

The Arts Fuse

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Fuse Commentary/Preview: 2016 Fall Orchestral Season Overview

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By Jonathan Blumhofer

Some years the summer months seem to go by faster than others; 2016's were a pretty quick blink of the eye, indeed. One thing that the start of fall means, though, is that the area's vibrant orchestral scene starts shifting into high gear and this year that's very good (and exciting) news. In fact, in the six years I've now been reviewing for the *Fuse*, I can honestly say that the 2016-17 season looks, in many regards, to be – across the boards – one of the liveliest in recent memory: there's simply something for just about everyone and some of it from some surprising places. So, without further ado, here is my overview of the high points we have to anticipate from the area's leading orchestral ensembles and presenters over the closing months of the year.

Boston Symphony Orchestra

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In Brief



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The hope is that nobody will notice that arts criticism hasn't been invited to the Pulitzer Prize's centennial party.



Fuse News: When You Think Things Can't Get Worse — More Arts Criticism Bites the Dust

The loss of arts criticism means severe economic challenges for arts and culture down the food chain.



Fuse News Quick Picks — Berkshire Theater Best Bets

Two fine new plays that create deeply absorbing drama from stories in the headlines.



Fuse News: "The Boston Globe" and WGBH Pull the Plug on Summer Arts Weekend

"It was an amazing event and it was a blow to lose it. Free outdoor events that give people access to the arts are a rarity."

Pro Arte's thirty-ninth season commences with a **Gala concert** featuring the Boston Cello Quartet playing selections from their acclaimed album, *The Latin Project*. Soprano Barbara Quintiliani also sings Villa-Lobos' *Bachianas Brasileiras no. 5* (October 21).

Cantata Singers

Cantata Singers opens their fifty-third season with music by **Bach and Zelenka** (October 15) and continues with a **Christmas-themed program** of pieces by Monteverdi, Distler, Schütz, and Schoenberg (December 16 and 17). The ensemble's chamber music series also presents a **very engaging-looking evening** of so-called *Entartente Musik* at the American Academy of Arts and Sciences that provides the opportunity to hear some under-represented pieces by Egon Wellesz, Hans Eisler, Berthold Goldschmidt, and others (November 18).

Longwood Symphony

Jeremiah Kissel is the narrator in Keven Kaska's *The Wizard of Menlo Park*, part of the LSO's **season-opener** that also includes pieces by Mozart and Dvorak (October 1). Then Hsin-yun Huang plays Bartók's Viola Concerto on a program that begins with Barber's *First Essay for Orchestra* and closes with Tchaikovsky's exuberant Symphony no. 1 (December 3).



The New England Conservatory Orchestra in action. Photo: NEC Facebook page.

New England Conservatory

NEC's free orchestral concerts are among the city's hidden gems. Highlights this fall include **Anna Clyne's *Night Ferry*** and Mahler's First Symphony (September 28), Mozart's glorious *Linz* Symphony **sharing a bill** with excerpts from *Porgy and Bess* (October 19), Ken-David Masur conducting **Reger and Franck** (October 26), and Andrew Litton conducting Prokofiev's Sixth Symphony (December 7). And there's also a semi-staged performance of **Manuel de Falla's *La vida breve*** (October 5).

Boston Youth Symphony

The BYS opens its season with a **meaty program** made up of music by Mozart, Beethoven, and Bartók (October 16). Two weeks later, it participates in the BSO's fall **Family Concert**, playing Prokofiev's *Peter and the Wolf* at Symphony Hall (October 29).

Boston Philharmonic Youth Orchestra