



For immediate release:
Thursday, May 14, 2026, 12 p.m.

**Actor Alec Baldwin to Perform with Boston Symphony
Orchestra at Tanglewood on Sunday, July 5**

**Baldwin Will Narrate Copland's *Lincoln Portrait* as Part of a
Program that Features the Premiere of Philip Glass'
Symphony No. 15, *Lincoln***

Tickets available at tanglewood.org

[Click here](#) for a 2026 Tanglewood press kit



Award-winning actor **Alec Baldwin** will narrate the **Boston Symphony Orchestra's** performance of Aaron Copland's *Lincoln Portrait* on Sunday, July 5 at 2:30 p.m. in the Koussevitzky Music Shed. The award-winning actor and classical music enthusiast joins a special Independence Day weekend program that features two other Lincoln-inspired works. The centerpiece is the world premiere of Philip Glass' Symphony No. 15, *Lincoln*, inspired by the 1838 Lyceum Address affirming the role of a democratic American government and warning against internal threats that seek to undermine the rule of law. John Williams' Suite from *Lincoln*, from the 2012 film directed by Steven Spielberg, completes the program. **Karen Kamensek**, regarded as one of the foremost interpreters of Glass, conducts the program in her Tanglewood debut. Grammy-winning baritone **Zachary James** makes his Tanglewood debut in the Glass symphony.

The July 5 Lincoln-themed program completes a four-day celebration of America's 250th birthday at Tanglewood, which kicks off on Thursday, July 2 with conductor

Damon Gupton and the **Boston Pops** performing music by Bernstein and Sondheim. **Ilana Ransom Toepfritz** directs the program, which includes special guest vocalists **Kate Baldwin**, **Alysha Umphress**, **Alton Fitzgerald White**, and **Jacob Keith Watson**.

James Taylor returns to Tanglewood with his All-Star Band for performances on Friday, July 3 and Saturday, July 4, with the Independence Day performance followed by a fireworks display over the Stockbridge Bowl. Lawn tickets remain available, supply limited.

The BSO's yearlong focus on American music and composers ([*E Pluribus Unum: From Many, One*](#)) continues through the summer at Tanglewood, highlighted by a series of special programs curated by Yo-Yo Ma titled "[We the People: Our Shared Past, Present, and Future](#)" (Aug. 1–9).

About Alec Baldwin

Baldwin has won three Emmy Awards, three Golden Globes, and seven consecutive Screen Actors Guild Awards for Best Actor in a Comedy Series for role on NBC-TV's *30 Rock*. He has also been nominated for a Tony (*A Streetcar Named Desire*, 1992) and for an Oscar (*The Cooler*, 2023). Passionate about classical music, Baldwin is the Radio Series Host of the New York Philharmonic, where he serves on the board of trustees. He holds an honorary degree from the Manhattan School of Music. Baldwin made his Tanglewood debut in 2010 as narrator of *The Dream Lives On: A Portrait of the Kennedy Brothers* with the Boston Pops and Keith Lockhart. Photo and bio available in the [press kit](#).

About Aaron Copland's *Lincoln Portrait*

During the darkest hours of World War II, the New York Philharmonic and its Russian American conductor Andre Kostelanetz commissioned Aaron Copland, Jerome Kern, and Virgil Thompson to write musical portraits of eminent Americans. Describing the patriotic impetus for the commission, Kostelanetz wrote, "In the weeks that followed our entrance into the war, I gave a great deal of thought to the manner in which music could be employed to mirror the magnificent spirit of our country.... The greatness of a nation is expressed through

its people and those people who have achieved greatness are the logical subjects for a series of musical portraits.”

Copland chose President Abraham Lincoln as his subject and incorporated excerpts from letters and speeches including the Gettysburg Address as well as popular folk songs like “On Springfield Mountain” and Stephen Foster’s “Camptown Races.” The composer wrote, “I hoped to suggest something of the mysterious sense of fatality that surrounds Lincoln’s personality. The challenge was to compose something simple, yet interesting enough to fit Lincoln.” The text emphasizes Lincoln’s staunch anti-tyrannical philosophy and defense of democratic principles.

Lincoln Portrait premiered on May 14, 1942, with Copland himself conducting the Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra and radio personality William (Bill) Adams (“American Family Robinson”) narrating. The piece had its BSO premiere at Symphony Hall the following March when music director Serge Koussevitzky and the orchestra were joined by actor and social activist Will Geer narrating for the first of what would be a dozen times as the BSO toured with the piece in 1943 and 1944. The piece had been scheduled to be performed at President Dwight Eisenhower’s inauguration in 1953 but was cancelled because Copland was blacklisted during Senator Joseph McCarthy’s “red scare.” Leonard Bernstein, another blacklist victim, included it in a 1955 BSO program with the great British American actor Claude Rains narrating.

Performed a total of 75 times since 1943 with other BSO and Pops conductors including Erich Leinsdorf, Arthur Fiedler, Harry Ellis Dickinson, Seiji Ozawa, John Williams, and Keith Lockhart (a record 20 times), *Lincoln Portrait* has been a mainstay of the orchestra’s repertoire.

In 2025, historian and author Heather Cox Richardson narrated in her first appearance at Tanglewood. Richardson returns this summer on August 8 for a Spotlight Series conversation with Bryan Stevenson of the Equal Justice Initiative ([event detail](#)).

Other notable Americans who have narrated Copland’s piece with the BSO or Pops include: Senator Edward M. Kennedy (1966 & 1970), Marian Anderson (1974), Senator Daniel Inouye (1988), Yolanda King (1989), Arthur Schlesinger, Jr. (1995), James Earl Jones (1997), Governor Deval Patrick (2003 & 2009), and former Governor Michael Dukakis (2009):

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Ticketing Information

[Tanglewood.org](https://www.tanglewood.org) is the official site for all Tanglewood tickets. The Tanglewood Box Office opens for the season on Saturday, June 13 at 10 a.m. Tickets also may be purchased by calling 888-266-1200 on Monday-Friday, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. and Saturday 12:30–4:30 p.m. or at the Symphony Hall Box Office during regular [Box Office hours](#).

About Tanglewood

Tanglewood, one of the country's premier summer music festivals and summer home of the Boston Symphony Orchestra since 1937, is in the Berkshire Hills of Lenox and Stockbridge, Massachusetts. Tanglewood is also the home of the [Tanglewood Music Center](#), the acclaimed summer music academy founded by Serge Koussevitzky in 1940. Launched in 2019 with the opening of the Linde Center for Music and Learning, the [Tanglewood Learning Institute](#) in collaboration with the BSO's Humanities Institute, created in 2024, offers a year-round schedule of dynamic and leading-edge performances and events connecting audiences with musicians, artists, students, scholars, and cultural leaders through wide-ranging humanities-focused programs. Tanglewood also presents an annual [Popular Artist Series](#) in the Koussevitzky Music Shed (opened in 1938) and recital and chamber music concerts in Seiji Ozawa Hall (opened in 1994). [Click here](#) for more Tanglewood history.

Sponsorships

The BSO is proud to welcome back **Berkshire Health Systems** as the Official Health System of Tanglewood.

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Tanglewood | 297 West Street | Lenox, MA 01240 | [Box Office Hours](#)

Symphony Hall | 301 Massachusetts Avenue | Boston, MA 02115 | [Box Office Hours](#)

Ticketing & Customer Service | 617.266.1200 (M-F: 10-4pm & Sat: 12:30pm-4:30pm) Service & Tickets | Subscriptions 888.266.7575

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