



أوركسترا قطر الفلهارمونية
Qatar Philharmonic Orchestra

Founded by | من إنشاء
Qatar Foundation | مؤسسة قطر

QATAR PREMIERE OF GERSHWIN'S "AN AMERICAN IN PARIS"

www.qatarphilharmonicorchestra.org

Program

Qatar Premiere of Gershwin's "An American in Paris"

Qatar National Convention Centre, Auditorium 3
Thursday, 1 October 2026
7:30 pm

Marcus Bosch, conductor

Program

**Igor Stravinsky:
(1882-1971)**

The Firebird Suite (L'oiseau de feu)

Introduction
The Firebird and its Dance
Variation of the Firebird
The Princesses' Khorovod (Rondo, Round Dance)
Infernal Dance of King Kashchei
Berceuse (Lullaby)
Finale

Intermission

**George Gershwin:
(1898-1937)**

An American in Paris

George Gershwin:

Catfish Row: Symphonic Suite

from Porgy and Bess

Catfish Row

Porgy Sings

Fugue

Hurricane

Good Morning, Sistuh

Qatar Philharmonic Orchestra Narrative

The Qatar Philharmonic Orchestra (QPO) is a pioneering cultural institution that proudly represents Qatar on the world stage. Founded in 2007 by Her Highness Sheikha Moza bint Nasser, the orchestra brings together 78 world class musicians from 28 countries, many of whom have performed with the world's leading ensembles such as the New York Philharmonic, Frankfurt Opera, BBC Symphony Orchestra, Tonhalle Zürich, Teatro Colón, and NDR Radiophilharmonie.

Known for its innovative programming and unique sound, QPO blends Western symphonic traditions with the rich musical heritage of the Arab world, creating performances that are globally resonant and deeply rooted in the region's cultural legacy.

With more than 500 performances to date, QPO has graced prestigious stages around the world, including La Scala (Milan), Konzerthaus Wien (Vienna), Théâtre des Champs-Élysées (Paris), Santa Cecilia (Rome), the Kennedy Center (Washington D.C.), and the Royal Albert Hall (London).

QPO is a source of national pride and a symbol of Qatar's commitment to cultural excellence. Driven by a mission to make music accessible to all, QPO continues to break barriers, inspire new generations, and lead the way in shaping a vibrant musical future for Qatar and the region.

Out of respect for the musicians and fellow audience members please silence your mobile phones. Applause between movements is not customary. Please also refrain from flash photography. Seating begins 30 minutes before performances. Latecomers cannot be seated during the concert. Children 6 and over are welcome at Philharmonic concerts. The Philharmonic retains the right to expel anyone disturbing others. Food and beverages can be consumed in the lobby only.

Composers and Program Notes



Igor Stravinsky (1882-1971)

Igor Stravinsky, a Russian-born composer who later became a French and American citizen, was one of music's most epochal innovators no other composer of the twentieth century exerted such a pervasive influence or dominated his art in the way that Stravinsky did during his five-decade musical career., the most important hallmark of Stravinsky's style is, indeed, its constantly changing character. Emerging from the spirit of late Russian nationalism and ending his career with a thorny, individual language steeped in twelve-tone principles, Stravinsky assumed a number of aesthetic guises throughout the course of his development while always retaining a distinctive, essential identity.

He first gained international recognition through three ballets that premiered in Paris *The Firebird* (1910), *Petrushka* (1911) and *The Rite of Spring* (1913).

Stravinsky composed many pieces that involved individual works by earlier composers, a tradition used in the fifteenth century. A fine example is his *Pulcinella* of 1920 where Giovanni Pergolesi contributed to the musical skeleton. He developed this technique further in the ballet, *The Fairy's Kiss* (1928), which was based on music by Tchaikovsky. Later examples of similar musical transformations include Stravinsky's use of Schubert's *Marche Militaire No. 1* in his *Circus Polka* (1942) and *Happy Birthday to You* in *Greeting Prelude* (1955).

The Firebird Suite (L'oiseau de feu)

Stravinsky extracted three suites from his Firebird ballet. The third concert version was completed in 1945. Stravinsky called it a "ballet suite," and it was substantially different from its predecessors in a number of ways, perhaps most significantly in the addition of more music in the third suite, whereas suites one and two each consisted of five movements, the 1945 suite boasted ten, including the original five from the 1919 suite, plus three *Pantomimes*, a *Pas de deux*, and a *Scherzo*.

The second suite of 1919 is sometimes also referred to as the "Symphonic Suite". The composer had made a number of reductions in orchestration of the two later suites: the 1945 suite will consist of the same instrumentation as the reduced 1919 suite, with the exception of an added snare drum in the former. There were also revisions on the notation, barring, and metrics of the second suite to facilitate reading his complex rhythms.

