



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: October 31, 2025

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THE ATLANTA SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA PERFORMS SIBELIUS' *FINLANDIA* + 2nd SYMPHONY

Virtuoso violinist Sergey Khachatryan performs Khachaturian's Violin Concerto

ATLANTA— The Atlanta Symphony Orchestra presents a concert of international virtuosity and storytelling as guest conductor Pietari Inkinen leads Sibelius' *Finlandia* and Second Symphony with decorated violinist Sergey Khachatryan performing Khachaturian's Violin Concerto on December 4 and 6 at Symphony Hall.

Finnish conductor Pietari Inkinen, who "conducts with clarity and such vitality..." (*Stuttgarter Nachrichten*), brings a deep understanding of his countryman's music, having recorded every Sibelius symphony while at the New Zealand Symphony Orchestra. Inkinen conducts Sibelius' love letter to his homeland, *Finlandia*, paired with his Symphony No. 2, a patriotic piece that once carried the torch for Finnish independence from Russia.

In between, Khachaturian's Violin Concerto is performed Armenian violinist Sergey Khachatryan, described as having "impeccable technique, who can absorb, develop, and intensify the ideas coming from the podium with refined sensitivity" (*L'ape musicale*). Influenced by Armenian folk melodies and a six-month trek collecting songs through Armenia, Khachatryan adds feverish virtuosity to this improvisatory concerto.

Don't miss the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra in the final Delta Classical Concert Series this year on December 4 and 6.

Concert tickets are on sale now and details can be found at aso.org.

CALENDAR LISTING

Thursday, December 4, 2025, 8 pm

Saturday, December 6, 2025, 8 pm

Pietari Inkinen, conductor

Sergey Khachatryan, violin
Atlanta Symphony Orchestra
SIBELIUS: *Finlandia*
KHACHATURIAN: Violin Concerto
SIBELIUS: Symphony No. 2

Feel the smoldering heat of Jean Sibelius when the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra welcomes the acclaimed Finnish conductor Pietari Inkinen. Sibelius's ever-popular *Finlandia*, an anthem to liberty and national pride, opens the program. Then, gold medal-winning violinist Sergey Khachatryan plays the flashy and fiendishly difficult violin concerto by fellow Armenian Aram Khachaturian. The Orchestra rounds out the evening with the passion-filled Sibelius Second Symphony, a patriotic piece that once carried the torch for Finnish independence from Russia.

About Pietari Inkinen

Finnish conductor Pietari Inkinen is one of the leading conductors of his generation and has made a name for himself worldwide through his big-picture thinking and outstanding technique. He has conducted prestigious orchestras including the Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra, the Budapest Festival Orchestra, the Bavarian Radio Symphony Orchestra, the Gewandhaus Orchestra Leipzig, the Accademia Nazionale di Santa Cecilia, the Orchestre Philharmonique de Radio France, the Sydney Symphony, the Los Angeles Philharmonic and the Cleveland Orchestra. In June 2024, he made his spectacular debut with the Danish National Orchestra, stepping in at very short notice to conduct Mahler's Third Symphony. In the same year, he made his debut at the Deutsche Oper Berlin with *Tannhäuser*, which critics said was "one of the strongest Wagner performances" in that house.

The music of Richard Wagner occupies a central place in Pietari Inkinen's work. In 2023, he conducted the new production of *Der Ring des Nibelungen* at the Bayreuth Festival (directed by Valentin Schwarz). In summer 2021, he conducted a special production of *Die Walküre* by Hermann Nitsch at the Grüner Hügel. His acclaimed performances of the *Ring* Cycle with Opera Australia in 2013 and 2016 earned Inkinen two awards: Australia's 2014 Helpmann Award for Best Musical Direction and a 2016 Green Room Award for Best Opera Conductor. He also received the Franco Abbiati Prize from the Italian National Association of Music Critics for his 2014 performance of *Rheingold* at the Teatro Massimo in Palermo.

Further opera productions have taken him to the Finnish National Opera, the Théâtre de la Monnaie, the Staatsoper Unter den Linden, the Bavarian State Opera and the Semperoper Dresden, where he conducted a highly successful new production of *Eugene Onegin*.

Pietari Inkinen is chief conductor of the German Radio Philharmonic Saarbrücken Kaiserslautern and music director of the KBS Symphony Orchestra in Seoul. He previously held chief positions with the Japan Philharmonic Orchestra, Prague Symphony Orchestra and the Ludwigsburg Festival Orchestra. During his time as music director of the New Zealand Symphony Orchestra, he recorded all of the Sibelius symphonies for Naxos. He made another live recording of the Sibelius cycle with the Japan Philharmonic Orchestra in Suntory Hall. With the German Radio Philharmonic, he is working on a complete recording of

all of the symphonies by Dvořák and Prokofiev (SWRmusic/Naxos). The film portrait “A baton and a passport - Pietari Inkinen Conductor” (directed by Sven Rech) was released in October 2023.

