For immediate release
Thursday, September 17 at 12 p.m.

Boston Symphony Orchestra Announces Fall Humanities Programs

Events Support Two Themes: *Technology and Our Humanity* (Oct. 20-25) and *Faith in Our Time: Creation* (Nov. 5-14)

Tickets for fall humanities events on sale Sept. 22 at 10 a.m.
Tickets for BSO performances on sale now at bso.org

Photos and bios of guest artists and speakers at the fall humanities events may be found in the press kit.

The Boston Symphony Orchestra (BSO) announces a rich array of humanities events to complement its orchestral programs this fall. In October, four events on the theme of *Technology and Our Humanity* complement the world premiere of composer Tod Machover's *already and not yet* (Oct 22-24). In November, the BSO continues its multi-season exploration of the *Faith in Our Time* theme with a *Creation Festival* offering eight events that complement the BSO's performances of Haydn's *The Creation* (Nov. 5-7) and the world premiere of *Creation* by composer Osvaldo Golijov and librettist David Henry Hwang (Nov. 12-14).

Technology and Our Humanity (Oct. 20-25)

This fall, the BSO begins a multi-season focus on technology with concerts and talks that consider one of the most urgent questions of our time: How is technology reshaping not only music, but also our understanding of ourselves and one another? October's thematic preview is anchored by an inventive world premiere BSO commission (*already and not yet)* that utilizes live AI technology in a work composed by **Tod Machover**, faculty director of the MIT Media Lab, which is celebrating its 40th anniversary this year.

As a visionary composer, inventor and faculty director of the MIT Media Lab, Machover has applied his boundless imagination to exploring technology's place in the world through music. The premiere piece incorporates a live AI system that collaborates with each BSO musician while also creating surprising links and blends across the orchestra, providing what the composer calls a "possible, positive vision" for the future of democracy. This new commission for the BSO reflects our legacy of driving innovation in orchestral music. Leading this varied program is esteemed American conductor **Kent Nagano**, a longtime champion of Machover's work.

Described in more detail below, four supporting events feature pioneering artists, composers, and thinkers like **William Brittelle, Roomful of Teeth**, **Metropolis Ensemble**, **George Lewis**, **Holly Herndon**, **MIT Media Lab alumni**, and **Machover** to probe the shifting relationship between technology, creativity, and the human experience theme.

Technology and Our Humanity Program Details

Tues., Oct 20. at 7:30pm
Millennium Rift
Special work in progress showing
Arrow Street Arts, 2 Arrow St., Cambridge
Composed by William Brittelle
Performed by Roomful of Teeth and members of Metropolis Ensemble

A preview of the new nostalgia-soaked '80's-influenced multimedia song cycle composed by **William Brittelle** for **Roomful of Teeth** to be performed by the group along with members of **Metropolis Ensemble**. *Millennium Rift* expands on Roomful of Teeth's Grammy®-winning album *Rough Magic* (2023), which garnered Brittelle a Grammy® award for production and Grammy® nomination for composition. This special presentation features world premiere music, newly

integrated AI-assisted video by filmmaker **Isaac Gale**, and additional QR-codeable content, including multiple volumes of hypertext poetry and an entire alternate world wiki system.

Scored for studio-styled vocals, reverb-drenched sax, Phil Collins-era drum fills, vintage synths, and chorused electric guitar, *Millennium Rift* tells the story of the fictional composer and poet mailer_daemon, a digital recluse active in the last two decades of the 20th century. Convinced of global cataclysm in Y2K, he secludes himself in the Mojave Desert, where he devotes the last decade of his life to developing a magnum opus, *Millennium Rift* — a maniacal swirl of musical influences and esoteric reference points outlining a cathartically emotional story of isolation and bittersweet redemption.

