

For immediate release
Tuesday, September 12, 2023

Contact Glenn Petri (212) 625-2038

Nov 28: Viñoly Foundation Presents The Philadelphia Orchestra, Jonathan Biss & Isaiah J. Thompson Trio, with Special Guest Appearance by Itzhak Perlman, in “A Musical Celebration of the Life of Rafael Viñoly” at NY’s Carnegie Hall



Yannick Nézet-Séguin and The Philadelphia Orchestra (photo: Chris Lee)

(September 2023) — On **November 28**, the **Viñoly Foundation** presents “**A Musical Celebration of the Life of Rafael Viñoly**,” a special memorial concert at New York’s **Carnegie Hall**. Featuring

The Philadelphia Orchestra and Music & Artistic Director **Yannick Nézet-Séguin**, with appearances by **Jonathan Biss**, Jazz at Lincoln Center's **Isaiah J. Thompson Trio**, and special guest **Itzhak Perlman**, the concert honors Viñoly, the distinguished Uruguayan architect who died this past March. A portion of the proceeds from the performance will benefit the **Viñoly Foundation**, the nonprofit formerly known as the Rafael and Diana Viñoly Foundation. The rededicated organization aims to carry forward Rafael's legacy by doing good in the areas of architecture, urban planning, music, the arts and science, as well as heritage projects aimed at highlighting the impact of his work.

The late **Rafael Viñoly** (1944–2023) has been hailed as “the extraordinary Uruguay-born architect whose function-driven, context-inspired buildings made their marks on six continents” (*Architectural Digest*). He is remembered for such iconic buildings as the Tokyo International Forum and the Cleveland Museum of Art as well as New York's Jazz at Lincoln Center and the Kimmel Center for the Performing Arts, where The Philadelphia Orchestra makes its home.

The architect's son, **Román Viñoly**, is the director of the Viñoly Foundation. He says:

“Music was my father's purest passion, which he nurtured daily through his avid piano study and near-constant listening. As a devoted patron of Carnegie Hall for many decades, Rafael Viñoly was a fixture at its concerts. His deep love of music filled him with immense pride at having designed the halls for The Philadelphia Orchestra and Jazz at Lincoln Center, both of which are performing at this special concert in his honor. He would have been humbled by their participation, celebrating his life in what was practically his second home. On behalf of my mother, Diana Viñoly, and our family, we look forward to sharing this special evening of appreciation with Yannick, Itzhak, Jonathan and our friends at The Philadelphia Orchestra and Jazz at Lincoln Center.”

Matías Tarnopolsky, president & CEO of The Philadelphia Orchestra and Kimmel Center, Inc., comments:

“Rafael Viñoly's unexpected death earlier this year leaves a massive hole in the architectural, musical and civic communities. Rafael dedicated his life to architecture and music. The Philadelphia Orchestra is fortunate to call the Kimmel Center, one of his most iconic creations, home. Rafael put his heart and soul into designing it, and it stands as an embodiment of his great love for the arts and his commitment to human-centered, inclusive spaces. It is our profound honor to be able to celebrate his life through music at Carnegie Hall this fall.”

The Philadelphia Orchestra will anchor the upcoming concert at Carnegie Hall. In a special guest appearance, preeminent violin virtuoso **Itzhak Perlman** will join Nézet-Séguin and the orchestra for both **Kreisler's “Liebesfreud”** and **Beethoven's Second Romance**. The **Isaiah J. Thompson Trio** will perform select jazz numbers, and pianist **Jonathan Biss**, widely recognized as “one of today's foremost Beethoven exponents” (*Chicago Tribune*), will be the soloist in the composer's beloved “**Emperor Concerto**.” Biss will perform Beethoven's masterpiece on the **Maene-Viñoly Concert Grand Piano**, an innovative instrument that was created by Rafael Viñoly in partnership with the respected piano builder Chris Maene. On display at the Kimmel Center since June, the piano is distinguished by its curved ergonomic keyboard, radial stringing, and a significantly

larger soundboard that endows it with more power and capacity for nuance. The coming concert marks the instrument's **U.S. concert debut**.

Tickets and more information are available [here](#).

