



For immediate release
Tuesday, March 3, at 3 p.m.

Boston Symphony Orchestra to Perform Philip Glass' New Symphony No. 15, *Lincoln* at Tanglewood on July 5

Programmed alongside other works inspired by Abraham Lincoln, the newly added BSO concert completes a four-day celebration of America 250 at Tanglewood with performances by the Boston Pops (July 2) and James Taylor (July 3 & 4)

Tickets to July 2 and 5 performances on sale March 5 at 10 a.m. at [tanglewood.org](https://www.tanglewood.org)

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

The Boston Symphony Orchestra performs Philip Glass' new Symphony No. 15, *Lincoln* on Sunday, July 5 at 2:30 p.m. at Tanglewood, capping off the summer music festival's monumental four-day celebration of America's 250th anniversary with a widely anticipated new work by one of the world's most influential composers. Glass' eight-movement symphony will be conducted by **Karen Kamensek** and features baritone soloist **Zachary James**, with both artists making their Tanglewood debuts. It is programmed alongside two other works honoring the great American president: Aaron Copland's 1942 *Lincoln Portrait* with a to-be-announced celebrity narrator and selections from John Williams' score of the 2012 Steven Spielberg film *Lincoln*.

Glass' Symphony No. 15 includes excerpts from Lincoln's 1838 Lyceum Address, which the then 28-year-old state legislator delivered to a young men's debating society in Springfield, Illinois. Written amidst a nationwide surge in mob violence and racial lynching, the now-famous speech affirms the role of a democratic American government and warns against internal threats that seek to undermine the rule of law. Later movements of the symphony draw from other speeches and writings by Lincoln, including his 1861 Farewell Address, 1863 Emancipation Proclamation, and the final public address he made three days before his assassination in 1865.

Statement from Philip Glass:

"I am very pleased that the Boston Symphony Orchestra will perform Symphony No. 15, Lincoln.

"Tanglewood and the BSO have a deep history with new music and civic engagement. For over a century and a half, the figure of Abraham Lincoln, a person who held the country together at its worst moment, remains at the center of the debate of who we are as Americans. The performance of this new symphony falls into the current discussion about our national identity and values.

"I look forward to hearing the symphony for the first time at Tanglewood, and I am happy that the Boston Symphony along with close collaborators, conductor Karen Kamensek, and soloist Zachary James, will bring this piece to life."

The July 5 Lincoln-inspired program completes a four-day celebration of America 250 at Tanglewood, which kicks off on Thursday, July 2 with conductor **Damon Gupton** and the **Boston Pops** performing music by Bernstein and Sondheim. 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. A focus on American music and composers continues throughout the summer at Tanglewood, including a performance of Glass' Complete Etudes for Piano by five prominent pianists in Ozawa Hall on Wednesday, July 22, and a series of programs curated by Yo-Yo Ma themed "We the People: Our Shared Past, Present, and Future" (Aug. 4–9).

July 5: Philip Glass Lincoln-Inspired BSO Program

Having won a wide, multigenerational audience in the opera house, concert hall, dance world, and in film and popular music, **Philip Glass** is one of the world's

most popular and prolific living composers. Commissioned by the National Symphony Orchestra, Symphony No. 15, *Lincoln*, is a new eight-movement work spanning approximately 35 minutes with a libretto comprised of speeches and writings from throughout President Abraham Lincoln's life. Grammy Award-winning baritone **Zachary James**, who originated the role of Abraham Lincoln in the 2013 world premiere of Glass' opera *The Perfect American* at Teatro Real in Madrid, makes his BSO and Tanglewood debuts with this performance. American conductor **Karen Kamensek**, regarded as one of the foremost interpreters of Glass' work, also makes her BSO and Tanglewood debuts.