Thurs., Oct. 22 at 7:30 p.m.
Fri., Oct. 23 at 1:30 p.m.
Sat., Oct. 24 at 8 p.m.
Symphony Hall
Boston Symphony Orchestra
Kent Nagano, conductor
MENDELSSOHN *The Hebrides* Overture (*Fingal's Cave*)
Tod MACHOVER *already and not yet* (World premiere: BSO commission)
Alex NANTE *Ein feste Burg* (U.S. premiere)
MENDELSSOHN Symphony No. 5

Sat., Oct. 24 at 6:30 p.m.
Symphony Hall, Cabot-Cahners Room
Positive Vision: *A Pre-Concert Talk with George Lewis and Tod Machover*

Composer, Columbia University professor, and AI-music pioneer **George Lewis** will engage **Machover** in conversation about where musical AI has been and where it could be headed. Lewis's software Voyager, built in the 1980s and continually updated since that time, was among the first computational systems to create live improvisational dialogues with human musicians. Machover, Faculty Director of the MIT Media Lab, has a longstanding engagement with AI that includes his celebrated 1996 *Brain Opera*. In their conversation, the two composers explore questions of subjectivity, social intelligibility, and ultimately, what it means to be human, offering a "possible, positive vision" for the future of shared creative life, and of democracy itself.

Note: While this event is scheduled to take place before the BSO's 8 p.m. performance the same evening, it requires a separate ticket that does not include a seat at the BSO concert. The talk will be held in the Cabot-Cahners Room at Symphony Hall.

Sun., Oct. 25 at 2 p.m.
MIT, Thomas Tull Concert Hall, , 201 Amherst St., Cambridge
40 Years of Music at the MIT Media Lab
MIT Media Lab alumni panel

The **MIT Media Lab** has been a center of bold interdisciplinary exploration for 40 years. A creative community of artists, scientists, engineers and designers, the Lab has innovated in areas as diverse as Affective Computing, Tangible Media, Biomechatronics, Sculpting Evolution, and Lifelong Kindergarten. Music has been at the absolute core of this culture since the very beginning, led by founding faculty Marvin Minsky, Barry Vercoe, and Tod Machover and nurtured by several generations of contributing researchers, collaborating artists (from Yo-Yo Ma to Jacob Collier to the BSO), and truly remarkable students from around the world. This panel/presentation brings together several generations of Media Lab music alumni in a discussion moderated by faculty director Machover that will explore what has made the Lab an especially fruitful environment for investigating out-of-the-box music technologies, forms and impacts (from the Hypercello to *Brain Opera* to Guitar Hero); what unusual trajectories and projects students have pursued post-Lab; and what this all might indicate for the future of music. Media Lab alumni panelists include: **Teresa Marrin Nakra** (Stevens Institute of Technology), **Alex Rigopulos** (Harmonix), **Anna Huang** (MIT), **Ben Bloomberg** (recording producer), and **Nicole L'Huillier** (transdisciplinary artist).

Sun., Oct. 25 at 3:30 p.m.
MIT, Thomas Tull Concert Hall, 201 Amherst St., Cambridge
Holly Herndon: *AI as Musical Practice*
Talk by Herndon with moderated Q&A by Manaswi Mishra, PhD student, MIT Media Lab

Composer and artist **Holly Herndon** offers an inside look at how her studio builds machine learning systems as a form of musical practice. In this talk, she reframes AI not as an automated tool, but as a medium shaped through a series of artistic decisions. From composing and recording bespoke training material to curating datasets and evaluating outputs, each stage of the model-making process becomes a site of authorship. Drawing on examples from her work, Herndon

discusses how music written specifically for training influences the behavior of resulting systems, revealing how aesthetic choices can shape technical outcomes. She also addresses her evolving approach to artistic practice as the orchestration of agents—human and machine—within a rapidly shifting technological landscape.

