intonations International Chamber Music Festival, Tsinandali, Ruhr Piano Festival, Festival de Lanaudière, and Jerusalem International Chamber Music Festival.

Kozhukhin's discography spans works by Haydn, Mendelssohn, Tchaikovsky, Grieg, Ravel, and Gershwin. A graduate of the Reina Sofía School of Music in Madrid, he further honed his skills at the International Piano Academy Lake Como.

About the Music



*Overture to **The School for Scandal**, Op. 5*

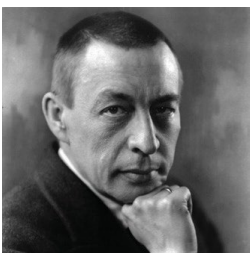
[1931]

SAMUEL BARBER (1910-1981)

Samuel Barber was a child prodigy who enrolled in the founding class at Philadelphia's Curtis Institute of Music at the age of 14. He composed his first work for full orchestra while still a student, drafting the Overture to *The School for Scandal* when he was 21. The Philadelphia Orchestra premiered it two years later, and Columbia University recognized the work with a prestigious Beams Prize, setting Barber on the path toward a thriving career before he had even graduated.

While the title and inspiration came from a satirical British play written in 1777, this music was always meant to stand alone as a concert overture. Formal counterpoint and ceremonious dotted rhythms (i.e., alternating long and short notes) hint at the Old World source material underlying the fresh, witty music from an American star on the rise.

Piccolo, two flutes, two oboes, English horn, two clarinets, bass clarinet, two bassoons, four horns, three trumpets, three trombones, tuba, timpani, percussion, harp, celesta, strings



Piano Concerto No. 4 in G minor, Op. 40

[1926, rev. 1941]

SERGEI RACHMANINOFF (1873-1943)

Sergei Rachmaninoff established a solid reputation as a composer and conductor in the early years of the 20th century, but it was his virtuosity at the piano that elevated him to international stardom. When the Russian Revolution forced him into exile at the end of 1917, he embraced the lucrative but exhausting business of touring as a virtuoso pianist around the United States and Europe, relegating his composing to the rare breaks in his performing schedule.

The centerpieces of Rachmaninoff's repertoire were the three piano concertos he had composed in Russia, including a revision of the early Piano Concerto No. 1 he undertook in 1917. When he carved out a sabbatical from touring in 1925, he used the time in New York and Dresden to fulfill his long-held desire to add a fourth concerto, a work he introduced with The Philadelphia Orchestra and Leopold Stokowski in 1927.

In a letter to fellow composer (and the concerto's dedicatee) Nikolai Medtner, Rachmaninoff expressed misgivings about the concerto's length, and his concerns were only amplified by poor reviews, like one from a New York critic declaring the work "long-winded, tiresome, unimportant, in places tawdry." Rachmaninoff made cuts that shaved about ten percent of its length before publishing the score in 1928; that version is being performed in these concerts. He trimmed another ten percent in 1941 for a version that he once again presented with The Philadelphia Orchestra, in what turned out to be the 68-year-old's last major effort to compose and premiere a new work.

The Fourth Piano Concerto stands with one foot in the Romantic past, and the other in the forward-looking climate of 1920s experimentation. The first theme from the piano, presented in grand chords, combines swashbuckling virtuosity with free-ranging harmonies voiced in stuttering orchestral accompaniment. Rachmaninoff was often at his most inspired when crafting the lyrical themes that provided contrast, and the opening movement's example is one of his finest, drawn in liquid textures that recall his old classmate Scriabin, infused with hints of jazz and Broadway sentimentality. Jazz harmonies also spice up the central *Largo*, proving how Rachmaninoff's ears remained open to new sounds as the world shifted around him.

The mercurial charm of the finale bears a family resemblance to Rachmaninoff's other late masterpiece for piano and orchestra, the *Rhapsody on a Theme of Paganini* from 1934. As in that work, this finale quotes the *Dies Irae* ("Day of Wrath") plainchant, rounding out a lifelong obsession with a fateful church tune that appeared in most of his major compositions.

Solo piano; piccolo, two flutes, two oboes, English horn, two clarinets, two bassoons, four horns, two trumpets, three trombones, tuba, timpani, percussion, strings



Symphony No. 9 in E minor, Op. 95, "From the New World" [1893]

ANTONÍN DVOŘÁK (1841-1904)

Antonín Dvořák came from a small Bohemian village, where his zither-playing father was the local butcher and innkeeper. He might have spent his whole life scraping by as a freelance musician in Prague had it not been for the intervention of a most influential champion, Johannes Brahms, who encountered Dvořák's music while judging a competition. On Brahms' recommendation, the publisher Simrock commissioned Dvořák in 1878, and the resulting *Slavonic Dances* catapulted the Czech composer onto the international stage.