While his suites remained popular for decades after the ballet's appearance early in the century, Stravinsky quickly outgrew the Russian musical idioms that give the work its characteristic sound. The concert suites enabled Stravinsky to extract what he felt were the ballet's salvageable moments, and to censor what musicologist Eric Walter White called the work's "effusiveness [which] must have been increasingly embarrassing to Stravinsky as time went on." The composer himself, after years of attempting to update his ballet, always referred to the work dismissively as "that audience lollipop."



George Gershwin (1898-1937)

American composer and pianist George Gershwin was born in Brooklyn in 1898. Autodidact, Gershwin took some classes with Charles Hambitzer who soon qualified him as a genius. Gershwin showed, from the first songs he published, innovative compositions techniques that spanned both popular and classical genres. He composed both for Broadway and for the classical concert theatre. His first big, popular success was with the song *Swanee*. Gershwin's most popular melodies came to be widely known. Among his compositions, many were used in movies or became big standards of jazz music that were recorded by big names such as Ella Fitzgerald, Louis Armstrong, Herbie Hancock, etc.

Determined to establish himself as a serious composer" twenty-five-years-old Gershwin composed his jazz-influenced *Rhapsody in Blue* in 1924. It was premiered in New York's Aeolian Hall to an audience including Jascha Heifetz, Fritz Kreisler, Leopold Stokowski, Sergei Rachmaninoff, and Igor Stravinsky. Gershwin followed this success with his Piano Concerto in F Major. Among Gershwin's best-known orchestral compositions are also his set of variations on *I got rhythm* for piano and orchestra (1934), his film music such as *An American in Paris* (music to Vincent Minnelli's film, 1928) and *Delicious* (music to David Butler's film, 1931), as well as the opera *Porgy and Bess* (1935).

An American in Paris

An American in Paris is a jazz-inspired symphonic poem composed by George Gershwin and first performed in 1928. The work reflects Gershwin's experiences in Paris, capturing the vibrancy, atmosphere, and cultural energy of the city during the *Années folles* (the "Crazy Years" of the 1920s).

Written for a full symphony orchestra, the composition also incorporates distinctive elements such as celesta, saxophones, and authentic Parisian taxi horns, which Gershwin brought to New York for the premiere. The piece debuted on December 13, 1928, at Carnegie Hall, performed by the New York Philharmonic under the direction of Walter Damrosch.

Commissioned after the success of *Rhapsody in Blue* and Gershwin's *Concerto in F*, the work was completed only weeks before its premiere. Gershwin also collaborated with critic and composer Deems Taylor on the original program notes.

Today, *An American in Paris* is regarded as one of Gershwin's most celebrated orchestral works, blending classical forms with jazz influences to create a vivid musical portrait of Paris.

Catfish Row: Symphonic Suite from Porgy and Bess

Inspired by the vibrant world of *Porgy and Bess*, *Catfish Row* is George Gershwin's orchestral suite drawn directly from his celebrated opera. Originally titled *Suite from Porgy and Bess*, the work was completed in 1936 and premiered on January 21 of that year at the Academy of Music in Philadelphia. The premiere featured the Philadelphia Orchestra conducted by Alexander Smallens, with Gershwin himself performing the piano part, including the solo passage heard in the opening moments. The suite preserves some of the composer's most profound, dramatic, and sophisticated music, transforming the operatic narrative into a compelling symphonic experience.

The musical journey begins with an atmospheric introduction that paints a vivid picture of life in Catfish Row, the close-knit Charleston community at the heart of the opera. The opening movement incorporates "Jazzbo Brown's Piano Blues," a section originally removed from the opera and not restored until decades later, before introducing the beloved melody of Summertime. The movement captures both the tenderness and vitality of everyday life, ending with a brief coda derived from the energetic "crap game" music that follows *Summertime* in the opera.

As the story unfolds, the suite turns its focus to the character of Porgy. Heartfelt selections including *I Got Plenty o' Nuttin' and Bess, You Is My Woman Now* reflect themes of love, hope, and resilience. A lyrical cello solo serves as a bridge between these melodies, creating a deeply expressive portrait of the relationship between Porgy and Bess. The warmth of these moments is soon contrasted with darker emotions as the music delves into one of the opera's most dramatic episodes. Through a powerful fugue, Gershwin evokes the tension and tragedy surrounding the murder of Crown, drawing on complex harmonies and striking orchestral textures.