Creation Festival (Nov. 5-14)

Further embarking on the *Faith in Our Time* journey launched last season that ponders faith, spirituality, and religion, the BSO again surveys music that seeks to answer one of humanity's oldest and most enduring questions: How did we come to be? The focal point of this existential inquiry is the world premiere of *Creation*, a BSO-commissioned companion piece to Haydn's exalted choral masterwork, *The Creation*. Led by conductor **Philippe Jordan**, the Haydn oratorio features soprano **Louise Alder**, tenor **Bogdan Volkov**, bass-baritone **David Steffens,** and the **Tanglewood Festival Chorus**.

Creation is written by longtime BSO collaborator and Tanglewood Music Center Fellow **Osvaldo Golijov** with Tony Award-winning playwright **David Henry Hwang** (book) and celebrated author **Leah Hager Cohen** (lyrics). Conducted by **Eric Jabobsen**, this momentous new work draws on jazz, Arabic, and Brazilian music as it explores Darwinian theory, randomness in the cosmos, and theories of the universe. The Argentine-born American composer's strength lies in the great range of his musical loves, which encompass popular and traditional music from all over the world and the great classics of the symphonic and operatic worlds. Working with a roster of stellar cross-genre performers (vocalists **Cécile McLorin Salvant** and **Davóne Tines**, percussionist **Cyro Batiste**, and kamancheh player **Kayhan Kalhor**), Golijov responds to Joseph Haydn's great oratorio, *The Creation,* in a musically eclectic and dynamic work revealing surprising commonalities among the origin stories across cultures.

The Creation and *Creation* are performed over back-to-back concert weekends. Both feature the **Tanglewood Festival Chorus** with newly appointed conductor **Jean-Sébastien Vallée**. The new **BSO x NEC Honors Children's Chorus**, directed by **Michele Adams,** joins the TFC for *Creation*.

The two-week *Creation Festival*'s eight supporting events described below feature musical artists and ensembles, poets, authors, and composers like **Robert Hazen, Mike Wong, William Basinski, Adam Tendler, Tracy K. Smith, Christian Wiman, Sudan Archives, Vijay Iyer, Davóne Tines, John Bitoy, A Golden Wire, Makoto Fujimura, Alan Lightman,** and **Golijov**. The festival

furthers our understanding of creation as more than just a moment in time, and instead as a continuing story that unfolds across cultures through sound, drama, and collective listening.

Creation Festival Program Details

Thurs., Nov. 5 at 6 p.m.
Symphony Hall, Cabot-Cahners Room
Robert Hazen and Mike Wong: *Time's Second Arrow*

In *Time's Second Arrow*, co-authors **Robert Hazen** and **Michael Wong** propose a striking idea: alongside entropy's well-known pull toward decline and disorder, there exists another "arrow" of time—one that points toward increasing complexity, structure, and creative possibility. In this 45-minute tandem talk, Wong introduces the foundations of this emerging theory, while Hazen traces its echoes through human expression, from art and culture to the deep, patterned beauty of music. For listeners gathering before *The Creation*, these ideas resonate in a particularly vivid way. Works of art do not simply resist time's decay—they embody its generative power, revealing how novelty, meaning, and form can arise and flourish. In this light, Haydn's luminous meditation on beginnings becomes not only a reflection on origins, but a testament to time's enduring capacity to create. Books will be available for purchase at the event.

Thurs., Nov. 5 at 7:30 p.m.
Fri., Nov. 6 at 1:30 p.m.
Sat., Nov. 7, 8 p.m.
Symphony Hall
Boston Symphony Orchestra
Philippe Jordan, conductor
Louise Alder, soprano
Bogdan Volkov, tenor
David Steffens, bass-baritone
Tanglewood Festival Chorus, Jean-Sébastien Vallée, conductor
HAYDN *The Creation*

Fri., Nov. 6 at 7 p.m.
Arrow Street Arts, 2 Arrow St., Cambridge
William Basinski: The Garden of Brokenness

Composer **William Basinski** brings a live realization of his deeply introspective "lamentation," *The Garden of Brokenness*, on the 20th anniversary of its release. Widely acclaimed for his epic, groundbreaking and haunting works for tape and electronics — including the seminal *The Disintegration Loops* — Basinski's works explore themes of loss, memory, time and transcendence through a meditative sonic language.

