



Philly Orchestra hitting The Mann for outdoor movie extravaganza

[Bill Chenevert](#)

July 15, 2014

[Awesome Stuff to Do](#), [The Philly Review](#), [What's Up Now](#)

Summer's when outdoor movie-screenings BOOM. Seriously, do a [little digging](#) and you can [find](#) just about every public park's screenings. There are so many good flicks to choose from, but if you want the most dramatic and grandiose experience, you're gonna haul yourself up to Fairmount Park for The Mann Center's movie nights. The big screen meets one of our fair city's finest cultural institutions, the Philadelphia Orchestra, for three nights in July to provide a live score to "Gladiator" (7/18), "West Side Story" (7/30), and "Star Trek Into Darkness" (7/31).

It just sounds so awesome, doesn't it? Especially with these three films. The Orchestra will help us find new terror in a Roman colosseum, root extra hard for the Sharks or Jets, and rocket us to space in real time. With dozens of violins, violas and cellos, a five-deep percussive team, and nearly 15 woodwind experts and 20 horn blowers, they'll provide a surround sound that can't be recreated in any living room.

They start cheap, too. They all begin at \$14.50 for a terrace/lawn seat and in this setting, a blanket picnic (preferably with a subtle, demure libation game) is downright encouraged. Tickets

jump up to \$30-\$75 for coverage from the elements and \$85 VIP tickets to “Gladiator” get you a limited edition print. That’s gotta be some wonderful nerd’s dream come true. Let’s break down the movies, shall we?

Friday, July 18: Gladiator Live (U.S. Premiere)

Bet you don’t remember, but Ridley Scott’s 2000 [Russell Crowe vehicle](#) CLEANED UP at award season. It earned five Oscars: Best Picture, Actor, Visual Effects, Costume Design and Sound Mixing. The score, written by Hans Zimmer and Lisa Gerrard, won a Golden Globe for Best Original Score, too. 15 years ago was a different time: Russell was a [legit sex symbol](#) at 36 years young, we hadn’t been bombarded with weak re-interpretations of the same theme (like “Troy,” “Alexander,” “300,” “Kingdom of Heaven,” or “Immortals”), and Joaquin Phoenix wasn’t completely nuts yet.

Wednesday, July 30: West Side Story

This is the one, you guys! This is going to be so boss. The tale of Tony Wyzek and Maria Nunez, the Upper West Side’s Romeo and Juliet, started on Broadway in 1957 and made its film debut in 1961. Written by Arthur Laurents (dude also wrote and directed “Gypsy” and “The Bird Cage” for the stage) and paired with a Leonard Bernstein (music) and Stephen Sondheim (lyrics) score, this is one humongous achievement in musicals. [The film](#) was directed by Robert Wise and the almighty Jerome Robbins and it won ten Academy Awards. “[Maria](#),” “[The Jet Song](#),” “[Tonight](#),” and “[America](#)” done with a huge live orchestra while the Jets and Sharks dance battle – get into it!

* Main Line Ballroom dancers will perform some live Jerome Robbins choreography before the concert and participation is encouraged.

Thursday, July 31: Stark Trek Into Darkness

Yes, this is the J.J. Abrams “Star Trek.” Very much NOT “The Motion Picture” (’79) or “The Wrath of Khan” (’82) or “The Search for Spock” (’84), or even the first one in the third wave of reboots (the second being “The Next Generation,” duh). This is the [2013 adventure](#), the newest and freshest, which stars Benedict Cumberbatch as Khan Noonien Singh. But the score’s composer, Michael Giacchino, hooked up Abrams for the 2009 reboot and he’s a New Jersey native! Giacchino’s also written a handful of awesome Disney scores: “The Incredibles,” “Ratatouille,” “Up,” and “Cars 2.” The “Into Darkness” score certainly includes the original [Star Trek theme](#) by Alexander Courage – blasted out by the Philadelphia Orchestra!

* There’s gonna be a pre-show costume contest for this one, friends

For all shows, the gates open at 6 p.m. and showtime is 8 p.m. Go to manncenter.org for tickets and more details.

<http://phillynow.com/2014/07/15/philly-orchestra-hitting-the-mann-for-outdoor-movie-extravaganza/>