

# NEW YORK PHILHARMONIC *opens Bravo! residency*

By Chris Freud  
CFREUD@VAILDAILY.COM

VAIL — Welcome to the portion of the Bravo! Vail Valley Music Festival when concertgoers get really spoiled.

After a wonderful run the past two weeks, The Philadelphia Orchestra leaves town, and who takes the stage but the New York Philharmonic? Bravo! likes to tout the fact that it is the only summer music festival to host three major symphony orchestras — and we do love the Dallas Symphony Orchestra — but the real treat is that Vail classical-music lovers get to hear two of “The Big Five” every year.

(For the trivially inclined, the rest of said “Big Five” are the Boston, Chicago and Cleveland symphony orchestras. While people may debate who’s in the “Big Five,” in 2011, there is no question as to the standing of The Philadelphia Orchestra and the New York Philharmonic in this regard.)

And New York serves up three outstanding concerts this weekend, starting with Dvorak and Beethoven tonight at 6. As a reminder, it’s usually a good idea to allow some extra time to get to the Gerald Ford Amphitheater when New York is in town as the parking lots and spots on the lawn tend to fill up quickly.

## GILBERT LEADS A TRIO OF CONCERTS



## IF YOU GO ...

What: New York Philharmonic.  
Where: Gerald R. Ford Amphitheater, Vail.  
When: 6 p.m. today.  
Cost: \$24 for lawn seats, \$63 to \$85 for covered pavilions seats.  
More information: 877-812-5700 or [www.vailmusic.org](http://www.vailmusic.org).

## TONIGHT

**I**n his second year as its musical director, Alan Gilbert leads the New York Philharmonic in Dvorak’s Violin Concerto and Beethoven’s Third Symphony, “Eroica.” This is a fantastic concert for aficionados of classical music as well as newcomers.

Violinist Veronika Eberle does the honors with the Dvorak and will be making her New York Philharmonic debut, always a landmark moment in any soloist’s career.

The “Eroica” follows as part of the Bravo! season’s study of the composer, titled “Beethoven: Architect of Humanity.” More importantly, Beethoven’s Third marks a turning point in the evolution of the symphonic work, serving as a bridge from the Classical Era symphonies of Haydn and Mozart to the Romantic.

The Third was originally going to be dedicated to Napoleon, but when the French ruler declared himself emperor, Beethoven was not pleased and changed the title to “Eroica,” or “heroic.”

Tonight is opening night with the New York Philharmonic. The show begins at 6 p.m. at the Gerald R. Ford Amphitheater. The program includes Dvorak and Beethoven under the baton of Philharmonic music director and conductor Alan Gilbert. Call 877-812-5700 or visit [www.vailmusic.org](http://www.vailmusic.org).

CHRIS LEE | New York Philharmonic

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**SATURDAY**

It's all-Austria Saturday with Mozart's Fifth Violin Concerto and Mahler's Fifth Symphony. The latter continues the celebration of the centennial of Mahler's death in 1911.

It is particularly poignant that the New York Philharmonic performs Mahler. The organization and the composer are inextricably linked. After leading the Vienna Philharmonic and Opera at various points from 1887 to 1907, Mahler came to New York and took over the Philharmonic. And so one can draw a line directly from the composer through the storied names associated with the New York Philharmonic from Arturo Toscanini to Leonard Bernstein to Zubin Mehta to Kurt Masur to Lorin Maazel, among many, to Gilbert.

The New York Philharmonic and Bernstein, in particular, were critical in the revival of Mahler's works after his death. Mahler was not well received in Vienna because of rampant anti-Semitism despite the fact that Mahler converted from Judaism to Catholicism to lead the Hofoper.

With the rise of Nazism, Mahler was all but banned from orchestral repertoires in Europe. After the Second World War, Mahler's music made a comeback, punctuated by Bernstein, who ended up recording the entire Mahler symphonic cycle, starting in 1960, the 100th anniversary of the composer's birth. (It was also helpful that, by the 1950s, LP — or long-play — records came on the scene, since nothing Mahler ever wrote could fit on a 45.)

The New York Philharmonic, under Maazel, did the Mahler cycle again in the '90s and now it appears that Gilbert is doing the same. They performed Mahler's First and Third in 2009-10 and the Fifth and Sixth last season. Gilbert and the Philharmonic have the Second, the Fifth (again) and the Ninth on tap for 2011-12, including a performance of the Second, also known as "The Resurrection," on Sept. 10 to commemorate the 10th anniversary of the Sept. 11 attacks.



**SUNDAY**

Rachmaninoff and Tchaikovsky cap the weekend. Pianist Alexander Romanovsky tackles Rachmaninoff's "Rhapsody on a Theme of Paganini for Piano and Orchestra," and we do mean tackle in this instance. In this piece, the emotions of humanity meet mathematics.

Rachmaninoff took said theme and did everything humanly possible with it, including just inverting it, or turning the notes upside down on the page of music.

The evening ends with a favorite for young and old with Act 2 of Tchaikovsky's "The Nutcracker."

Chris Freud can be reached at 970-748-2934 or [cfreud@vaildaily.com](mailto:cfreud@vaildaily.com).