Aaron Copland's *Lincoln Portrait* was premiered on May 14, 1942, with Copland himself conducting the Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra. Part of the New York Philharmonic's commissioning effort to create musical portraits of eminent Americans, the work incorporates excerpts from letters and speeches including the Gettysburg Address as well as popular folk songs. The BSO and Pops have performed *Lincoln Portrait* a combined 74 times in their histories, and the Tanglewood Music Center Orchestra performed it at last summer's Tanglewood on Parade with historian Heather Cox Richardson as narrator.

Steven Spielberg's 2012 biographical historical drama *Lincoln*, which portrays the president's final efforts to abolish slavery and end the civil war, was both a box office and critical success. Boston Pops Conductor Laureate John Williams composed and conducted the score, which received an Academy Award nomination. While the Boston Pops have frequently performed excerpts from *Lincoln* in the annual *John Williams Film Night* and other programs, this will mark the first time that music from the film is performed by the BSO.

July 2 Boston Pops Bernstein-Sondheim Program with Damon Gupton

The Boston Pops ("America's Orchestra") kick off a four-day celebration of America 250 with an evening of music by two of the most iconic American composers, Leonard Bernstein and Stephen Sondheim (Thursday, July 2 at 8 p.m.). Their work on Broadway broke ground and forged pathways, from their collaboration on *West Side Story*, to Bernstein's *On the Town* and *Candide*, to Sondheim's *Sweeney Todd* and *A Little Night Music*. Boston native Bernstein made his professional conducting debut in 1941 with the Boston Pops on the Charles River Esplanade and remained closely tied to the BSO and Tanglewood throughout his life. Stephen Sondheim's unparalleled musical theater catalogue has been performed by the Pops on over 200 occasions since 1970, including a

memorial tribute concert at Tanglewood in summer of 2022. **Damon Gupton**, Principal Guest Conductor of the Cincinnati Pops, leads the program, returning after last summer's Tanglewood debut leading a live-to-picture performance of *Star Wars Episode VI: Return of the Jedi* with the Pops.

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Ticketing Information

[Tanglewood.org](https://www.tanglewood.org) is the official site for all Tanglewood tickets. Tickets for the July 2 and 5 concerts mentioned in this announcement and all other previously announced Tanglewood events go on sale Thursday, March 5 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](#).

Please note that the originally announced July 5 program (Damon Gupton conducting the Boston Pops) has been moved to July 2. Patrons who have already purchased presale tickets to the original July 5 program will be given the option to keep their tickets and attend the new Lincoln-inspired BSO program on the same date, switch to the July 2 Pops program, or receive a refund.

The Tanglewood Box Office is currently closed for the season but will open specially on March 5, 6, and 7 (from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.) once tickets for the 2026 season go on sale. Please note that the March sale dates will take place at the Linde Center for Music and Learning Box Office rather than at the Main Gate location. Parking is available in the Bachrach Lot (enter at 3 West Hawthorne Rd., Lenox).

Tickets for James Taylor, Cynthia Erivo with the Boston Pops, Carrie Underwood, Jason Isbell and Patty Griffin, “Weird Al” Yankovic, and Paul Simon are currently on sale at [tanglewood.org](https://www.tanglewood.org). Tickets for all other previously announced events go on sale March 5 at 10 a.m.

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.

Formal titles for BSO conductors, leadership, and guest composers

Andris Nelsons, Ray and Maria Stata Music Director and Head of Conducting at Tanglewood

Chad Smith, Eunice and Julian Cohen President and Chief Executive Officer

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Carlos Simon, Deborah and Philip Edmundson Composer Chair

John Williams, George and Roberta Berry Boston Pops Conductor Laureate

Edward Gazouleas, Director of the Tanglewood Music Center, endowed in honor of Edward H. Linde by Alan S. Bressler and Edward I. Rudman

Esa-Pekka Salonen, The Merwin Geffen, M.D. and Norman Solomon, M.D. Festival of Contemporary Music Director

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More BSO News

For more news about the BSO and Boston Pops, [read our recent press releases](#) or follow us on social media.



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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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