The atmosphere intensifies further with the hurricane sequence, one of the most dramatic scenes in the entire opera. Here, the orchestra unleashes tremendous energy, depicting the fear, chaos, and destructive power of nature through surging rhythms and vivid orchestral color. After the storm subsides, the music gradually moves toward resolution and renewal. The final movement recalls the opening of the opera's last scene before leading to the uplifting strains of *Oh, Lawd, I'm on My Way*, bringing the suite to an inspiring conclusion filled with determination and hope.

To achieve its remarkable range of colors and emotions, *Catfish Row* is scored for a large orchestra. This rich instrumentation allows Gershwin to blend symphonic tradition with jazz, blues, and American folk influences, creating a uniquely expressive sound world.

Although Gershwin conducted several performances of the suite before his death in 1937, the work gradually faded from the repertory and was long thought to have been largely forgotten. It was rediscovered in 1958 through the efforts of Ira Gershwin's secretary, Lawrence D. Stewart. That same year, Ira Gershwin gave the work its present title, *Catfish Row*, to distinguish it from Robert Russell Bennett's *Porgy and Bess: A Symphonic Picture*, an entirely different orchestral adaptation commissioned after Gershwin's death. Despite its temporary obscurity, *Catfish Row* is now recognized as one of the most valuable orchestral interpretations of *Porgy and Bess*, not only because it contains many of the opera's most memorable melodies, but because it was conceived and arranged by Gershwin himself. Through its seamless blend of narrative drama, unforgettable themes, and richly colored orchestration, the suite remains a powerful celebration of one of the greatest achievements in American music.



Marcus Bosch
conductor

Marcus Bosch is one of the most distinguished and innovative minds on the German conducting scene and a highly sought after conductor worldwide.

In 2020/21 he was appointed chief conductor of the Norddeutsche Philharmonie Rostock and has been artistic director of the Opernfestspiele Heidenheim since 2010, which has become one of the largest and most successful opera festivals in recent years, not least due to the award winning orchestra, Cappella Aquileia founded by Marcus Bosch himself.

Current orchestral projects take Marcus Bosch to Essen, Stuttgart, Constance, Vienna, Athens, Palermo, Milan, Belgrade, and Qatar. He has also conducted regularly at the Hamburg State Opera, Semperoper Dresden, Deutsche Oper Berlin, Cologne Opera, and will make his debut at the Wexford Opera Festival in 2021.

The German artist with Brazilian-Italian roots began his career as a Kapellmeister in Wiesbaden, Saarbrücken and Halle. He was General Music Director of the city of Aachen from 2002-2012 and GMD of the Nuremberg State Theater and Philharmonic from 2011 to 2018.

His operatic repertoire includes more than 100 music theater works, including major projects such as Wagner's Ring Cycle and Berlioz's Les Troyens. The live CD recordings of Anton Bruckner's symphonies with the Aachen Symphony Orchestra caused an international sensation. "A thrilling listening experience," was the verdict of the Kulturspiegel, and the WDR summed up that the Aachen cycle "need fear no prominent names." The Brahms recordings also confirmed the outstanding quality Bosch had achieved with the Aachen orchestra. In Nuremberg, Marcus Bosch achieved a similar feat with the recording of all Dvorák symphonies as well as the Symphonic Poems. Klassik.com spoke of a "stroke of luck for all Dvorák fans". Currently, his recordings of the Schumann symphonies and Beethoven's music for the theater with the Cappella Aquileia are being enthusiastically reviewed.

In general, the "aural seducer," as Deutschlandfunk Kultur called him, is breaking new, innovative ground: he is constantly developing new concert and event formats, conducted the world's first freely accessible live Internet broadcast ("Salome" in Aachen) in 2008 and the first opera premiere broadcast live in movie theaters ("Tristan und Isolde" in Nuremberg) in 2012. With the Nuremberg Klassik Open Air, he has repeatedly directed the largest classical music event in Europe.

Marcus Bosch cultivates a stylistically broad concert and opera repertoire from the baroque to the modern. He has been responsible for numerous world premieres and has worked with influential directors such as Peter Konwitschny, Calixto Bieito and Stéphane Braunschweig as well as internationally renowned singers and instrumental soloists.

Marcus Bosch is chairman of the German GMD Conference and, as professor, leads a highly successful conducting class and the University Symphony Orchestra at the renowned HMT in Munich.

Upcoming Concerts

Oscar Race: An Evening of Academy-Award Music

Qatar National Convention Centre, Auditorium 3
Saturday, 17 October 2026
7:30 pm

Frank Strobel, conductor
Manfred Callsen, narrator

In cooperation with the Europäische FilmPhilharmonie - EFP, Conductor Frank Strobel, a pioneer of the film-in-concert genre, leads the Qatar Philharmonic Orchestra through the music behind some of cinema's most unforgettable moments, narrated by Manfred Callsen. From the sweeping desert vistas of *Lawrence of Arabia* and the thundering chariot race in *Ben-Hur*, to the time-travelling adventure of *Back to the Future*, and the bittersweet romance of *La La Land*. This is a night of music you already know and love, brought to life live.

