

More orchestras join Google classical project

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Gary Hanson, executive director of the Cleveland Orchestra, announces the launch of Classical Live on Google Play Music at a news conference in June 15, 2015 in New York

Four more leading orchestras on Friday joined Google's Classical Live, a project by the Internet giant to bring more of the concert hall audience into the growing sector of streaming.

The London Philharmonic Orchestra, Orchestre de Paris, Sydney Symphony Orchestra and Boston Pops Orchestra all will make available new recordings for Classical Live, which is available for streaming or downloading for users of Google Play Music.

"Orchestras in the 21st century are vibrant organizations that embrace new ways of reaching audiences—and offering recordings of our live concerts via Classical Live on Google Play helps us to share our music-making worldwide," Timothy Walker, chief executive and artistic director of the London Philharmonic Orchestra, said in a statement.

The Orchestre de Paris said it hoped to keep up its focus on the French repertoire and contributed to the service Camille Saint-Saens' Symphony No. 3, which is known for its innovative use of organ.

The Sydney Symphony Orchestra's chief conductor David Robertson said he hoped to offer pieces with "real emotional content" and made available Sibelius' triumphant Symphony No. 2 and Schumann's Symphony No. 2, a piece whose sense of uplift belied the composer's declining health.

Streaming—which allows unlimited, on-demand music—has been growing rapidly in recent years but the key markets have been pop and electronica.

Classical Live, launched in June, aims in part to draw a younger audience for classical music whose listeners tend to be older but also wealthier.

Classical Live—the most concerted foray into classical music among major streaming platforms—started with five participants including the New York Philharmonic and the London Symphony Orchestra.

The other participants were the Boston Symphony Orchestra—whose contributions include Mahler's darkly autobiographical Symphony No. 6 led by star conductor Andris Nelsons—as well as the Cleveland Orchestra and the Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra of Amsterdam.

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