The Garden of Brokenness reflects on humanity's separation from the divine—an evocation of the lost garden and a longing for what we were created to be. Originally an electronic work using piano tape loops that Basinski recorded in 1979, this rare, live realization of *The Garden of Brokenness* will be performed by the composer, joined by his longtime collaborator, pianist **Adam Tendler**, an ensemble of **BSO percussionists,** Light and Space by **A.J. Weissbard**, pianists to be announced, and a cutting-edge sound and light team — transforming the space into a resonant atmosphere, a "garden" itself, enveloping the audience in the music's world of space, decay, and quiet renewal. The result is an unforgettable and immersive experience that aligns with the *Creation Festival*'s exploration of creation, fragility, and the possibility of restoration.

Sat., Nov. 7 at 6:30 p.m.
Symphony Hall, Cabot-Cahners Room
Christian Wiman & Tracy K. Smith

Acclaimed poets **Christian Wiman** and **Tracy K. Smith** join forces for a special program of readings and reflections around the theme of creation. Together, they curate an imaginative sequence of poetry and prose, drawing on their own celebrated works as well as voices across time, offering audiences a deeply human perspective on origins, wonder, and the act of making. Wiman, former editor of *Poetry* magazine and author of the National Book Award finalist *Every Riven Thing*, has been praised by *The New York Times* for work that is "restlessly searching, brilliantly restless." Smith, who served as U.S. Poet Laureate from 2017-2019 and won the Pulitzer Prize for her collection *Life on Mars*, writes with what *The Washington Post* calls "a voice of lyrical clarity and cosmic scope." As a prelude to *The Creation*, their readings open another path into Haydn's vision: one shaped not by the music of language — where creation unfolds in image, breath, and thought.

Sun., Nov. 8 at 7 p.m.
Institute of Contemporary Art/Boston, Seaport, Boston
Sudan Archives: *Any Shape I Want*

Acclaimed violinist and singer-songwriter **Sudan Archives** brings a new performance to the ICA/Boston, in a co-presentation with the BSO. *The New York Times* has called her "an artist in a league of her own"; *Pitchfork* praised her "thrillingly original" fusion of sound and storytelling.

Any Shape I Want is a meditation on the freedom to move between instruments, identities, and imagined selves, staged across six stations representing four-hour blocks of a single day. Sudan Archives moves through a full 24-hour cycle in real time, reimagining songs from her catalog with violin loops and voice while projected video shifts to reflect the hour. Audiences watch her build a private universe on stage, then step into it themselves. The piece speaks directly to the festival's themes of origin and transformation.

Tues., Nov. 10 at 6 p.m.
Harvard University, Paine Hall, 3 Oxford St., Cambridge
Davóne Tines: *What Creation Sounds Like*
Vijay Iyer, host

What does the story of our beginning say about our present and future? What does creation actually sound like? Osvaldo Golijov and David Henry Hwang's *Creation* seek to provide a new answer. Join path-breaking opera singer **Davóne Tines** with pianist **John Bitoy**, in conversation with innovative composer and pianist **Vijay Iyer** as they explore musical ideas of creation though live performance, improvisation, and examples from Beethoven, Duke Ellington, Schumann, Alice Coltrane, Philip Glass, and excerpts from the new work.

