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Fine conducting, choral offerings, players outside the concert halls: Sounds good.

Even with the classical music world on pins and needles over the future of the Philadelphia Orchestra, the fall season hardly looks grim. Not only does the orchestra have a strong podium lineup - including chief conductor Charles Dutoit, music director designate Yannick Nézet-Séguin, and popular guest Vladimir Jurowski - but other organizations in town keep pushing forward with enterprising programs that are getting them out of the usual venues.

New Jersey's Symphony in C sets up shop in Macy's Grand Court on Oct. 1 for another Wanamaker Organ centennial celebration in which music director Rossen Milanov and organist Peter Richard Conte collaborate on Widor's *Symphony No. 6*. Network for New Music has something that promises to be part concert, part poetry slam at World Cafe Live Nov. 6. Opera Company of Philadelphia simulcasts its opening night of *Carmen* Sept. 30 on Independence Mall.

The season is unusually heavy on choral music, in part because Philadelphia loves to sing but also because Nézet-Séguin, who studied choral conducting at Westminster Choir College in Princeton, is doing Brahms' *A German Requiem* Nov. 3 to 5 with Dorothea Röschmann and Matthias Goerne. And heaven only knows what Donald Nally is cooking up for his choir, the Crossing, on Dec. 16 in Chestnut Hill.

Below, some performances my colleague Peter Dobrin and I anticipate this fall. - **David Patrick Stearns**,
Inquirer music critic



Whether or not the world needs another *Carmen*, **Opera Company of Philadelphia** has cast Rinat Shaham, a frequent guest of Christoph Eschenbach and an artist of intense intelligence, who sings the role at the Academy of Music Sept. 30 to Oct. 14. (www.operaphila.org or 215-732-8400) - **David Patrick Stearns**

Pianist **Stewart Goodyear** makes a major Beethoven statement Oct. 6 in Longwood Gardens' suddenly formidable performing arts series - taking on the "Waldstein," "Tempest," "Moonlight," and "Appassionata" sonatas in a single recital. (tickets.longwoodgardens.org or 215-893-1999) - **Peter Dobrin**

Pamela Frank, one of the most beloved American violinists, was sidelined by an injury roughly a decade ago but slowly has been returning to concert life. Her Philadelphia Chamber Music Society engagement on Oct. 9 at the American Philosophical Society provocatively juxtaposes Scriabin, Brahms, and Mozart with the temporarily reconstituted Guarneri Quartet plus pianist Gary Graffman. (www.pcmsconcerts.org or 215-569-8080) - **D.P.S.**

Lang Lang's come along way since his Curtis student days. His face is everywhere on concert hall brochures and beyond, and he returns in October for a series with the Philadelphia Orchestra that will climax with a national simulcast Oct. 22. The repertoire: Liszt, whom he's has been advocating with his usual feverishness, claiming no composer understood the piano so well. (215-893-1999 or www.philorch.org.) - **D.P.S.**

The superlative **Jonathan Biss** - recently named to the faculty of the Curtis Institute of Music - picks up the Beethoven thread Oct. 23 in the composer's *Piano Concerto No. 4* with the Curtis Symphony Orchestra led by Michael Stern. (www.curtis.edu or 215-893-7902.) - **P.D.**

Orchestra 2001 collaborates with the **Mendelssohn Club** in a program of minimalists, both American and Eastern European, most especially Arvo Pärt's *Adam's Lament* Oct. 22 at the Church of the Holy Trinity and 23 at Swarthmore College. It's also worth noting that Pierre Boulez's music appears on every program this year. Yay! (www.orchestra2001.org or 215-893-1999) - **D.P.S.**

Astral Artists makes a connection between Beethoven's *Septet* and the Brahms *Serenade No. 1* in a reconstruction of Brahms' original version for nine instruments. It's one of three Astral concerts on Dec. 3 at the Church of the Holy Trinity, all focusing on Brahms' chamber music. (www.astralartists.org or 215-735-6999) - **P.D.**

Princeton Symphony teams with **Westminster College Choir** for Rachmaninoff's *The Bells* - a great choral setting of Edgar Allan Poe writings that Eugene Ormandy used to perform in the original English. But conductor Rossen Milanov prefers the Russian that the composer had in his mind's ear. Nov. 13 at Princeton University. (www.princetonsymphony.org or 609-497-0020) - **D.P.S.**

Orchestre Revolutionnaire et Romantique, the larger version of John Eliot Gardiner's English Baroque Soloists, returns to Beethoven with *Symphonies No. 3 and 5* - no doubt with a more evolved slant than in its recordings in the mid-1990s. Nov. 15 - see below for a tough choice on that date - at the Kimmel Center. (www.kimmelcenter.org or 215-893-1999) - **D.P.S.**

Austrian mezzo-soprano **Angelika Kirschschrager**, though always a fine singer, has hit a new level of interpretive insights in her art-song repertoire, and this program couldn't

be more substantial, with Wolf and Mahler. Presented by the Philadelphia Chamber Music Society Nov. 15 at the Kimmel's Perelman Theater. (www.pcmsconcerts.org or 215-569-8080) - **D.P.S.**

Peering around the corner into early January, Beethoven's *Violin Concerto* will no doubt tell us a lot about the soloist, Arabella Steinbacher, but all ears will be on conductor **Robin Ticciati** when the young Brit makes his debut with the Philadelphia Orchestra Jan. 12 to 14. If the Beethoven doesn't fully reveal his personality, the rather coals-to-Newcastle Sibelius *Symphony No. 2* should do the trick. (www.philorch.org 215-893-1999) - **P.D.**

Another taste of 2012: **ECCO** - the 17 players that constitute the East Coast Chamber Orchestra - makes a Philadelphia Chamber Music Society appearance Jan. 6 with Beethoven's *Grosse fuge, Op. 133*, as well as works of Schoenberg, Britten, and Dvorák. (www.pcmsconcerts.org or 215-569-8587) - **P.D.**

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