Even after three decades of writing symphonies and chamber music scores that proved him to be a worthy heir to Beethoven and Brahms, Antonín Dvořák was thought of, for better or worse, as a Czech composer. That reputation paid off when a wealthy patron who was setting up a conservatory in New York recruited Dvořák to come direct the school and teach its composition students. Just as he had defined a Czech style for the world, he was tasked with leading American composers toward their own national sound.

Dvořák homed in on two essential sources: the musical traditions of Black Americans and Indigenous Americans. His understanding of Indian culture was indirect, gleaned from Longfellow's epic poem *The Song of Hiawatha* (1855) and from melodies that appeared in heavily edited songbooks. Dvořák did have the benefit of direct contact with Black music through one of his students at the conservatory, Harry Burleigh, a singer and composer who had learned spirituals from his formerly enslaved grandfather.

Going beyond just teaching others, Dvořák incorporated American sounds into his own works from that period, including the symphony that he composed in New York for a debut at Carnegie Hall, subtitled "From the New World." In the symphony's first movement, a leaping motive sounded by the horns at the start of the Allegro molto section becomes a building block for adventurous exploration. A secondary theme set in a major key, first heard in the flute, introduces a pastoral contrast.

Reflecting on **America 250** throughout this season, we celebrate music shaped by American landscapes, audiences, and artistic ideals—Barber's bold overture and the jazz harmonies flavoring Rachmaninoff's concerto join Dvořák's groundbreaking symphony inspired by American folk music.

The “New World” influences become more salient starting in the *Largo* second movement. Drawing on the melodies he learned from Burleigh, Dvořák crafted an original theme first presented as a solo for English horn. Later, with the addition of lyrics by William Arms Fisher, this melody became “Goin’ Home,” and the fact that it is frequently mistaken for an authentic spiritual proves how well Dvořák synthesized his source material.

The third movement fulfills the traditional function of a symphonic scherzo in the mold of Beethoven and Mendelssohn, while also tying the work together with quotations from the two preceding movements. According to Dvořák, a wedding scene from *The Song of Hiawatha* served as inspiration for this festive music.

The finale, like the opening movement, blends European-leaning themes and techniques with glints of folk material, including flashbacks to some of the symphony’s earlier highlights. As the Czech composer duly acknowledged, “I should never have written the symphony ‘just so’ if I hadn’t seen America.”

Piccolo, two flutes, two oboes, English horn, two clarinets, two bassoons, four horns, two trumpets, three trombones, tuba, timpani, percussion, strings

The Musicians of the North Carolina Symphony

Carlos Miguel Prieto,
Music Director

*The Maxine and Benjamin
Swalin Chair*

Grant Llewellyn,
Music Director Laureate

Sophie Sze-Ki Mok,
Assistant Conductor
The Lucy Moore Ruffin Chair

Violin I

Justin Bruns, Concertmaster
*The Annabelle Lundy Fetterman
Chair*

Anna Black*,
Associate Concertmaster
*The Assad Meymandi and Family
Chair*

Karen Strittmatter Galvin,
Assistant Concertmaster

Rotating,
Assistant Concertmaster
The Anne Heartt Gregory Chair

Emily Rist Glover
The Jessie Wyatt Ethridge Chair

Paul Goldsberry
The Richard and Joy Cook Chair

Seula Lee
*The Governor James B. Hunt, Jr.
Chair*

Joseph Meyer*

Maria Meyer
*The Tom and Mary Mac Bradshaw
Chair*

K. Lee Morris
The Harvey At-Large Chair

Esther Roestan

Jessica Ryou
The James C. Byrd and Family Chair

Pablo Sánchez Pazos**
The Phyllis ("Pat") Conrad Wells Chair

Erin Zehngut
The J. Felix Arnold Chair

Violin II

Jacqueline Saed Wolborsky,
Principal
The Nancy Finch Wallace Chair

Tiffany Kang, Associate Principal
The Blanche Martin Shaw Chair

David Kilbride, Assistant Principal
Qi Cao

Janet Gayer Hall

Chris Jusell

Oskar Ozolinch

Subin Shin

Jeanine Wynton

Viola

Samuel Gold, Principal
*The Florence Spinks and Charles
Jacob Cate and Alma Yondorf and
Sylvan Hirschberg Chair*