Thurs., Nov. 12 at 7:30 p.m.
Fri., Nov. 13 at 7:30 p.m.
Sat., Nov. 14 at 8 p.m.
Symphony Hall
Boston Symphony Orchestra
Eric Jacobsen, conductor
Cécile McLorin Salvant, vocalist
Davóne Tines, bass-baritone
Cyro Baptista, percussion
Kayhan Kalhor, kamancheh
Tanglewood Festival Chorus, Jean-Sébastien Vallée, conductor
BSO x NEC Honors Children's Choir, Michele Adams, director
Creation (World premiere: BSO commission)

Music by Osvaldo GOLIJOV
Book by David Henry HWANG
Lyrics by Leah Hager COHEN

Fri., Nov. 13 at 5:30 p.m.
Boston Athenaeum, 10-1/2 Beacon St., Boston
A Golden Wire: *Timæus*
Parker Ramsay, co-director, harp and harpsichord
Arnie Tanimoto, co-director, viol
Thomas Fields, viol
Lucine Musaelian, viol

A Golden Wire offers a richly textured meditation on music, cosmology, and creation. The intimate program draws on Plato's *Timæus* and the ancient idea of the "music of the spheres," where the proportions governing the cosmos mirror those of the musical scale. Through English Elizabethan and Jacobean works alongside Italian instrumental music, illuminates a worldview in which harmony shapes not only sound, but the structure of the universe itself—from the movements of planets to the human body and voice. Blending performance with intellectual discovery, this program invites listeners to hear creation as the ancients imagined it: ordered, resonant, and profoundly musical.

Sat., Nov. 14 at 2 p.m.
Tremont Temple Baptist Church, 88 Tremont St., Boston
Makoto Fujimura: *A Portal of New Creation*
with BSO String Quartet

Makoto Fujimura is a leading contemporary painter known for a meditative "slow art" practice using centuries-old Japanese Nihonga techniques — a method *The New York Times*' David Brooks called "a small rebellion against the quickening of time." Art in America has placed him "at the vanguard" of a movement forging a new kind of art centered on hope, healing, and redemption. Born in Boston, Fujimura's work is held in collections including the Museum of Contemporary Art Tokyo and Saint Louis Art Museum. Drawing from his book *Art + Faith: A Theology of Making* (Yale University Press), Fujimura will speak on "Kainos" (newness as transformation) and share artwork from his collaborative project *Qu4rtets*, inspired by T.S. Eliot's *Four Quartets*. A **BSO string quartet** will perform one of Beethoven's late quartets, the music that helped shape Eliot's poetic masterpiece.

Sat., Nov. 14 at 6:30 p.m.
Symphony Hall, Cabot-Cahners Room
Osvaldo Golijov & Alan Lightman: *Awe and Understanding*

How do we make meaning in a universe that often exceeds our understanding? Are awe and scientific understanding compatible? Before the culminating performance of the BSO's *Creation Festival*, composer **Osvaldo Golijo**v joins physicist, novelist, and essayist **Alan Lightman** for a wide-ranging conversation at the intersection of music, science, and wonder. Drawing inspiration from Lightman's *The Miraculous from the Material* and the spirit of curiosity that animates Golijov's creative life, the two explore the questions that have long united artists and scientists: Where does awe come from? What can creativity reveal that reason alone cannot? And why do the deepest mysteries continue to compel us, even when they resist answers?

For both men, the search itself is essential. Whether through equations or melody, observation or imagination, science and art offer different instruments for approaching the same enduring mysteries. Their conversation considers how each discipline transforms curiosity into discovery, and how our impulse to create may itself be one of humanity's most profound clues to the meaning we seek.

Note: While this event is scheduled to take place before the BSO's 8 p.m. performance the same evening, it requires a separate ticket that does not include a seat at the BSO concert. The talk will be held in the Cabot-Cahners Room at Symphony Hall.

How to Obtain Tickets

Tickets for the humanities events announced in this release go on sale to the public on Tues., Sept. 22 at 10 a.m. at bso.org.

Single tickets and subscriptions (both fixed and flexible "choose your own" packages) to the 2026–27 BSO season are available to purchase by calling 888-266-1200 or visiting bso.org. Group tickets are available at groupsales@bso.org or 617-638-9345.

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