About Rafael Viñoly

Rafael Viñoly was an acclaimed architect and founder of Rafael Viñoly Architects, a leading international practice focused on making meaningful civic and cultural contributions while exceeding the programmatic, economic, aesthetic and performance goals of every building project. In over half a century of built work, he realized more than 600 commissions, from courthouses, concert halls and museums to airports, stadiums and buildings for science throughout North and South America, Europe, Asia and the Middle East. His work is characterized by holistic attention to proportion and a sustained structural originality that transcends passing architectural fads. An accomplished amateur pianist, Viñoly began lessons in his youth. For nearly 70 years, music-making was his favorite pastime and a consistent retreat from the pressures of his professional life. His design interest in the instrument flows from his appreciation of the ergonomic and physical exigencies of achieving pianistic excellence.

About The Philadelphia Orchestra

The world-renowned Philadelphia Orchestra strives to share the transformative power of music with the widest possible audience, and to create joy, connection and excitement through music in the Philadelphia region, across the country, and around the world. Through innovative programming, robust education initiatives, a commitment to its diverse communities, and the embrace of digital outreach, the ensemble is creating an expansive and inclusive future for classical music, and furthering the place of the arts in an open and democratic society. In June 2021 the orchestra and its home, the Kimmel Center, united to form The Philadelphia Orchestra and Kimmel Center, Inc., an organization that is poised to bring the greatest performances and most impactful education and community programs to audiences in Philadelphia and beyond. Recently, the orchestra was named "Orchestra of the Year" by both *Gramophone* and *BBC Music* magazines, in addition to winning both a Grammy Award and a Diapason d'or for its first recording of music by Florence Price. Joining a remarkable list of music directors spanning the Orchestra's 123 seasons, Yannick Nézet-Séguin is now in his twelfth season as The Philadelphia Orchestra's eighth music and artistic director. More information is available [here](#).

About the Maene-Viñoly Concert Grand Piano

Master piano maker Chris Maene and renowned architect Rafael Viñoly developed the Maene-Viñoly Concert Grand over a six-year period. The instrument's ergonomically curved keyboard matches the natural sweep of a pianist's arms, rotating from the shoulders, and facilitates effortless playing across all registers. The keyboard's radial arrangement is extended to strings fanning out over a much larger soundboard that augments the instrument's capacity for nuance, clarity, and power. An accomplished amateur pianist himself, Viñoly was encouraged to design the piano after conversations with several legendary artists, including Daniel Barenboim and

Martha Argerich. His experience and close friendships with master pianists sharpened his awareness of the instrument's biomechanical demands and inspired his idea to curve the keyboard. He partnered with Maene to develop the piano, and began collaborating with noted piano kinematics researcher Renzo Pozzo, professor at the Department of Medical and Biological Sciences at the University of Udine in Italy, and German pianist and researcher Dr. Henriette Gartner to determine the keyboard's ideal arc. Some of the world's most prominent piano technicians and artists provided feedback throughout the construction process, including Emanuel Ax, Barenboim, Kirill Gerstein, and Stephen Hough. The first pianist to perform on the piano was Gerstein at Switzerland's Verbier Festival on July 19, 2022. More information is available [here](#).

About Chris Maene

Chris Maene is a piano builder who learned his craft in his parents' piano workshop. Founded in Ruiselede, Belgium, in 1938, Pianos Maene has built, restored, and collected many historical instruments. In 1973, Chris Maene formally joined his parents' company and in 1984 he became the company's director. Over the years he built up Pianos Maene into a family business with six branches and became the exclusive dealer of Steinway & Sons for Belgium and the Netherlands. Since 2004, his sons, Dominique and Frederic Maene, have been active in the business. Chris Maene has made replicas of iconic pianos such as the Steinway & Sons N°1 "Kitchen" fortepiano 1836, the Ignaz Pleyel concert grand 1843, and the Erard 1803 and John Broadwood 1817, both originals of which were owned by Ludwig van Beethoven. Maene is also an associate researcher at the Orpheus Institute and Research Centre in Ghent, Belgium.

Click [here](#) for high-resolution photos, and [here](#) for tickets and information about the concert.

#

© 21C Media Group, September 2023