Pietari Inkinen is successful not only as a conductor, but also as a violinist. He studied with Zakhar Bron at the Cologne Music Academy before continuing his training as a conductor at the Sibelius Academy in Helsinki.

About Sergey Khachatryan

Born in Yerevan, Armenia, Sergey Khachatryan won First Prize at the VIII International Jean Sibelius Competition in Helsinki in 2000, becoming the youngest ever winner in the history of the competition. In 2005 he claimed First Prize at the Queen Elisabeth Competition in Brussels.

His recent appearances in the United States include with the Seattle Symphony (Ludovic Morlot), the Cleveland Orchestra (Jakub Hrůša) and the National Symphony Orchestra Washington (Vasily Petrenko). He has also performed with the New York Philharmonic, the Boston Symphony, the Philadelphia Orchestra, and the San Francisco Symphony as well as the Ravinia, Aspen, Blossom and Mostly Mozart Festivals. The most recent North American Tour with the Armenian National Philharmonic included such destinations as Roy Thomson Hall in Toronto, Maison Symphonique in Montreal, and Carnegie Hall in New York.

Sergey regularly performs as a duo with his sister, pianist Lusine Khachatryan. Together, they have given recitals at the Wigmore Hall (London), Théâtre des Champs-Élysées and Cité de la Musique (Paris), Amsterdam Concertgebouw, Palais des Beaux Arts (Brussels), Victoria Hall (Geneva), Brucknerhaus Linz, Konzerthaus Dortmund, Auditori Nacional (Madrid), Philharmonie Luxembourg, Carnegie Hall and Alice Tully Hall (New York), and Herbst Theater (San Francisco).

Sergey and Lusine's most recent album, *My Armenia*, released by Naïve Records, dedicated to the 100th commemoration of the Armenian genocide, has been awarded the Echo Klassik for Chamber Music Recording (20th/21st Century). Together, they have also recorded Brahms' Three Sonatas for Violin and Piano. Sergey's discography on Naïve Records also includes the Sibelius and Khachaturian concerti with Sinfonia Varsovia and Emmanuel Krivine, both Shostakovich concerti with the Orchestre National de France and Kurt Masur, a recording of the Shostakovich and Franck sonatas for violin and piano and the complete sonatas and partitas for solo violin by J. S. Bach.

His latest recording, *Ysaÿe Sonatas Op. 27* for Naïve Records, was released in March 2024 and is the winner of the Preis der deutschen Schallplattenkritik (Chamber Music). In this album, he presents the first recording of Ysaÿe's 6 Solo Sonatas performed on the composer's Guarneri del Gesù violin.

Highlights of the previous seasons include Sergey's residency with the Orquesta de Valencia, comprising several concerts conducted by Alexander Liebreich, as well as a chamber project. Additionally, Sergey's residency at BOZAR in Brussels included a pair of recitals and a concert with the Orchestre National de Belgique and Hugo Wolff. Re-invitations included the Finnish Radio Symphony Orchestra, the Accademia Nazionale di Santa Cecilia, the Rotterdam and Antwerp Symphony Orchestras, and the Cleveland Orchestra. Sergey also embarked on a tour of the US and Europe with Alisa Weilerstein and Inon Barnatan with a program entitled "Transfigured Nights" featuring the music of Beethoven, Schoenberg and Shostakovich. Other recent projects included a tour of Japan with the Nippon Foundation. In 2015, Sergey performed Beethoven's Violin Concerto at the Lucerne Festival with the Wiener Philharmoniker and Gustavo Dudamel, receiving the Credit Suisse Young Artist Award.

About the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra

Under the leadership of Music Director Nathalie Stutzmann, the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra (ASO) offers live performances, media initiatives, and learning programs that unite, educate and enrich our community through the engaging and transformative power of orchestral music experiences. The ASO engages the diverse international community of our city, bringing people together in harmony—including our youngest citizens, with extensive opportunities for youth and families to experience the power of live orchestra music.

The Orchestra's range and depth are featured in more than 150 concerts each year, including the flagship Delta Classical Series, Movies in Concert, Family Concerts, Coca-Cola Holiday series, and many community and education concerts. In addition, the ASO presents many vibrant, wide-ranging events and artists through its Delta Atlanta Symphony Hall Live presentations. The ASO also performs regularly with the ASO Chorus, originally founded by Robert Shaw, and currently under the direction of Norman Mackenzie. The Chorus is featured on nine of the ASO's 27 GRAMMY® Award-winning recordings.

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