Brahms Reimagined

Katara Cultural Village, Opera House
Saturday, 31 October 2026
7:30 pm

Wilson Ng, conductor
Esther Yoo, violin

Conductor Wilson Ng (newly appointed Fellow Conductor of the London Philharmonic Orchestra), leads the Qatar Philharmonic Orchestra. Violinist Esther Yoo (youngest prizewinner of the prestigious Queen Elisabeth Competition), joins the orchestra for Brahms' *Violin Concerto in D Major*, one of the most beloved works in the violin repertoire. After the interval, the programme lives up to its title with Brahms' *Piano Quartet in G Minor*, radically transformed into a full orchestral work by Arnold Schoenberg. Familiar Brahms experienced in a way you've never heard before.

Program

Johannes Brahms: Violin Concerto in D Major, Op. 77

Intermission

Johannes Brahms: Piano Quartet in G Minor, Op. 25 (orchestrated by Schoenberg)

Musicians



LIONEL SCHMIT



JOO YOUNG OH



VITALII PERVUSHYN



LORENA MANESCU



DMITRI TORCHINSKY



TOBIAS GETTE



MICHAELA LINSBAUER



TAEHYUN KIM



ANNEMARI AINOMAE



DINA LEINI



PAVLO DOVHAN



RALUCA GETTE



ANA MARIA RUSU



FULVIO FURLANUT



ROLANDA GINKUTE



MAIAS ALYAMANI



REEM KHOURY



GEORGES YAMINE



ISLAM EL HEFNAWY



SHAZA OWEDA



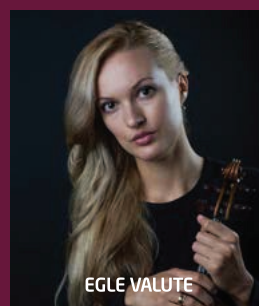
JULIA KORODI



ANNE-CATHRIN EHRLICH



MOHAMED OWEDA



EGLÉ VALUTE



GIOVANNI PASINI



ANCA BOLD



ANDREA MEREUTA

Musicians



VICTOR SUMENKOV



MERVE BULUN



INES WEIN



ISLAM ABDELAZIZ



KAHRAMAN SEREF



KIRILL BOGATYREV



HASSAN EL MOLLA



ANTON PAVLOVSKY



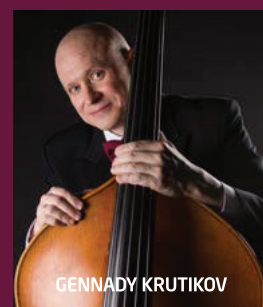
CHRISTOPH SCHMITZ



HARALD GEORGI



NICOLAS ROJANSKI



GENNADY KRUTIKOV



SANDOR ONODI



MATTEO GASPARI



RADOVAN HETSCH



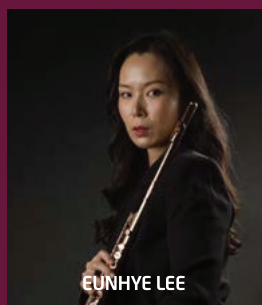
SERGIY KONYAKHYN



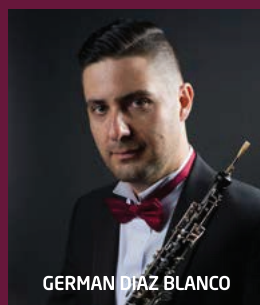
ALEKSANDR HASKIN



JIHOON SHIN



EUNHYE LEE



GERMAN DIAZ BLANCO



MOHAMED IBRAHIM SALEH



CLAIRE GLAGO



RONY MOSER



THOMAS GNAUSCH



SIMONE ZANACCHI



DANIEL HRINDA



YOSHIKO KOYAMA

Musicians



MIROSLAV STOYANOV



PETER DAVIDA



GIDEON SEIDENBERG



ATILLA SZÜCS



ZSOLT PÉTER



LASZLO FROSCHL



JORIS LAENEN



DANIEL EDELHOFF



PHILIPP REBMANN



TOMOKI KIRITA



DIMO PICTHALOV



SEBASTIAN ZULUAGA



RICHARD ALBERTO DIAZ



ALEXANDER KAMENAROV



KEE GUAN NG



JULIE SGARRO

Sponsors and Partners

