



Los Angeles Philharmonic:
**DUDAMEL CONDUCTS
BEETHOVEN'S
SYMPHONY NO. 9**

Tuesday, October 6, 2015
Walt Disney Concert Hall, Los Angeles

BEETHOVEN'S SYMPHONY NO. 9

Beethoven's Symphony no. 9 is one of the most famous works in western classical music. It was Beethoven's last complete symphony, and it is widely considered his greatest work. Also known as *The Choral*, this was the first symphony by a major composer to include singers' voices. The vocal parts include the celebrated "Ode to Joy," the lyrics of which are based on a poem by Friedrich Schiller.

While there is overwhelming consensus about the greatness of this work, its interpretation is just as greatly debated. Tom Service wrote in *The Guardian* that Beethoven's ninth "is arguably the single piece that inspired the methodology of musical analysis . . . It's been held up as the central work of Western classical music both by those who imagine it as the *ne plus ultra* of symphonic, technical, and compositional imagination and mastery, and by those who want to say that . . . the piece is a sounding bell of social change, of emotional hope, and even of political reform."

Musically, Beethoven's Ninth has been a tremendous influence on composers including Berlioz, Brahms, Wagner, Bruckner, Mahler, and Schubert, who reportedly attended the premiere. Wagner remarked that the symphony pointed the way to the "music of the future," which would unite words and music, as he would do in his own monumental operas.

The progression of the first movement from subtle strings (like an orchestra tuning) to a strong, loud theme was a radical new experience for concertgoers. Beethoven also surprised audiences—and inspired later composers—by changing the conventional order of movements, placing the fast-paced scherzo before the slow movement. The fourth movement is the famous choral finale, which pianist and scholar Charles Rosen has described as "a symphony within a symphony."

Symphony no. 9 premiered in Vienna in 1824, performed by the largest orchestra Beethoven had ever assembled. The symphony has been widely and frequently performed ever since, including as an anthem and a symbol of unity at major world events such as the Olympic Games, the protests in Tiananmen Square, the fall of the Berlin Wall, and the end of the year in Japan.

GUSTAVO DUDAMEL

Gustavo Dudamel, born in Venezuela in 1981, is the music and artistic director of the Los Angeles Philharmonic and music director of the Simón Bolívar Symphony Orchestra of Venezuela. A dynamic violinist and conductor, he has worked with major orchestras around the world and is acclaimed not only for his extraordinary musical talent, but also for his explosive energy, which enralls audiences.

Dudamel has been a Deutsche Grammophon artist since 2005, and in 2007 was honored with the Echo Award for New Artist of the Year and Spain's annual Royal Philharmonic Society Music Award for Young Artists. In 2009, he was awarded an honorary doctorate from Venezuela's Universidad Centro-Occidental Lisandro Alvarado.

Dudamel began to learn the art of conducting in his early teens. As an adult, he is committed to developing musical spirit from an early age, especially among youth in his native Venezuela. In 2008, Harvard University awarded him the Q Prize for his dedication to youth.

Dudamel is celebrated for his unique ability to connect with both the orchestra and the audience.

LOS ANGELES PHILHARMONIC

Founded in 1919, the Los Angeles Philharmonic has been a vital part of the cultural landscape of the city for nearly a century. From 1920 to 1964, the orchestra performed in Philharmonic Auditorium, on the corner of Fifth and Olive (now a parking lot). In 1964, the orchestra moved to the Dorothy Chandler Pavilion at the Music Center. In 2003, they moved into Walt Disney Concert Hall.

Under the 17-year tenure of music director Esa-Pekka Salonen (which ended in 2009), the Los Angeles Philharmonic joined the ranks of the world's elite orchestras. Salonen worked as a champion of new music, challenging Los Angeles audiences to listen to the unexpected. The orchestra has continued to innovate under the leadership of Gustavo Dudamel.

The Los Angeles Philharmonic performs a regular season of concerts at Disney Hall, as well as a summer season at the Hollywood Bowl. Critics have described the Los Angeles Philharmonic as "forward-thinking," "contemporary-minded" and "the most creative, and, therefore, the best orchestra in America."

SIMÓN BOLÍVAR SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA OF VENEZUELA

The Simón Bolívar Symphony Orchestra of Venezuela was founded by José Antonio Abreu and a group of fellow musicians who were inspired by the ideals of Simón Bolívar (1783–1830), who led the Venezuelan rebellion against Spanish colonial rule. The orchestra is composed of more than 200 young musicians between the ages of 18 and 28, and is the flagship of the orchestral academic program of the Fundación Musical Simón Bolívar (Fundamusal Bolívar).

Seventy-five percent of the children involved with Fundamusal Bolívar live below the poverty line. The orchestral program allows the musicians to explore a demanding repertory through master classes and concerts involving leading soloists, orchestras, and arts institutions around the world. The orchestra's music director is Gustavo Dudamel, himself an alumnus of Fundamusal Bolívar.

The Simón Bolívar Symphony Orchestra of Venezuela and Gustavo Dudamel record for Deutsche Grammophon.

LOS ANGELES MASTER CHORALE

Currently in its 52nd season, the Los Angeles Master Chorale is the resident chorus at the Music Center and Disney Hall. The group's repertoire spans from Renaissance-era choral-music classics to innovative world premieres. In addition to performing with the Los Angeles Philharmonic, the LAMC performs its own concert series each year.

The first organization in the United States to offer a complete season of great choral masterworks, the LAMC has hosted such distinguished guest conductors as Robert Shaw, Aaron Copland, Helmuth Rilling, Margaret Hillis, Robert Page, and Richard Westenburg.

The GRAMMY-nominated group, led by artistic director Grant Gershon, is recognized as one of the world's leading choruses. The group has been awarded the ASCAP/Chorus America Award for Adventurous Programming three times as well as, in 2012, Chorus America's Margaret Hillis Award for Choral Excellence, the nation's top choral-music award.

The chorale's Voices Within in-school artists-in-residence and other educational programs reach approximately 9,000 students and adults each year.

WALT DISNEY CONCERT HALL

Walt Disney Concert Hall was designed by architect Frank Gehry to be one of the top acoustically conscious concert halls in the world. Its original stainless-steel shape makes it a uniquely fashioned building.

Construction began in 1999 and took four years to complete. It was funded by a major contribution from Walt Disney's widow, Lillian Disney, and various other donors, totaling \$240 million. Within its walls, the hardwood construction aims to perfectly funnel the sounds of music. Esa-Pekka Salonen said of the hall: "Everyone can now hear what the LA Phil is supposed to sound like."

As beautiful as the exterior is, it initially created some problems for the neighbors. A few highly reflective panels of the building focused sunlight onto adjacent condos and sidewalks; residents' air-conditioning bills skyrocketed and hot spots on the street rose to 140°F. In 2005 the offending panels were lightly sanded to reduce the glare.

Recently opened across the street from Disney Hall is The Broad, L.A.'s newest museum of contemporary art. Architect Elizabeth Diller said of The Broad, "Our goal for the museum is to hold its ground next to Gehry's much larger and very exuberant Walt Disney Concert Hall through contrast. As opposed to Disney Hall's smooth and shiny exterior that reflects light, The Broad will be porous and absorptive, channeling light into its public spaces and galleries."