



MEDIA CONTACT

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Boulder Phil Season Finale Features Music Inspired by Scandinavia With Renowned Violinist Jennifer Koh

Concert also kicks off year-long collaboration with City of Boulder Open Space and Mountain Parks

The Boulder Philharmonic Orchestra's 2012-2013 season, *The Spirit of Boulder*, comes to a close on Saturday, April 27, with a concert that features music inspired by Scandinavia and welcomes violinist Jennifer Koh in a performance of the Sibelius *Violin Concerto*. The concert, with works also by Debussy, Stravinsky, and Rautavaara, takes place at Macky Auditorium, CU-Boulder, at 7:30 p.m., with Michael Butterman conducting. The pre-concert talk at 6:30 p.m. will feature Dr. Glenda Dawn Goss, Finlandia Foundation's Lecturer of the Year, with Boulder Phil Assistant Conductor Travis Jürgens.

"This concert is less about paying tribute to Nordic culture than it is about a certain kind of sound aesthetic—one that is spare, atmospheric, and deeply calming," said Butterman, who is finishing his seventh season as music director with the Boulder Phil. "The piece that initially helped to shape this concert is Einojuhani Rautavaara's 'Concerto for Birds,' his *Cantus Arcticus*. It's a marvelously evocative piece that blends recorded sound—birdsong that the composer himself recorded near the Arctic Circle in Finland—and acoustic instruments. In listening, one gets a real sense of the landscape—its expansiveness, its loneliness, its austere beauty," said Butterman.

"There is an impressionistic wash that seems to tint one's perception of the *Cantus Arcticus* and the land it describes," continued Butterman, "and it is that aesthetic that influenced our decision to program Claude Debussy's quintessential impressionistic nature-scape, *Prelude to the Afternoon of a Faun*. Both this work and the *Cantus Arcticus* have a quiet, calm beauty, and open with extended passages for the flute. Both are sonic paintings of serenity—one cold and sparse, the other warmer and fuller."

The concert also presents two works from the "father" of Finnish composers, and the man who encouraged and inspired Rautavaara—Jean Sibelius. "In some ways, both *Finlandia* and the *Violin Concerto* are atypical of Sibelius's output," said Butterman. "Much of his music takes a while to unfold and the ideas coalesce gradually. In both of these pieces, though, we hear fully formed themes and motives right from the start, especially in *Finlandia*, which is as tuneful and patriotic a work as one could ask for."

The *Violin Concerto*—Sibelius's only work for solo instrument and orchestra—is tremendously demanding of the soloist, and treats the orchestra as an equal partner. "The last movement is especially brilliant and tuneful," said Butterman. "The whole piece has a symphonic 'weight' to it and can therefore hold its own as the culmination of an evening's concert."

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Performing the Sibelius *Violin Concerto* is American violinist Jennifer Koh, making her Boulder Phil debut. Koh (*rhymes with toe*), has performed with leading orchestras and conductors around the world. During the 1994-95 season, she won the International Tchaikovsky Competition in Moscow, the Concert Artists Guild Competition, and the Avery Fisher Career Grant. She recently performed in her New York Philharmonic subscription debut conducted by Lorin Maazel, as well as with the London Philharmonia Orchestra led by Esa-Pekka Salonen. Koh, who performs on a 1727 Ex Grumiaux Ex General DuPont Stradivari, is known for her intense, commanding performances.

Music by Igor Stravinsky is featured directly before the performance of the *Violin Concerto*, placed last on the program. "Stravinsky's *Four Norwegian Moods* is interesting in that it is by a Russian, living in California, writing for a film that was never completed, and using Norwegian tunes found in a used book store," said Butterman. "Because of the folk tunes, there is a rustic folksiness to the work, but the textures are spare and the harmonies never let you forget that Stravinsky is the composer."

This season finale concert inaugurates a year-long collaboration with the City of Boulder Open Space and Mountain Parks, in conjunction with the Phil's upcoming season theme, *Nature & Music: The Spirit of Boulder*. Naturalists will lead geology and birding hikes including musical excerpts played in the field, as well as provide program notes to complement concert programming. To complement the performance of the *Cantus Arcticus*, naturalist David Sutherland with Open Space and Mountain Parks will lead two nature hikes at Sawhill Ponds in Boulder on April 21 and May 5. For additional information on these outings, visit <http://www.boulderphil.org/concerts/apr-27-season-finale#hikes>.

The Boulder Phil, a fully professional orchestra, has continued to expand its audiences during the past seven seasons. Season subscriptions are up 70 percent from the 2006-2007 season, due in large part to Butterman's musical leadership and community engagement. To date, Masterworks and Pops sales numbers are up 13 percent in number of tickets sold and 20 percent up in ticket income over last season. Subscriptions to the 2013-2014 season, *Nature & Music: The Spirit of Boulder*, are on sale now and can be purchased by visiting www.BoulderPhil.org or calling 303-449-1343, ext. 2.

Saturday, April 27, 2013, 7:30 p.m.

Land of the Midnight Sun

Michael Butterman, Music Director

Jennifer Koh, Violin

CLAUDE DEBUSSY — *Prelude to The Afternoon of a Faun*

EINOJUHANI RAUTAVAARA — *Cantus Arcticus, Concerto for Birds and Orchestra*

JEAN SIBELIUS — *Finlandia*

IGOR STRAVINSKY — *Four Norwegian Moods*

JEAN SIBELIUS — *Violin Concerto*

Macky Auditorium, CU-Boulder

Tickets: \$13-\$70 at www.BoulderPhil.org and 303-449-1343, ext. 2.

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**Related Events**

Café Phil, a free “open door rehearsal” with the Boulder Phil

Thursday, April 25, 7:30 p.m.

The Dairy Center for the Arts

2590 Walnut Street, Boulder, CO 80302

Koenig Alumni Center Post-concert Reception (CU-Boulder campus)

Saturday, April 27, 9:30-11 PM

Season finale celebration and post-concert reception with Michael Butterman and guest artist

Jennifer Koh. Tickets, \$50 per person, are available at

<http://www.boulderphil.org/support/events-of-note> and 303-449-1343, ext. 2.

Musical Birding Hikes (free)

Sunday, April 21, 8-10:30 a.m.

Sunday, May 5, 8-10:30 a.m.

Sawhill Ponds, Boulder (75th Street about 0.6 miles north of Valmont Road)

Naturalist David Sutherland with City of Boulder Open Space and Mountain Parks will lead two nature hikes to complement the performance of the *Cantus Arcticus*. For additional information, visit,

http://www.bouldercolorado.gov/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=2855&Itemid=1045.

Season Presenting Sponsor: Flatirons Bank

Official Hotel for Boulder Phil Guest Artists: Millennium Harvest House

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