

**1906**

Frank Welsman establishes the Toronto Conservatory Symphony Orchestra, which changes its name to the Toronto Symphony Orchestra in 1908. Due to a lack of financial support, it disbands in 1918.

**1923**

Viennese-born conductor **Luigi von Kunitz** forms the New Symphony Orchestra (renamed the Toronto Symphony Orchestra in 1927) and becomes the TSO's first Music Director. The inaugural performance, on April 23 at 5:15pm at Massey Hall, features Tchaikovsky's Fifth Symphony. Tickets are 75¢, 50¢, and 25¢.



Luigi von Kunitz



Von Kunitz and the TSO at their first CBC recording at Arcadian Court, 1929

**1923**

The Toronto Symphony Women's Committee, now known as the Toronto Symphony Volunteer Committee, is formed to raise funds for the Orchestra. To this day, their support and dedication to the TSO's education programs is instrumental in fostering generations of musicians and classical enthusiasts in the local community.

**1925**

The first TSO Children's Concert is held at Massey Hall and sponsored by the Toronto Board of Education and Toronto Catholic School Board. An outgrowth of this initiative, the TSO's current education programs comprise Young People's Concerts, School Concerts, virtual Classroom Concerts, live streams, and workshops in collaboration with community groups.

**1929**

The TSO makes its CBC radio-broadcast debut from the Arcadian Court in Simpson's department store—marking the beginning of a long and fruitful relationship with the CBC.

**1931**

Canadian musician **Sir Ernest MacMillan** (Principal of The Royal Conservatory of Music and Dean of the Faculty of Music at the University of Toronto) is appointed as second Music Director. MacMillan entrenches Children's Concerts and strongly encourages the study of music in Ontario schools.

**Ethel Stark** becomes the first woman to conduct the TSO.



Ethel Stark

**1937**

The Toronto Mendelssohn Choir makes its debut with the Orchestra on March 2, beginning an artistic collaboration that continues to the present.

**1942**

The first TSO recording is produced under Sir Ernest MacMillan on the RCA label. It is followed over the years by other memorable recordings—several winning prestigious JUNO Awards.

**1947**

Glenn Gould makes his TSO debut, at age 14, with Beethoven's Piano Concerto No. 4. He is one of many young artists whose careers will develop under the auspices of the TSO.



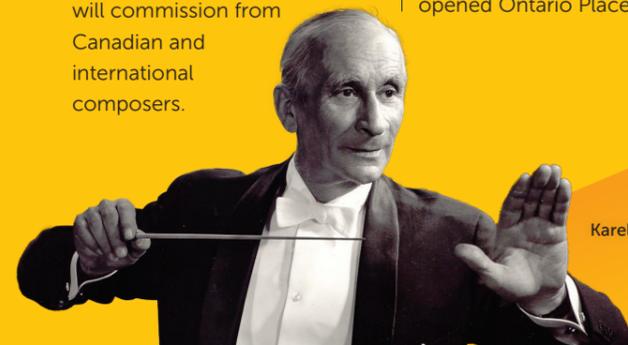
Glenn Gould

**1956**

Czech-born British conductor **Walter Susskind** is appointed as third Music Director. Under him, the TSO attains international stature, with a Carnegie Hall debut in 1963, and the introduction of 27 new or seldom-heard works into the Orchestra's repertoire, including Canadian Premieres of two Mahler symphonies.

**1960**

Oskar Morawetz's Symphony No. 2 premieres. It is the first of numerous works the TSO will commission from Canadian and international composers.



Karel Ančerl

**1965**

Japanese conductor **Seiji Ozawa** begins his tenure as fourth Music Director. He is instrumental in introducing new composers, such as Ives (Symphony No. 4) and Messiaen (*Turangalila-Symphonie*), to Toronto audiences. The Messiaen work is captured in a pioneering recording in 1968.

**1969**

Czech conductor **Karel Ančerl** is appointed as fifth Music Director of the TSO and serves until his death in 1973. During his tenure, Ančerl introduces Canadian audiences to seldom-heard Czech composers Janáček, Martinů, and Suk.

**1970**

**Harry Freedman** is appointed as the TSO's first Composer-in-Residence, a position that continues to this day and provides mentorship and training for many young Canadian composers.

**1971**

The TSO gives its first performances at the newly opened Ontario Place Forum.

**1974**

The Toronto Symphony Youth Orchestra is formed under the leadership of **Victor Feldbrill**, the TSO's Resident Conductor from 1973 to 1975. He proves to be an ardent supporter of Canadian music and young artists.

**1975**

British conductor **Sir Andrew Davis** is appointed as sixth Music Director, serving until 1988 in that capacity, and now as Conductor Laureate.

**1976**

At Ontario Place, **Erich Kunzel** debuts the Pops Concerts—a series that today thrives under the leadership of Principal Pops Conductor **Steven Reineke**.

**1978**

The TSO embarks on a historic tour to China as the first Canadian orchestra to perform there after the Cultural Revolution. Renowned Canadian guest soloists include contralto Maureen Forrester and teenage pianist Louis Lortie.



