

# Yevgeny Kutik Brings Philip Glass to Life with Las Vegas Philharmonic Debut

In just a few weeks, acclaimed violinist Yevgeny Kutik will make his debut with the Las Vegas Philharmonic, performing Philip Glass's "Violin Concerto No. 2, "The American Four Seasons"" at the Smith Center. Known for his evocative interpretations and passion for contemporary music, Kutik's performance promises to be a highlight of the season. In an exclusive interview, Kutik shares his musical journey, inspirations, and thoughts on visiting Las Vegas for the first time.

## The Beginning of a Lifelong Love Affair with Music

"My parents claim I asked to play the violin when I was two or three, though I started at five," Kutik says with a laugh. Born into a musical family—his mother a violinist and his father a trumpet player in the Belarus National Symphony—music was always part of his world.

The family emigrated from Belarus when Kutik was just four and a half, eventually settling in the Berkshires of Massachusetts. Surrounded by music from an early age, the violin became his voice, his way of understanding the world. "Growing up playing the violin shaped how I hear music—from melody first, rather than the bassline or other textures," he explains. "It influenced the composers I connect with and the music I've come to love."

## Philip Glass and "The American Four Seasons"

For his Las Vegas debut, Kutik is bringing one of his favorite pieces: Philip Glass's "Violin Concerto No. 2, "The American Four Seasons." Known for his hypnotic, minimalist style, Glass has been a major influence on Kutik. "I first discovered him through film scores," Kutik says, "but his orchestral music is just as captivating—mesmerizing, really."

The concerto, inspired by Vivaldi's "Four Seasons," offers a modern take on the timeless interplay of seasons and emotions. "It's such a unique piece," Kutik says. "It's like walking into a soundscape where every note has this incredible intensity. It's a privilege to bring this work to life."

## The Composers Who Inspire

When asked about the composers who have influenced him the most, Kutik's passion for music is palpable. "It changes daily," he admits. "Some days it's Bach, whose genius opens a window into the soul. Other days, it's Beethoven, Debussy, or even Philip Glass. Each composer speaks to me differently depending on the day or piece."

Growing up in a Soviet household, Kutik was also deeply influenced by the titans of Russian classical music. "Rostropovich,

Kogan, Richter—they were larger-than-life figures whose sound and passion stayed with me. Their recordings shaped how I approach music."

## Adding a Personal Touch

Every musician brings something unique to their performances, and for Kutik, it's about blending authenticity with individuality. "You can't play a piece without putting a part of yourself into it," he explains. "Your life experiences, emotions, and story all come through. That's what makes live music so compelling—it's the same piece, but different every time because of who's performing it."

This philosophy is why Kutik loves performing new works. One standout moment in his career was premiering Joseph Schwantner's "Violin Concerto" with the Detroit Symphony. "Being the first to perform a piece—bringing it to life when the ink is barely dry—feels like a tremendous privilege," he says. "It's a mix of responsibility and creativity, and I love that challenge."

## Advice for Aspiring Musicians

Kutik is no stranger to hard work, a trait he emphasizes to young musicians. "You have to love what you're doing," he says. "It's not enough to be good—you need to wake up every day excited to play, create, and share your art."

But he also advises not to take the journey too seriously. "You're going to make mistakes—everyone does. Some performances will be great, others less so, and that's okay. Music is about storytelling, and it's your job to make it inspiring, not perfect."

## A First Taste of Las Vegas

While this will be Kutik's first official visit to Las Vegas, he's eager to explore the city beyond the Smith Center. "I had an eight-hour layover once and managed to see a little, but this time I'm looking forward to really experiencing it," he says. "I love food, shopping, and just walking around and soaking in the atmosphere. There's so much to see here."

## The Las Vegas Debut

Kutik's upcoming performance with the Las Vegas Philharmonic is more than just a concert—it's a reflection of his lifelong love for music and his ability to connect with audiences. Whether through a contemporary piece by Philip Glass or a timeless classic, Kutik's artistry and passion shine through.

Join Guest Conductor Michelle Merrill and violinist Yevgeny Kutik for the January 18<sup>th</sup> performance "Dvořák's "New World" Symphony." Tickets are available at [lvphil.org](http://lvphil.org)