Kurt Tseng, Associate Principal
The Betty Ellen Madry Chair

Brian Sherwood, Assistant Principal
Petra Berényi

Amy Mason
The J. Sidney Kirk Chair

Daniel Moore

Sandra Schwarcz
*The Samuel H. and Anne Latham
Johnson Chair*

To Be Filled

Cello

Bonnie Thron, Principal
The June and Tom Roberg Chair

Elizabeth Beilman,
Associate Principal
*The Sarah Carlyle Herbert Dorroh
Chair*

Peng Li, Assistant Principal
Anonymously Endowed

Yewon Ahn
Anonymously Endowed

Emma Cary

The Sara Wilson Hodgkins Chair

David Meyer
The Nell Hirschberg Chair

Marc Moskovitz*
The William Charles Rankin Chair

Nathaniel Yaffe
*The Secretary of Cultural Resources
Betty Ray McCain Chair*

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Leonid Finkelshteyn, Principal
*The Martha and Peyton Woodson
Chair*

Joshua DePoint, Associate Principal
*The Dr. and Mrs. Preston H. Gada
Chair*

Bruce Ridge
*The John C. and Margaret P. Parker
Chair*

To Be Filled
*The Harlee H. and Pauline G. Jobe
Chair*

To Be Filled

Flute

Megan Torti, Principal
*The Mr. and Mrs. George M. Stephens
Chair*

Mary E. Boone, Assistant Principal
*The Dr. and Mrs. Shaler Stidham, Jr.
Chair*

Vaynu Kadiyali
The Jack and Sing Boddie Chair

Piccolo

Vaynu Kadiyali

Oboe

Melanie Wilsden, Principal
The Hardison and Stoltze Chair

Joseph Peters, Associate Principal
The Lizette T. Dunham Chair

Hoon Chang
The Clarence and Alice Aycock Poe Chair

English Horn

Joseph Peters
The Bruce and Margaret King Chair

Clarinet

Samuel Almaguer, Principal
The Mr. and Mrs. J. Christopher Walker, II Chair

Sammy Lesnick, Assistant Principal
The Kathryn Powell and Green Flavie Cooper Chair

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Aaron Apaza, Principal
The Mr. and Mrs. Fitzgerald S. Hudson Chair

Wenmin Zhang, Assistant Principal,
The Beethoven Chair

French Horn

Rebekah Daley, Principal
The Mary T. McCurdy Chair

Kimberly Van Pelt, Associate Principal
The Paul R. Villard and Gabriel Wolf Chair

Gabriel Mairson
The James Marion Poyner Chair

Russell Rybicki
The Mary Susan Kirk Fulghum Chair

The North Carolina Symphony gratefully acknowledges financial support from Wake County, the City of Raleigh, and the State of North Carolina.



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Paul Randall, Principal
The George Smedes Poyner Chair

Ben Hauser, Associate Principal
The Henry and Martha Zaytoun and Family Chair

Trombone

Devin Drinan, Principal
The Thomas Warwick Steed, Jr. Family Chair

John Ilika, Assistant Principal
The Frances Armour Bryant Chair

Bass Trombone

Matthew Neff
Anonymously Endowed

Tuba

Seth Horner, Principal
The Governor and Mrs. James G. Martin, Jr. Chair

Timpani

Colin Hartnett, Principal
The Patricia R., Steven T. and George F. Hackney III Chair

Percussion

Richard Motylinski, Principal
The Margery and Earl Johnson, Jr. Chair

Rajesh Prasad, Assistant Principal
The Abram and Frances Pascher Kanof Chair

Organ

To Be Filled
The Albert and Susan Jenkins and Family Organ Chair

Library

Stephanie Wilson, Principal Orchestra Librarian
The Mary Colvert and Banks C. Talley Chair

Taylor Troyer, Assistant Orchestra Librarian

*Acting position

**Leave of absence

Named musician chairs are made possible through very meaningful gifts to the Symphony's endowment. As such, these donor families are also members of the Lamar Stringfield Society.

All string players rotate stands on a periodic basis in each section with the exception of titled players: Principals, Associate Principals, and Assistant Principals.

The North Carolina Symphony is a member of the League of American Orchestras and the International Conference of Symphony and Opera Musicians.

The North Carolina Master Chorale is the Resident Chorus of the North Carolina Symphony.

The North Carolina Symphony Foundation gratefully acknowledges the generous gift of the Lupot violin from Arnold and Zena† Lerman.
†deceased

NORTH CAROLINA SYMPHONY

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