Sir Andrew Davis and Maureen Forrester in China, 1978

The TSO at Roy Thomson Hall, 1982



Sir Andrew Davis and Bessie Wolki in Inuvik, Canadian Odyssey Tour, 1987



### 1987

The TSO's "Canadian Odyssey" tour takes it to Northern Canada, making it the first orchestra ever to perform in Inuvik, NWT. Smaller groups of musicians also travel to Tuktoyaktuk and other remote communities to perform in schools.

Celebrating Walter Homburger's 25 years of service as Managing Director, the "Great Gathering" event brings together musical celebrities, subscribers, young Ontario musicians, and students from every school board in Ontario.

### 1989

German conductor **Günther Herbig** is appointed as seventh Music Director. Highlights of his tenure include the historic Israel Philharmonic and TSO joint concert in 1989; the inauguration of the first International Choral Festival under Nicholas Goldschmidt; and the 1990 Pacific Rim Tour, which includes stops in Vancouver, San Francisco, Australia, Singapore, Taiwan, and Japan.

TSO opening night with Günther Herbig and Yo-Yo Ma, 1990



## CELEBRATE 100: A SYMPHONIC CENTURY

### 1994

Finnish conductor **Jukka-Pekka Saraste** is appointed as eighth Music Director, serving until 2001. Under his baton, between 1996 and 2000, six TSO recordings are produced on the Finlandia label.



### 2001

TSOUNDCHECK is created to encourage young people ages 15–35 to experience orchestral music with the TSO. With over 34,000 current members, it remains a landmark audience-development performing arts initiative.

### 2004

Toronto-born conductor **Peter Oundjian** is appointed as ninth Music Director and leads the Orchestra through a period of steady audience growth and innovative programming including the annual New Creations and Mozart Festivals, and the Decades Project.

### 2005

The TSO establishes an annual Northern Residency in Sudbury, Timmins, North Bay, and Thunder Bay.

### 2008

TSO Live, a self-produced label of live-concert recordings, is launched. Eight recordings are released between 2008 and 2013.

### 2011

Canadian **Jonathan Crow** débuts as the first occupant of the Tom Beck Concertmaster Chair.

### 2014

As part of a European tour, members of the TSO perform in various homes and churches, as well as a chamber concert at Harpa Hall in Reykjavik, Iceland, during its opening season.



Peter Oundjian and Concertmaster Jonathan Crow in Tel Aviv, 2017 (© Jag Gundu)



Daniel Bartholomew-Poyser, 2019 (© Jag Gundu)

### 2017

The TSO's Tour to Israel & Europe takes place in May. The European leg comprises appearances in Vienna, Prague (as part of the famous Prague Spring International Music Festival), Regensburg, and Essen. And the Orchestra's first-ever visit to Israel includes performances in Jerusalem and Tel Aviv, and results in an exchange visit from the Israel Philharmonic in Toronto.

To commemorate the 150th anniversary of Confederation, more than 40 new works by Canadian composers across the country—co-commissioned by the TSO and other Canadian orchestras—are performed, including a series of short, fanfare-like pieces called "Sesquies".

### 2018

Spanish conductor **Gustavo Gimeno** is appointed as tenth Music Director and assumes the role in the 2020/21 season.



The TSO performs at CityView Drive-In, 2020 (© Tobias Wang)

### 2019

Sir Andrew Davis conducts Massenet's *Thaïs*, which is released on the Chandos label and wins a 2021 JUNO Award for Best Classical Album: Vocal or Choral.

The TSO presents its first-ever Relaxed Performance for neurodiverse audiences and those who benefit from more informal concert experiences. It features a variety of accommodations including a quiet room, more freedom to move around the hall during the performance, and sound-reducing headphones.

### 2020

The 99th season ends prematurely on March 6 due to the COVID-19 pandemic. However, smaller TSO ensembles continue to perform at such venues as the Art Gallery of Ontario, CityView Drive-In, and the Royal Conservatory of Music. A 2020 online co-production with Against the Grain Theatre, *Messiah/Complex*, is nominated for a 2022 JUNO Award.

### 2021

**Daniel Bartholomew-Poyser**, who helped to initiate the TSO's Relaxed Performances, is appointed Barrett Principal Education Conductor & Community Ambassador.

Gustavo Gimeno begins his tenure as Music Director. Under continuing COVID-19 restrictions, the TSO cancels concerts in Roy Thomson Hall. However, in-person and virtual performances continue at various venues including the Toronto Zoo. *Mistatim*—a digital reimagining of an unforgettable story of reconciliation, with music by Orchestra members and Indigenous music creators—is shared with young audiences through a partnership with Red Sky Performance, in association with Crow's Theatre. On November 10, the TSO returns to Roy Thomson Hall for Gimeno's first live performances as Music Director.



Gustavo Gimeno and the TSO, 2021 (© Bronwen Sharp)

Virtual workshop with Red Sky Performance and the TSO, 2021

## April 9, 2022

The countdown begins! Gustavo Gimeno and four of his predecessors all take to the podium in a Music Directors' Special Homecoming concert marking the beginning of a 15-month-long celebration of the TSO's 100-year history.